

DETERMINING THE NEED FOR OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION IN  
THE GUIDANCE PROGRAM AT FT. WINGATE, NEW MEXICO

by

KENNETH DALE HELMICK

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## INTRODUCTION

Fort Wingate, New Mexico is a community built around a school operated by the United States Indian Service under the direction of the United States Department of Interior. The school is operated for the sole purpose of educating Indian students and only Indian students may attend.

The student population of about 500 is entirely Navaho with the exception of about ten Pueblos. Ft. Wingate offers education from grade five through grade twelve. The first four grades are taken care of by day schools, trailer schools, and smaller boarding schools located on the reservation nearer the students' homes. The students at Ft. Wingate are all boarding students and few are able to go home during the school year except for the Christmas vacation.

The Navaho people have many problems. The author has not forgotten the ten Pueblo students; but since they constitute such a small minority and because their economic and social problems so closely parallel those of the Navaho, they have been considered within this study and the problems of both groups have been treated as one. The problem which is most important to the content of this report is the economic one. The Navaho reservation embraces approximately 14,500,000 acres of eroded and overgrazed land. The Navaho population has constantly increased from about 20,000 in 1868 to about 75,000 today. It has been estimated that the reservation can provide a fair standard

of living for about half of the present population. Who then is to leave the reservation? Certainly not the old people, since they have not had the opportunity of an education and most of them speak only their native tongue. Logically, then, it must be the young people who have had the advantages of an education. Since they must make the move it is imperative that they receive the maximum benefit from the Occupational Information service. Where else can they receive this but in school? The opportunities for observing the world at work are not present on the reservation and there are very limited opportunities in the small surrounding communities.

Students, then, need an intensive program of guidance. Occupational Information is a part of any good guidance program and, to the author, one of the most important services of that program. It was the faith in the foregoing tenet that helped the writer decide upon this study to determine the extent of the need for occupational information in the school.

## THE NEED FOR OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

### Review of Literature

A guidance program is established to provide services to individuals. Smith has broken the guidance program into the following groups of services: (1) the individual inventory service, (2) the information service, (3) the counseling service,

(4) the placement service, (5) the follow-up service, and (6) the coordinating guidance activities.<sup>1</sup>

The service of most interest in this report is the information service. This does not deny the need for the other services and certainly the guidance program would not be complete if any of these were omitted. However, for the purposes of study the author has separated the information service from the others.

In most guidance programs the information service is one of the weakest services. Occupational information, being included in this service, suffers along with other information. Yet everyone spends approximately two-thirds of his life working, assuming the average life span of 65 years.

Occupational information is defined by Shartle as follows:

Occupational information includes accurate and usable information about jobs and occupations. It also includes information about industries and processes insofar as such information is directly related to jobs. Occupational information also includes pertinent and usable facts about occupational trends and the supply and demand of labor. There must be considered in planning personnel programs in industry, in carrying out vocational counseling and advisement, and in considering the planning of training courses and educational programs. It is used as a tool in evaluating an individual's capabilities in terms of the work he has performed. Occupational information is, of course, the principal tool in exploring with an individual the jobs, occupations, families of occupations, industries, and relative opportunities that may<sup>2</sup> be ahead for him if he makes certain vocational choices.

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<sup>1</sup> Glenn E. Smith, Principles and Practices of the Guidance Program, pp. 109-112.

<sup>2</sup> Carrell L. Shartle, Occupational Information, its Development and Application, pp. 1-2.

With this definition in mind, what are some of the needs for occupational information? Judging from the review of literature studied the need for occupational information is rather wide spread. If one were to ask some counselors about their own programs of occupational information, they would probably reply, "Why put too much stress on occupational information? Most of the students know what they want to do anyway." But do students really know what they want to do for their life's work? Some maybe have actually thought it through and do have fair ideas; while others believe they know, but if all the available information was placed before them about prospective job opportunities they would change their minds.

Today, as never before, the choice of an occupation is a difficult task. The United States Employment Service has formulated more than 20,000 different occupational definitions under more than 40,000 different titles. In the near future the picture will probably change and there will be other occupations open to young people. Baer states:

As society becomes more complex and as its institutions grow and change their nature and structure, individuals increasingly find themselves confused and in need of assistance toward utilizing to the fullest their talents and their opportunities.<sup>1</sup>

There is an ever growing need due to the changing social and economic conditions in the world today. Since early times

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<sup>1</sup> Max F. Baer and Edward C. Roeber, Occupational Information, p. 1.

the duration of education for American youth has been lengthened. Because of this lengthened period of years in education and the child labor laws, the youth of today has less opportunity to try out various occupations before deciding on one which he wishes to follow.

Some types of work have decreased in demand and some have been replaced by more modern machinery and equipment. A good example of this is the village blacksmith. He has been replaced by the automobile worker; the automobile in turn brought about hundreds of new jobs in the assembly line and in its maintenance after leaving the assembly line.

