Importance of supervised occupational experience in vocational guidance as perceived by Alabama vocational agriculture teachers

Willie James Cheatham

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IMPORTANCE OF SUPERVISED OCCUPATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AS PERCEIVED BY ALABAMA VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS

Iowa State University

Ph.D. 1980

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Importance of supervised occupational experience in vocational guidance as perceived by Alabama vocational agriculture teachers

by

Willie James Cheatham

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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1980
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There is a growing recognition of the important position held by teachers of agriculture in the vocational guidance of their students. Vocational guidance is a helping or assistance service, part of which can be provided by vocational agriculture teachers as they teach and direct student learning activities. Teachers can provide vocational guidance which will contribute to an individual becoming both a contributing economic producer and a responsible member of society. This has been an accepted principle by educational leaders for many years. In 1934, F. G. Nichols said, "Vocational education of any sort without vocational guidance before, during, and after the period of training is little short of futile" (F. G. Nichols, 1934, as quoted by Byram (1936, p. 1)). Now, 45 years later, educators still recognize vocational guidance as an important aspect of vocational education.

During the last two decades many interesting concepts about vocational guidance have been formulated. These concepts are important in helping us to understand why people choose and advance in their respective occupation. However, these concepts are insufficient in working with students in vocational agriculture. In addition to understanding the basic concepts of vocational guidance, the teacher of agriculture must assist youth and adults in and out of school in arriving at wise

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The Iowa State University Committee on the Use of Human Subjects in Research reviewed this project and concluded that the rights and welfare of the human subjects were adequately protected, that risks were outweighed by the potential benefits and expected value of the knowledge sought, that confidentiality of data was assured and that informed consent was obtained by appropriate procedures.
choices among occupational and educational options, in securing employment for which they are trained, and in making the necessary adjustments and advancements on the job. These factors are important for agriculture workers to live a happy, successful and useful life as a family member, worker, and citizen (London, 1973).

To accomplish the objectives of vocational agriculture, teachers commonly use three methods: (1) organized classroom-laboratory instructions, (2) Future Farmer of America (FFA) activities, and (3) supervised occupational experience (SOE). These are integral parts of strong secondary school vocational agriculture instructional programs.

Vocational guidance and SOE share a common goal and three basic common values. The goal they share is an attempt to emphasize education, as preparation for employment, a basic function of agriculture education. The three basic common values they share are: (a) a regard for the importance of work to both individuals in our society and to the society itself; (b) a regard for the need for, and the potential of, experiential learning; and (c) a regard for the need to combine formal education and planned employment experience in the community to expand students' employment opportunities. Christian (1968, p. 1) supported this idea when he stated that the main purpose of SOE is "to develop entry level managerial and operative abilities under real life conditions which will enable him to secure a position in and make satisfactory progress in an agricultural occupation of his choice, whether on or off the farm".
Statement of Problem

Vocational guidance has an important place in vocational agriculture, both historically and presently. Educators and students alike recognize the value of guidance in helping youth and adults to secure and advance in an occupation of their choice. In a national project to identify and validate standards for vocational agriculture programs, several vocational guidance related activities were identified as requisites to a quality vocational agriculture program (Department of Agricultural Education, 1977). Many of these standards emphasized vocational guidance functions, especially the ones pertaining to supervised occupational experience.

Teaching and learning in an experience-based setting assists the teacher in providing certain vocational guidance functions. In Alabama as in most other states, supervised occupational experience (SOE) is a widely used method of instruction in vocational agriculture. Therefore, the central problem of this study was: how important is SOE in helping students with selected vocational guidance activities as perceived by Alabama vocational agriculture teachers?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the importance of SOE in vocational guidance as perceived by Alabama vocational agriculture teachers. The specific objectives were to:

1. Identify personal and situational characteristics of Alabama vocational agriculture teachers.
2. Identify the importance of SOE in helping students with vocational guidance functions.
3. Determine if significant differences existed among teachers on the importance of SOE in vocational guidance when grouped according to selected situational variables.

4. Isolate the vocational guidance functions best provided by the SOE component of vocational agriculture as perceived by Alabama vocational agriculture teachers.