There are even differences among courses of action open to them. Some students rank high in intelligence which leaves courses of action open to them which the person of low intelligence could or should not consider. Because of the numerous opportunities before young people it is the counselor's responsibility to recognize these differences in individuals and help guide the person down the right avenue of action.

There must be countless numbers of individuals with the ability to contribute much to society, who, because they did not receive effective occupational information and guidance, are doing work far below their ability levels. If this is the case, as it undoubtedly is, consider the loss not only to the individual but also to society. In addition to the individual with a great deal of ability think of those persons with lesser abilities who are also working at jobs which do not utilize what they



are actually capable of achieving. It can, therefore, be seen that with a good occupational information service in the guidance program, one could discover and help guide youth into occupations where they could fully utilize their potentialities.

What are the students' needs while in school? Sometime before the student leaves school or at the time he does leave he must decide what particular occupation he would like to pursue for the remainder of his life. Too frequently the student makes this very important decision with a poor foundation for occupational judgement. Some do not make any plans and chance circumstances determine what they will do to support themselves and probably a family.

There has been a great deal of evidence that students in general will make an unwise choice if they do not receive some occupational information. It has been pointed out that few of them have the knowledge to make wise choice for future occupations. They make plans for occupations which are entirely unreasonable in regard to their ability. They do not give much serious thought to the opportunities in their chosen field. Often students who are reared in low economic conditions plan on an occupation which is financially beyond their means. Comparisons of students' occupational choices and the actual distribution of occupations is several times greater than is the actual percentage of that occupation in the total population. That is, the number indicating their choice as medical doctor is much greater than the actual number of doctors in the distribu-



tion of occupations. So it becomes apparent that there is a real need for occupational information before students leave school.

What are the individual's needs? Perhaps the most important point of view of the individual is financial. The person needs to feel secure financially and his occupation must pay enough to make it possible for him to support his family fairly comfortably. The person who is barely able to eke out a living is not going to feel very secure.

It often happens that an individual will enter an occupation by some chance method. If this happens the result will probably be that he will shift from job to job with little thought of advantages or disadvantages. Some will go into work which is unsuited to their abilities but, nevertheless, remain in the work. They may be good enough to get by but their work will be less efficient and less satisfactory than that of the individual who is more suited to the work. Those individuals who enter unsuitable occupations, providing they remain, will take longer to reach their peak performance and top salary. Consider the loss in salary that has resulted when an individual enters an occupation unfitted to his capabilities as compared with an occupation more suitable in which he would have reached his peak performance much earlier with consequent salary gains.

It is not uncommon to hear of a person preparing for some occupation only to find after completing his training that it is unsuited to him. He can either go to work with a resulting

low productivity or he can prepare himself for a more suitable occupation with a resulting waste of time and money; both because of additional preparation and the lost time when he could have been working. This also would result in a shortened period of productivity and therefore less chance of reaching the top of his occupational field.

The individual needs occupational information in order to choose wisely from the health viewpoint. The author has known people who were in occupations that were entirely unsuitable for them because of their health. One example is the person who was in field surveying. He was allergic to various weed pollens and yet his job in surveying took him out in the field where he was exposed to pollen. There must be others who are in even more distressing positions and positions which are more harmful to their health. The person with a weak heart who has to do heavy lifting; the one with tubercular tendencies who works under dusty conditions; and the person whose nervous system is constantly under strain because of his efforts to keep up with the high speed production of an assembly line. It is distressing enough for these people to endanger themselves; but, unfortunately, this is not the extent of the situation. Because of their health they not only endanger themselves but are a constant accident hazard to their fellow workers.

In addition to the accident risk they represent, they quite often are an economic liability. The person who is misplaced because of his health becomes a non-producer due to more frequent

sickness. This not only causes a loss of wages to himself but also results in a loss to the employer and in some cases to his fellow employees.

The individual needs to find happiness and satisfaction in his work. An individual's occupation cannot be considered entirely appropriate if he is not happy in his work and if it is not self-satisfying. If he does not feel that his work is contributing something to the welfare of society he cannot feel that he is useful to society. If, because he is misplaced occupationally, he fails to do satisfactory work this can be extremely demoralizing to him. If he is doing work unsuited to his abilities and interests there will be constant irritation and friction which will make him dissatisfied and unhappy.

There is one other source of evidence of the individual's need for occupational information. This is the success of quacks who prey upon individuals who are unhappy and dissatisfied in their occupational choices. The mere fact that people resort to astrology, handwriting analysis and other pseudo-sciences is evidence enough that they lack proper occupational information.

Up to this point the individual's needs have been discussed. Next consider the employer and how this need for occupational information could help him. It is only fair to look at this problem from his viewpoint because if there were no employers, there would be little need for occupational information.

What advantages then does the dissemination of occupational information offer the employee? The economic loss, due to labor turnover, amounts to millions of dollars yearly. The worker who is misplaced according to his abilities and interests is a constant drain on production because he is not able to do his best. If the employee discovers that he is misplaced it still results in an economic loss to the employer. The new worker must either be trained or developed through supervision before he can reach the level of proficiency attained by the other workers. The loss to an employer varies considerably depending on the type of job and the skills required of the worker. If it is an occupation that requires considerable skill it will naturally take longer to train a new worker. During this period of training the employer will suffer the loss of peak production, possible damage to machinery, the time the foreman has to spend supervising the new worker, and the waste caused by mistakes of the new worker while learning.

Myers gives an example to illustrate this point very forcefully:

In the case of a telephone company ..... which reported a turnover of 70.3 per cent among its switchboard operators in 1926, dismissals accounted for 9.1 per cent, disability for 8.2 per cent, employment reasons 12.6 per cent, and "leaving city" for 11.5 per cent. Nearly three fifths of the turnover was included in these four groups, each of which must have contained many who would never have entered the employ of the company if they had had proper vocational guidance. No doubt other groups also included some of this type. Even a reduction of turnover from 70.3 per cent to 50.3 per cent would have

meant a saving of more than \$50,000 to the company in costs of hiring and training new operators.<sup>1</sup>

Because of these conditions industry has taken an increased interest in occupational information and its application. One needs only to visit some large industries' personnel offices to see the elaborate systems and great pains they employ to place workers in jobs according to their abilities. They have learned from experience that this practice is economical if they can help workers to be happy and efficient and thus cut down on the amount of turnover.

#### Responsibility for Provision of Occupational Information

In the preceding pages the great need for occupational information was pointed out. The writer next wants to determine whose responsibility it is to provide this occupational information service and how this need can be met.

There is a great deal of controversy over just whose responsibility it is to disseminate occupational information. Some will say it is the responsibility of the parents; but after proper consideration we can discount this point of view. Parents are, too often, blinded by affection toward their own children and help set goals for them that are too high. Parents

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<sup>1</sup> George E. Myers, Principles and Techniques of Vocational Guidance, p. 71.

tend to overestimate the abilities and forget about the weaknesses of their children.

Is it the responsibility of industry? True, industry is the one who will reap benefits if it has workers placed in occupations according to their interests and abilities. But again if one considers this point of view industry will have to be excused from the greatest share of responsibility. By the time an individual goes to an employer seeking work he has already been trained. If the employer told him that he had trained in the wrong occupational field it would mean a loss of time and education for the individual and the employer would still have the task of finding an employee.

Is it the responsibility of the individual? The individual will, along with his employer, benefit most from a wise choice. But what about the complexity of the situation. The individual, it has been proven, too often makes unwise choices because he does not know the various factors that must be considered. He is influenced by the prestige value, the salary, or the colorfulness of the job. He does not think of the training requirements, the possibilities of finding a job, the chances of promotion, conditions under which he will work or the physical requirements of the job.

Whose responsibility is it then? Most people will agree after viewing the facts that the task belongs to the school. There are several reasons for placing this responsibility in the school. Because of the lengthened duration of education



for the youth nearly all of them are attending school during adolescence when they are thinking seriously about their future vocations. The school has a great deal of information about the individual student which is reliable and can be used in guiding the student in regard to the selection of an occupation. The school has test data available which tell about the student's scholastic achievement, some schools also have data pertaining to their interests. Depending on the organization of the guidance program of the school, there may or may not be other test data on the student. Even if there were no test information, they would have his scholastic record available which would help considerably. Lacking records of test data, or to supplement them the school has a knowledge of the student's interests as expressed in reading, extra-class activities, clubs and athletics.

Most schools keep health records on each of the students and therefore are in a position to help guide the student into a choice of an occupation which would not result in physical harm or if he is in poor health, keep him from entering an occupation that would do further harm to him. The idea of choosing an occupation befitting to his physical and mental health is one of great importance because an unwise choice can harm others as well as the individual.

The school has considerable knowledge about the individual's aptitudes and abilities. If it does not give aptitude tests it can observe the student and at least make better than chance



predictions. The school can also observe the individual's behavior and determine how well he gets along with other people. The school can tell whether he likes to work alone or in groups.

Perhaps the most important reason why it should be the school's responsibility is the growing trend for schools to have trained personnel as part of their guidance program who know something about the world of work and can help the student make a wise choice.

Smith places the responsibility upon the school and in discussing just where this information service should begin places it in high school. He believes the common needs should be emphasized in elementary school and the more specialized needs in high school.

In 1870, three out of four of those going to high school went on to college, while in 1940 only one in ten entered college. This trend placed upon the schools the responsibility for assisting pupils to plan programs of studies not only as a preparation for college, but also in preparation for employment immediately upon leaving the secondary school. This greatly reduced selectivity of the secondary school gave rise to educational services designed to meet the needs of individuals who were required to adjust to a socioeconomic society in which satisfactory adjustment and survival meant that each had to capitalize his known aptitudes and interests.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Glenn E. Smith, Principles and Practices of the Guidance Program, pp. 39-40.