Significance of Study

Many youth are not motivated to exert themselves in school and, therefore, never know how well they could do if they really tried. Excluded from employment, except for occasional part-time and seasonal jobs, urban youth have lacked opportunities to discover what they can do and how they compare with others. The situation for farm youth is not much better in some respects. The farm youth has few chances to see agribusiness related occupations, other than farming, that are carried on by others, or to experience other occupations before making a choice. For many rural youth of minority groups, the opportunity to become aware of and experience the tremendous number of agricultural occupations is even more minute. London (1973, p. 19) wrote:

"Although farm youth generally have learned how to work, they have lacked contact in most cases with non-farm occupations - the kind most of them will eventually work at. Youth from minority groups are often even less well informed about themselves and the world of work. Many of them appear to have lost hope for the future".

So great is the number of nonfarm agricultural occupations and so rapid the changes in them that printed information is available for only
a limited number of them. Furthermore, much of the printed material that is available becomes obsolete and unreliable soon after it is issued. Thus, we, as vocational educators, must use other methods to help students become aware of and gain experience in these occupations.

SOE programs in agriculture help teachers perform those vocational guidance functions that will aid their students in making wise educational and occupational decisions. Helping students to make wise decisions is, indeed, one of the major program objectives for vocational and technical education in agriculture. Information in this study will show the importance of SOE in providing vocational guidance to students as perceived by vocational agriculture teachers in Alabama.

**Guidance activities studied**

The guidance activities included in the study were as follows (procedures followed in selecting these abilities are described in Chapter 3):

1. Identify their occupational interest.
2. Formulate realistic occupational goals.
3. Identify employment opportunities in off-farm agribusiness jobs.
4. Learn what skills they can perform well.
5. Communicate with their parents about occupational goals.
6. Become aware of personal rewards from different jobs.
7. Identify employment opportunities in farming.
8. Stimulate their interest in work.
9. Develop their public relations awareness and skills.
10. Make a personal contribution to the community.
11. Improve their communication skills.
12. Develop independence.
13. Make job oriented decisions.
14. Select and develop additional experience in light of their needs.
15. Become aware of the demand for people in different types of employment.
16. Select courses in high school based on occupational goals.
17. Get along satisfactorily with other people.
18. Recognize the need for education.
20. Make an occupational choice.
21. Recognize barriers which may limit goal accomplishment.
22. Gain financial experience.
23. Develop interviewing skills.
24. Relate subject matter to occupations.
25. Further establish their career goals.
26. Overcome obstacles to achieving their goals.
27. Prepare a resume.
28. Develop a pleasant character.
29. Determine their likes and dislikes.
30. Develop their leadership skills.
31. Identify the type of life they want to live.
32. Analyze job descriptions.
33. Recognize the importance of agricultural occupations.
34. Identify clusters of occupations requiring similar worker traits.
35. Learn educational preparation needed for jobs.
36. Identify sources of occupational information.
37. Enter off-farm agribusiness jobs.
38. Learn from mistakes.
40. Expand their interest in agriculture.
41. Explore different work situations.
42. Become established in farming.
43. Improve skills required for a job.
44. Complete employment applications.
45. Meet other people.
46. Make choice of extra curricular activities to support occupational goals.
47. Recognize contributions made by people in different occupations.
48. Use sources of occupational information in making job choices.
49. Become aware of experiences, exams, etc. required for jobs.
50. Recognize physical demands of different jobs.
51. Use their own ideas.
52. Develop pride in ownership.
53. Accept responsibility.
54. Recognize self-worth.
55. Recognize their personal strength and weakness.
56. Select an occupation to pursue.
57. Gain self-confidence.
58. Recognize different occupations to select from.
59. Recognize qualifications for different jobs.
60. Explore occupational opportunities.

Factors studied

The personal, programmatic, and environmental factors considered in this investigation were as follows (procedures followed in selecting these
factors are included in Chapter 3):

1. Type of school where employed.  
2. Years of agricultural teaching experience.  
3. Number of persons teaching in the vocational agriculture department.  
4. Highest level of education completed.  
5. Enrollment in grades 7-8 and 9-12 for 1978-79.  
6. Population of the town where the school is located or the town closest to the school.  
7. Teacher's enrollment in vocational agriculture while in high school.  
8. Nature of students' SOE.  
9. Background of students enrolled in vocational agriculture.

Definition of Terms

"Vocational guidance" refers to the process of helping people develop and accept an integrated and adequate picture of themselves and of their role in the world of work, to test this concept against reality, and to convert it into a reality, with satisfaction to themselves and benefit to society (Super, 1957).