STUDY OF OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION NEED  
AT FT. WINGATE, NEW MEXICO

There were several reasons why the author decided to make the present study. It was not a product of idle curiosity nor was it made with the intention of blaming or praising anyone in particular for the result which became so obvious from the study itself. It was undertaken to bring about an awareness of strengths and weaknesses of the occupational information service at the school. It is hoped that the study can be of some use in correcting the weaknesses and giving credit to those who merit it where it is strong.

The writer has for sometime felt the need for occupational information in the school's guidance program. Any information the student obtains is not the result of an organized information service but rather a floundering by the student until he happens upon a choice because of his initiative in locating the information himself. Consequently, he may get the correct information or he may get biased information depending upon the source from whence it came. If the student goes to the teacher who is interested in his problem of choosing a suitable occupation he may be guided wisely. All too frequently, however, he is influenced by someone who does not care to spend the time with him or he goes to a conscientious person who wants to help but is handicapped because of a lack of knowledge about occupational fields.

The need for occupational information is common in the schools throughout the United States. One has only to look around in the school system to see young people preparing for an occupation that is out of reason with their abilities. The author can recall his own experiences in choosing an occupation and the problems involved before coming to a decision.

The school that does not have an adequate information service need not bow its head in shame because it is a fairly universal shortcoming of the public school systems. However, the school that recognizes this need in its own system but ignores it should be very much concerned about its laxity of preparing youth for life.

Students have on occasions consulted the author about occupational choices. It was during these conferences with students that the extent of need as expressed by individual boys and girls was seen. Some of these students had no idea of the possible job opportunities and some who had made plans had no idea of the requirements or the conditions under which they would have to work. Reference to students' needs, however, has been discussed in the first section of the report.

Other teachers have expressed the same experiences. They have probably been negligent in their teaching by failing to correlate subject matter with possible occupational choices.

Teachers are in an excellent position to guide students in wise occupational choices if they have the knowledge to do so. If, however, they do not understand the occupational fields it

would be better to refer the student to someone who possesses this information. In this way the student will be afforded greater benefit and will hold the teacher in higher esteem than if the teacher, lacking the proper background, had attempted to give information.

#### How the Study was Made

The first thing that had to be accomplished was to determine exactly what information was desired in order to show the need or lack of need for occupational information in the guidance program. After some thought a questionnaire was decided upon to determine students' expressed occupational choices and how much information they had about their chosen occupations. The Kuder Preference Record, Vocational Form-C was chosen to use as a comparative instrument. The Examiner Manual states:

An individual's preferences indicate that he likes certain types of activities. When his preferences are identified, he can investigate the occupations that involve these activities. In this way he narrows the field of investigation to those occupations most deserving of his attention. In many cases a person's attention may be called to an occupation for which he is suited, but which he had not previously considered simply because of unfamiliarity with it.<sup>1</sup>

The questionnaire was devised after it was decided what was to be determined. An attempt was made to keep it as brief

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<sup>1</sup> G. Frederic Kuder. Examiner Manual for the Kuder Preference Record Vocational Form-C, p. 1.

as possible but still collect all the necessary information. The writer also attempted to make it possible to complete most of the questions by checking the appropriate answer. It was in this respect that he recognized some faults in the questionnaire when he compiled data. It was felt that the final results of these faults did not invalidate the findings.

Questions were included in the questionnaire (Appendix, Form 1) which would:

1. determine the individual's expressed occupational choice. (Item 1)
2. determine the extent of knowledge about similar occupations which might serve as alternate occupations providing they were unable to attain one of their first choices. (Item 2)
3. determine their knowledge of the educational requirements necessary for success in their occupational choice. (Items 3 & 9)
4. determine if they had a knowledge of colleges or training institutions where they could receive the requirements for occupational success in their chosen field. (Items 4, 20, & 21)
5. determine the extent of their knowledge of salary that can be expected in their occupational choice. (Item 6)
6. determine the extent of their knowledge concerning job opportunities in their occupational choice. (Items 5 & 14)
7. determine whether the information they have is based on occupational literature or associations. (Items 7 & 8)

8. compare their occupational choice with subjects liked best in school. (Items 11, 12, 15, & 23)
9. determine the effect of part time work and club activities to their occupational choice. (Items 13, 16, 17, & 19)
10. determine the effect of their teacher and family occupations on their choice. (Items 13 & family's occupation)
11. determine the student's knowledge of cost of education in preparing for occupational choice. (Item 22)

The Kuder Preference Record, Vocational Form-C, was chosen as the instrument for comparison for very definite reasons. It was believed that the Kuder was of a reading level more readily understandable by bilingual students. Because of the language handicap it was desirable to use an interest inventory which was not so difficult as to invalidate the results. The opinion of the author was confirmed by a study of the reading difficulty of interest inventories made by Steffle. It was found in measuring the difficulty with two separate instruments that "both suggest that about seventh grade reading ability is needed to understand the Brainard, Kuder, or Occupational Interest Inventory---"<sup>1</sup>

The Kuder was also desirable because of Table 1 in the Examiner Manual<sup>2</sup>. The table serves as a classification of

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<sup>1</sup> Buford Steffle, "The Reading Difficulty of Interest Inventories", Occupations, November, 1947, 27:95.