"Supervised occupational experience (SOE)" refers to all planned agricultural activities of educational value conducted by a vocational agriculture student outside of class for which systematic instruction and supervision are provided (Phipps, 1972).

"Vocational agriculture" refers to the group of related courses or units of subject matter which are organized for carrying on learning experiences concerned with preparation for or up-grading in occupations requiring knowledge and skills in agricultural subjects. The areas of agricultural production, agricultural supplies, agricultural mechanization, agricultural products (processing), ornamental horticulture, forestry, agricultural resources, and the services related thereto, are emphasized in the instruction designed to provide opportunities for pupils to prepare
for or improve their competencies in agricultural occupations. An agricultural occupation may include one or any combination of these functions (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1968).
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of literature relevant to this study. Included are sections on vocational guidance in vocational agriculture, the teacher's role in vocational guidance, and supervised occupational experience (SOE) in guidance.

Vocational Guidance in Vocational Agriculture

There is a need for vocational guidance in vocational agriculture. The need for guidance is greater now than ever before, and it seems that it will continue to increase in direct proportion to the changes that take place in agriculture. The U.S. Office of Education publication, Objectives for Vocational and Technical Education in Agriculture (1966, p. 7), stated that:

"Modern agriculture is broad and complex, involving hundreds of professional and technical occupations which require extensive knowledge and highly developed skills, as well as some which require only relatively simple manipulative abilities. Current trends indicate that agriculture will become more complex and specialized in the future. Thus, individuals aspiring to enter and/or progress in agricultural occupations should acquire knowledge concerning the types of jobs and their characteristics. This would include the number of annual employment opportunities, abilities required, beginning salaries, advancement opportunities, and promise of satisfaction".

In making a tentative occupational choice and beginning to prepare for it, the students of vocational agriculture must assess their individual characteristics and interests in relation to the requirements of the occupation and the employment opportunities it affords. To make
this choice, vocational guidance is a must.

Vocational guidance is an assisting service designed to enable persons to make choices and adjustments that are realistic and desirable for both themselves and society. To provide this essential assistance, the vocational guidance program is broken into five services: (1) an individual inventory service, (2) an occupational information service, (3) a counseling service, (4) a placement service, and (5) a follow-up and evaluation service (London, 1973). These services provided within a school environment help to make effective vocational education programs. Likewise, effective vocational education programs can help provide these services to students enrolled in such programs.

Leaders in vocational agriculture have not always acknowledged the importance of these services. Early practitioners and policy-makers in vocational agriculture failed to consider vocational guidance as the first step in the success of a vocational agriculture program. The failure was evidenced by the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917; this piece of legislation set up a federally aided program of vocational education of less than college grade for farmers, industrial workers, and homemakers, but no provision whatever was made for vocational guidance as an ancillary service to vocational education in public schools (London, 1973).

Except for a few leaders in the vocational guidance movement, no one expressed concern over the omission of vocational guidance from the Smith-Hughes Act. This further emphasized the lack of importance placed on vocational guidance. Dr. Charles Prosser, generally regarded as the father of vocational education in America and principal architect of the Smith-Hughes Act, a few years before his death explained:
"Since there were an abundance of jobs in 1917, and since lack of a marketable skill was generally what prevented a person from securing employment, the answer was simple: teach them a marketable skill and placement would largely take care of itself" (London, 1973, p. 43).

London (1973) further stated that Dr. Prosser had some doubts about the above statement; he felt that it left out entirely the matter of matching individual characteristics with job requirements. Thus, Dr. Prosser was later convinced, as were most leaders in vocational education, that vocational guidance, including placement and follow-up, is essential to a successful program of preparation for work.

Following the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917, the George-Barden Act of 1946 expanded the vocational education program and authorized federal funds for vocational guidance. Likewise, the Employment Act of 1946 had an impact on guidance in vocational agriculture. This act maintained that:

"1. There should be a socially desirable job either in the private or public sector of our economy for every adult willing and able to work, and the nation committed itself to the attainment of this objective.
2. Human beings are our most important single resource and should be fully developed and utilized.
3. Both general and vocational education is an investment in people and therefore is a prime requisite to economic well-being and individual fulfillment.
4. Freedom of occupational choice is a fundamental right of the individual and must be respected.
5. Vocational and professional education must be realistically related to the manpower needs of the country, and the skills which are developed should be fully utilized.
6. Vocational guidance and counseling must function in such a way as to alleviate occupational maladjustment, balance labor supply and demand, and make optimum use of human resources" (London, 1973, p. 49).
Because of this act, counselors and teachers were forced to come to grips with the matter of occupational choice. However, it was not until the 1960's that the vast number of unemployed youth became recognized as a national problem of major concern. Federal policies in the 1960's that directly focused on the schools were stated in the Vocational Education Act of 1963 (London, 1973). President Kennedy, in 1961, had directed the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to assemble a representative Panel of Consultants on Vocational Education. This panel consisted of representatives of business, industry, agriculture, labor, education, and the public. It made a thorough investigation and evaluation of vocational education, including vocational guidance (London, 1973). Its 1962 report, entitled *Education for a Changing World of Work*, revealed that of every ten youngsters then in grade school, three would not complete high school, seven would earn high school diplomas, four would enter college, and only two would finish four years of college. Stated differently, eight out of ten would not complete college. Additionally, the report stated that vocational education was not available in enough schools, was not serving all those who needed it, was not preparing for enough jobs, and was not receiving proper moral and financial support. The report revealed also that occupational information of practical significance and expert vocational guidance should be made available to noncollege bound youth served by vocational education. Most of the specific recommendations for change in vocational education and its ancillary dimensions were incorporated into the Vocational Act of 1963. This Act made provisions to broaden and strengthen the national program of vocational education, including vocational agriculture.
Based on the Vocational Act of 1963, the U.S. Office of Education publication entitled *Objectives for Vocational and Technical Education in Agriculture* (1966), listed six major program objectives for vocational agriculture. These six objectives were:

"1. To develop agricultural competencies needed by individuals engaged in or preparing to engage in production agriculture.
2. To develop agricultural competencies needed by individuals engaged in or preparing to engage in agricultural occupations other than production agriculture.
3. To develop an understanding of and appreciation for career opportunities in agriculture and the preparation needed to enter and progress in agricultural occupations.
4. To develop the ability to secure satisfactory placement and to advance in an agricultural occupation through a program of continuing education.
5. To develop those abilities in human relations which are essential in agriculture occupations.
6. To develop the abilities needed to exercise and follow effective leadership in fulfilling occupational, social, and civic responsibilities" (pp. 5-9).

Two of these objectives and their contributory objectives that related directly to vocational guidance were as follows:

-- "To develop an understanding of and appreciation for career opportunities in agriculture and the preparation needed to enter and progress in agricultural occupations" (#3).

"Foremost among contributory objectives are the abilities to:

a. Understand and appreciate the importance of agriculture to the Nation's economy and its impact upon the daily lives of all citizens;
b. Determine the types and numbers of occupational opportunities in agriculture;
c. Evaluate information concerning agricultural occupations;
d. Study pertinent occupational information in relation to personal characteristics, aptitudes, and interests;
e. Obtain exploratory work experiences in selected occupations under proper supervision;
f. Appreciate the need for pursuing a program of continuing education to keep abreast of and advance in the occupation.

-- To develop the ability to secure satisfactory placement and to advance in an agricultural occupation through a program of continuing education (#4).

Foremost among contributory objectives are the abilities to:

a. Utilize the services of appropriate agencies and organizations in locating and securing satisfactory employment;
b. Analyze opportunities for self-employment;
c. Analyze job opportunities and requirements, and assess personal abilities and interests in terms of these requirements;
d. Apply for employment and participate in employment interviews;
e. Plan and pursue a program of continuing education appropriate to the requirements of the vocation;
f. Make satisfactory progress and advancement in an occupation.

To accomplish these objectives, the Vocational Act of 1963 continued the support of vocational agriculture as defined by the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 and the George Barden Act of 1946. In addition to expanding the mission of vocational agriculture, the Vocational Act of 1963 gave a significant push to work study programs, residential schools, area vocational education programs, and general education as it could be tied to specific needs in vocational education. Further, the Act specifically stated that vocational guidance and counseling were to be provided to students enrolled in vocational courses and those planning to enroll (London, 1973). In an extension of the clientele typically served by vocational education, the 1963 legislation explicitly identified four groups for whom federal funds could be expanded. They included:
(1) persons enrolled in secondary schools, (2) out-of-school youth in need of training for employment, (3) adults seeking to upgrade themselves in their occupations, and (4) for the first time, persons who have academic, socioeconomic, or other handicaps that prevent them from succeeding in the regular vocational education programs (Herr, 1974). Of further significance was the Act's expectation that resources of vocational education and of the state employment services were to be combined in determining labor market needs and in placing vocational education graduates.