<sup>2</sup> G. Frederic Kuder, op. cit. pp. 4-12.



occupations according to the major interests measured by the Kuder. This would be a great help in comparing the students expressed occupational choices with their measured interests. The table was used for this purpose and proved to be helpful in this area.

The questionnaire was administered to a total of eighty-three high school students including one section of the ninth grade, one section of the tenth grade, and the entire eleventh and twelfth grades. The questionnaire was administered during the homeroom period from 8:30 to 9:00 A. M. At the time the students were informed that the purpose was to determine what they knew about their occupational choice and that this information was to be used by the writer for a research paper in college. After they had finished the questionnaire they were told that the Kuder Preference Record would be given to them as soon as a time could be arranged.

The Kuder Preference Record was administered shortly after the Questionnaire. The writer explained to each of the classes what the Kuder measures. It was emphasized that the finding would be kept confidential and that there were no right or wrong answers. The instructions were read aloud while they followed in the test booklet. Instructions were illustrated on the blackboard, then the students were watched carefully until the writer was certain that they fully understood the directions. They were given as much time as necessary to complete the Kuder and most of them finished in about an hour.



The author wishes to point out some of the shortcomings of any interest inventory which must be taken into consideration. There is the possibility that the student may lack information about some of the activities, his lack of experience may make the results incorrect, his educational level may affect the results either making them more or less valid depending on the individual, and the instability of his interests or preferences may affect the results. These things must be considered in counseling the individual, but since one has no control over these factors and since the study was comparative with no counseling involved, they had to be disregarded.

A high incidence of verification scores below 38 was found. Scores below 38 are to be regarded as doubtful and should be checked. It was not possible for the writer to do a thorough analysis of the reasons for the incidence of low scores. The papers were checked for mistakes in punching to determine if there was any misunderstanding regarding directions; and he checked the difficulty of some of the items. In both instances he could determine no reason for the low scores. One of the possible reasons given in the manual for low scores is "his preferences are so atypical that he actually does not prefer activities ordinarily chosen by the overwhelming majority of people".<sup>1</sup> The author could find no literature dealing with this incident but he has wondered if possibly the preference of Indian students might be affected by culture conflicts.

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<sup>1</sup> G. Frederic Kuder, ibid., p. 2.

### Findings of the Study

With the questionnaire and the Kuder results the process of tabulating the results began. A tally sheet was made to determine what the student knew about the following: educational requirements, schools offering training in occupational choice, job opportunities, pay in occupational choice, occupational choice by reading, occupational choice by acquaintance, subjects necessary for success and cost of education or training. The information for each of these items was taken from the questionnaire and was tallied under three categories: considerable knowledge, some knowledge, and no knowledge. The tabulations were done separately for ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades and the grades were further divided into boys and girls. A total was then made of all grades but still keeping the boys and girls separate. The findings were then translated into graph form (Fig. 1) to make the findings more visibly clear.

It can readily be seen from Fig. 1 where the need for occupational information is the greatest.<sup>1</sup> In only two items tabulated, job opportunities and occupational choice by reading, were there any incidences of more than 50 per cent who had

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<sup>1</sup> Individual classes were organized into table form (see Appendix) as a further aid in visualizing the results of the student knowledge of his occupational choice.

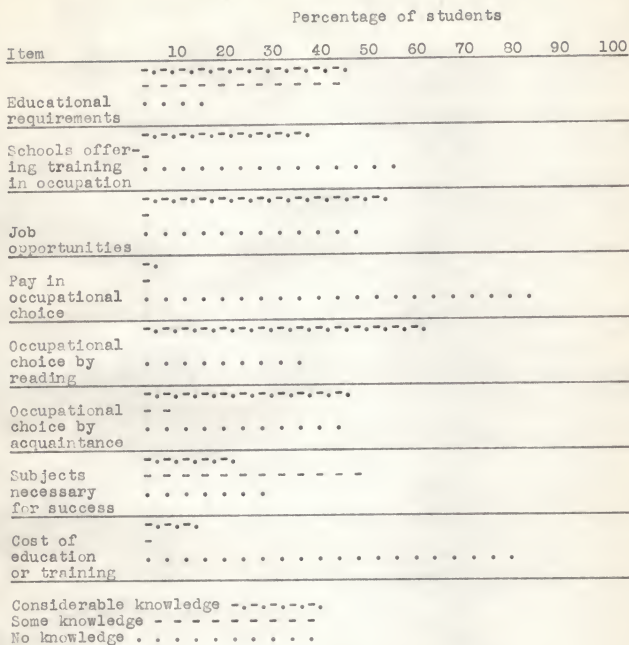


Fig. 1. The percentage of eighty-three boys and girls at Ft. Win@ate having knowledge of their occupational choice measured by a questionnaire.

considerable knowledge. In two of the items, salary in occupational choice and cost of education or training, there was an incidence of nearly 90 per cent who had little or no knowledge. If one were to group all answers together -- all items considerable knowledge, all items some knowledge, all items no knowledge -- and take an average, we would get the following results: 35.5 per cent of the students with considerable knowledge, 14.1 per cent of the students with some knowledge, and 50.1 per cent of the students with no knowledge.

A tabulation of the number of students whose expressed choice of occupations agreed with the classification of occupations according to major interests as measured by the Kuder Preference Record was then made. An interest was considered major among the ten areas if the student was at or above the 75th percentile. As was pointed out by the Examiner Manual:

The 75th percentile point was chosen because it is a convenient point which lies between 1 per cent and 5 per cent points of significance for normally distributed scores from tests having a reliability of .90. Since test reliabilities vary somewhat from group to group as well as with the method used for estimating them, there is probably little to be gained by attempting to set up separate cutting points for each scale, and there is much to be lost in convenience of interpretation. In this connection, it should be remembered that no cutting point is completely satisfactory. Scores well above the 75th percentile can be regarded with greater confidence. Those somewhat below it may deserve some consideration but must be regarded as less likely to be an expression of a true interest in the field.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> G. Frederic Kuder, op. cit., p. 3.

The results of these tabulations show that 36 per cent of the girls and 27.6 per cent of the boys chose occupations related to their measured interests. This would be about 31.3 per cent of the total group of 33 who made choices related to their major interests.

From the questionnaire a comparison was made of their preference for subjects, both vocational and academic, and the subjects usually considered of most importance in various occupations. The subjects which were considered of most importance were fundamental subjects such as mathematics for engineering, mechanics for automobile mechanics, and biology or chemistry for nursing. The first two preferences for subjects were considered by the writer. Most Indian students realize the importance of English in adjusting to the "white man's world", as off-reservation life is frequently referred to, and therefore checked this subject as one of their first choices very frequently. The results of this tabulation show that 50 per cent of the girls and 49 per cent of the boys chose subjects necessary for their chosen occupation.

The results of checking to determine their knowledge of jobs similar to their first choice indicated that they had very little knowledge of other possible occupations. Only about 9 per cent of the total group indicated jobs pertaining to their first choice. This finding is rather difficult to believe but since 91 per cent left that item blank or filled in occupations entirely unreasonable, the data had to stand until some future check is possible.

The effects of their teachers, part-time work and extra-class activities had on their choices appeared to be nil. There were three or about 3.5 per cent of the students whose occupational choices were related to club activities. It would be difficult to say with such a small number that club activities influenced their choices. The question used to determine the effect of the teacher's influence of occupational choice had to be discarded as being useless since the students invariably chose their present homeroom teacher as their preference. If some other teachers had been selected there would have been some evidence to indicate that there might have been some influence by the teacher.

The influence of their family could be determined only to the extent of comparing their occupational choice with the father's occupation. This furnished some interesting but very inconclusive data as to the influence of the family. About 61 per cent indicated occupational choices on a higher economic level than their fathers, 37.3 per cent indicated choices on about the same economic level as their fathers, and 1.7 per cent indicated a choice lower than the economic level of their father's occupation.

### Conclusions

From the results of the study it was evident that there was a need for more extensive use of occupational information in the

guidance program at Ft. Wingate, New Mexico. Fig. 1 of this report indicated a large percent had very little information upon which to base their choice of an occupation. Their knowledge of schools offering training, the salary in their occupational choice, the subjects necessary for success, and the cost of education or training were apparently the items where more should be done to guide the students.

There were only eight students out of 35, or about 9 per cent, who indicated that they knew of occupations similar to their first choice. In other words, if they were not able to attain their first choice they knew of no other occupation similar in nature but possibly closer to their level of ability or less costly but still in the occupational field where their interests were. It was concluded from this study that occupational information was needed to interpret occupational choices to broader fields rather than to such specific choices.

The students' lack of knowledge of related occupations leads to one very definite conclusion. The student needs more information about occupational fields and not just a limited knowledge. He needs a broad knowledge. Take for example the student who wanted to be a civil engineer; but discovered that he had neither the abilities nor the money for a college education. If he realized the occupational possibilities he might be just as happy in a survey party or in a drafting department. The later two possibilities would not require the abilities or the money but would be work similar in nature to his original ambition.



From the comparison of the individuals' expressed choices and suggested occupations, according to Table 1 of the Examiner Manual, Kuder Preference Record, if the measured interests were correct, and it was assumed that they were, one could draw the following conclusions. The student needed more guidance in choosing his occupation to coincide more closely with his interests. The student must, however, be guided in his explorations of finding an occupation when using the results of an interest inventory because of the faults of such a method as pointed out earlier in this study.

The comparison made between the students' subject preferences and the subjects necessary for success in their chosen occupations leads to very definite conclusions. The results indicated that about 50 per cent preferred subjects related to their occupational choices. There were two possibilities in a case like this. Either the individual should be guided into a choice more compatible with his preferred subjects or if he has the other qualifications for his chosen occupation then he should be encouraged to develop more of an interest in the subjects in question.

No conclusions could be drawn on the effects of the students' teachers, part-time work, or extra-class activities. It is imperative, however, to point out the possible influence of these on an occupational choice. The effect of clubs and part-time work are rather obvious. A word of caution might be appropriate. Extra-class activities might very well lead to an appropriate choice but the individual should learn about the

chances of reaching the top and other factors related to the occupation. What might be a very good hobby and leisure time activity could be a very poor choice occupationally. The effect of a teacher might better be illustrated by an incident known to the author. An Indian girl who was student in one of the writer's classes expressed a desire to be a nurse. She had the potentialities for becoming a nurse and it was felt that she would realize her goal. She took courses in high school that were pointed toward a nursing career and did very well. However, as she was preparing to enter college one of the teachers cornered her and told her of the dire need for qualified teachers and how much she could help her own people. Consequently, she decided to take up teaching. It is possible that she will be happy in the teaching profession but the writer can't help wondering if she wouldn't have been happier in nursing.

With the incident just cited as a basis a word of caution is appropriate to teachers. The teacher who wishes to help the student with his occupational plans is to be commended. There are, however, many phases which must be considered when the occupational plans are being made. Even the teacher who believes that he knows all about the world of work should be cautious. The student should never be told to enter a certain career, but should be guided in locating pertinent information about occupations and then let the final decision evolve from the guiding principles. Remember that the student will be employed in his occupational choice for most of his life. If the teacher advised

him to enter a particular occupation and he is not happy, who is he going to blame. Certainly not himself, because it was the teacher who made the decision for him. If the teacher is only occasionally called upon to help, the author would recommend the purchase of Occupations A Basic Course for Counselors by Greenleaf which is listed in the bibliography of this paper. The pamphlet is inexpensive and if the need arises for occupational information of a more extensive nature it has some excellent source material.

It was difficult to base any definite conclusions on the influence of the family on the choice of an occupation. However, one possible evidence of further need for occupational information was pointed out. Sixty-one per cent indicated an occupational choice above their fathers' economic levels, a number choosing work on a professional level. It may not be impossible for them to attain this level, however, the writer felt that it was improbable. It was believed that many chose an occupation higher than their potentialities seemed to indicate.

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## APPENDIX

Table 1. Distribution of girls and boys according to grade having knowledge of occupational choice.

	9th		10th		11th		12th		Total	
	OK:	NK:	OK:	NK:	OK:	NK:	OK:	NK:	OK:	NK:
Educational requirements	G 4	B 3	G 5	B 2	G 6	B 4	G 3	B 3	G 19	B 13
Schools offering training in occupation	G 2	B 5	G 3	B 5	G 5	B 4	G 4	B 2	G 14	B 20
Job opportunities	G 3	B 4	G 2	B 6	G 7	B 3	G 8	B 7	G 20	B 16
Pay in occupational choice	G 7	B 14	G 3	B 8	G 9	B 3	G 7	B 4	G 26	B 21
Occupational choice by reading	G 5	B 7	G 6	B 5	G 8	B 3	G 4	B 3	G 25	B 19
Occupational choice by acquaintance	G 1	B 6	G 5	B 1	G 4	B 2	G 6	B 2	G 16	B 16
Subjects necessary for success	G 4	B 3	G 2	B 5	G 4	B 2	G 5	B 6	G 10	B 18
Cost of education or training	G 1	B 7	G 1	B 11	G 2	B 10	G 3	B 3	G 6	B 32

G - Girls

B - Boys

OK - considerable knowledge

SK - some knowledge

NK - no knowledge

## APPENDIX

## Form 1

## Questionnaire to Determine Extent of Occupational Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Home address \_\_\_\_\_ Height \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_

Father's occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Brother's occupation (if any are employed) \_\_\_\_\_

Sister's occupation (if any are employed) \_\_\_\_\_

1. List three occupations you have thought about that you would like to do for your life's work. List in order of preference.

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you know of other occupations that are similar to the above three?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_. If yes list them.

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

3. How much education is necessary for your first choice?

a. Less than high school education \_\_\_\_\_

b. High school \_\_\_\_\_

c. College \_\_\_\_\_

d. Special school (such as trade school) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you know the schools or colleges that give good training for your first choice if more education is necessary?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you know where you could get a job if you were trained for your first choice?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you know the average pay per year in your first choice?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_. If yes, it is about \$ \_\_\_\_\_

7. Have you read about any of your choices? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

8. Do you know anyone in any of these occupations?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, is this person a close friend? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

9. What subjects are necessary for success in your first choice? Check those which are most essential for success by numbering 1, 2, 3, 4 in order of importance.

English \_\_\_\_\_

Music \_\_\_\_\_

Foreign languages \_\_\_\_\_

Home economics \_\_\_\_\_

Mathematics \_\_\_\_\_

Commercial subjects \_\_\_\_\_

Science \_\_\_\_\_

Manual arts \_\_\_\_\_

Social studies \_\_\_\_\_

Agriculture \_\_\_\_\_

Art \_\_\_\_\_

Physical education \_\_\_\_\_

10. What vocational or shop subjects have you had in school?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

11. Which one of the above subjects did you like best? \_\_\_\_\_

12. Which vocation or shop would you rather work in? \_\_\_\_\_

13. What summer jobs have you had? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Which one of these jobs did you like best? \_\_\_\_\_

14. Do you have or have you had any serious physical defects?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_.

If yes, list them \_\_\_\_\_

15. In what subjects have you made the best grades?

\_\_\_\_\_

16. What clubs have you belonged to while in school? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

17. Have you taken part in athletics? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

18. What teacher at Ft. Wingate would you like to have for your home room sponsor? \_\_\_\_\_

19. Have you held class, club, or any other offices in school?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_. If yes, list the most important ones

\_\_\_\_\_

20. Do you plan to attend college? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, where do you plan to go? \_\_\_\_\_

21. Have you looked through any college catalogs?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_.

22. Do you know how much money is required for room, board,

books, etc. when you attend college? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what is the approximate amount for one year? \_\_\_\_\_

23. Which of the following subjects do you like best? Number 1, 2, 3, 4 according to your choice. If you haven't taken them, indicate which one you think you would like most.

English \_\_\_\_\_

Silversmithing \_\_\_\_\_

Mathematics \_\_\_\_\_

Agriculture \_\_\_\_\_

Chemistry	_____	Cooking	_____
Biology	_____	Journalism	_____
History	_____	Music	_____
Art	_____	Typing	_____
Weaving	_____	Bookkeeping	_____
Sewing	_____	Speech	_____
Blacksmithing	_____	Woodworking	_____
Mechanics	_____	Baking	_____

Any others not mentioned above. \_\_\_\_\_

DETERMINING THE NEED FOR OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION IN  
THE GUIDANCE PROGRAM AT FT. WINGATE, NEW MEXICO

by

KENNETH DALE HELMICK

B. A., Kansas Wesleyan University, 1950

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AN ABSTRACT OF  
A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Education

KANSAS STATE COLLEGE  
OF AGRICULTURE AND APPLIED SCIENCE

1955



Fort Wingate, New Mexico is a community built around a school operated by the U.S. Government for Indian students. The writer made this study because he felt there was a great need for more emphasis on occupational information in the present guidance program. He further realized the dire need of Indian students whose economic conditions make it necessary for the youth to find employment off the reservation. There was little opportunity for Indian students to really gain a knowledge of the world of work.

From the review of literature it was evident that the need at Fort Wingate was not unique, but was widespread in schools throughout the nation. Some of the areas of need which were evident were the following: the lengthened period of education and child labor laws which make opportunities to try occupations difficult, the ever increasing complexity of the world of work and variety of occupations which youth may enter, the individual's needs from the viewpoint of abilities, happiness and satisfaction, health and finances. From the industrial viewpoint it was determined that the proper placement of the individual would benefit all concerned. There would be a big saving in industry if individuals were properly placed, thus preventing the large turnover with its consequent loss to industry, the individual, and society.

It was decided that the responsibility of disseminating occupational information quite logically fits in the school. Although the individual and industry will benefit more directly,

it was pointed out previously that society does benefit and the school is one of the main representatives of society. The school has on hand or is able to secure information about the individual pertaining to his achievement, abilities, interests and such other data necessary for guiding him into a wise occupational choice. The school was in a better position because of trained personnel in guidance who could help guide the individual. Most all youth are in school during the years when they are concerned with choosing an occupation.

The study conducted by the author was made to determine the need for occupational information at Fort Wingate. To determine the need a questionnaire was devised to find the student's expressed choice of occupations and his knowledge pertaining to the choice. The Kuder Preference Record Vocational Form-C was used as a comparative instrument for comparing the student's occupational choice with suggested occupations according to their measured interests.

From the study, it was concluded that there is need for more occupational information at Fort Wingate. This conclusion was a result of the following findings: an analysis of the questionnaire indicated that about fifty per cent of the students had no knowledge of their chosen occupation; in only two items measured were there incidences of more than fifty per cent who had considerable knowledge and in two items nearly ninety per cent had no knowledge; a comparison of their expressed choices and suggested occupations as measured by the Kuder Preference

Record indicated that only thirty-one per cent chose occupations related to their major interests. These were the most significant findings which lead to the author's conclusions.