Even though the Vocational Education Act was passed in 1963, it did not become operational until two years later. As the provisions of this act were implemented, old vocational agriculture programs were revised, new programs added, vocational guidance assumed a more active and positive role, and enrollment in vocational agriculture increased (Herr, 1974). But not all problems were solved. Fortunately, the Act of 1963 contained a built-in provision for a general periodic review of the program by a high-level group composed of representatives from concerned interests groups. In 1967, a second panel of consultants (after the first established by President Kennedy in 1961) was formed to examine the status of vocational education and in particular the impact of the 1963 Act to that time. The counsel's report, called Vocational Education: The Bridge Between Man and His Work, was issued in 1968. This report stated, among other things, that:

"The need for vocational guidance appears as an urgent and critical problem in vocational education. Although nine out of 10 American high schools provide counseling services, only 50 percent of the high schools provide any form of vocational guidance" (Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1968, p. xxxi).
In a section on limitations of the program, the reports stated that:

"All youth do not receive the benefits of vocational guidance; a commitment is needed among schools to provide vocational guidance as a recognized part of the total education process.

Emphasis upon the vocational aspects of guidance does not begin early enough in the educational structure; such emphasis must be continuous but varying in nature with maturation and interest of students" (Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1968, p. xxxiv).

Included in the summary statements were the following:

"Starting early in the student's formal education he must learn more about work, its dignity, and its relationship to the occupational world. Actual work experiences need to be included as an integral part of the student's educational program.

The subject matter of the school and vocational requirements need to be realigned so that education becomes more meaningful in terms of its occupational potential. This involves a high degree of flexibility and a definite movement toward individualization of instruction.

The hard-core content of vocational education--the part that makes a person employable--must be adjusted to accommodate a wider range of occupational opportunity and larger number of students.

The renaissance in education must develop new relationships between the school and the community at large to the end that education, with its vocational component, reaches into every facet of the community to provide for youth and adults now being served.

Occupational preparation need not and should not be limited to the classroom, to the school shop, or to the laboratory. Many arguments favor training on the job....

Effective occupational preparation is impossible if the school feels that its obligation ends when the student graduates...."
No matter how good the system of initial preparation and the opportunities for upgrading on the job, there will always be need for remedial programs....

At every level from the elementary school through the post-secondary, adult and remedial programs there will be those with special needs as defined by the 1963 Act. For both humanitarian and economic reasons, persons with special needs deserve special help... (Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1968, pp. xxiv-xxv).

After reviewing the Advisory Council's report, Congress enacted many of these recommendations into legislation in the Vocational Education Act Amendments of 1968. The 1968 amendments supported an expanded concept of guidance and counseling to include services which facilitate job choices and job placement (Herr, 1974).

According to London (1973), a state's plan for vocational education under which vocational programs were to operate had to incorporate requirements whereby participating schools shall provide for such vocational guidance and counseling personnel and services as are required to (1) identify and encourage the enrollment of individuals needing vocational education, (2) provide the individuals with the necessary information for realistic vocational planning, (3) assist them while pursuing the plan, (4) aid them in vocational placement, and (5) conduct follow-up procedures to determine the effectiveness of the vocational instruction and the guidance and counseling program.

Law (1969) when outlining the necessities for interrelations between vocational guidance and vocational education spurred by the 1968 amendments, suggested three propositions:
"1. Career guidance and orientation is needed by everyone.
2. Vocational guidance needs a regular place in the school curriculum.
3. There can be no satisfactory program of vocational guidance without vocational education" (p. 28).

Law contended further that,

"if the vocational guidance program were longitudinal, a continuing process, as it has been described in career development theory, there would be an ample opportunity for an individualized program. From a common core of group activity, individual students would move toward the development of occupational knowledge, concept of self, and vocational competence in any variety of ways, largely determined by each person's qualities and drives" (p. 28).

Most youth and many adults need vocational guidance. Choosing an occupation is one of life's greatest decisions. According to London (1973), one's occupation determines where he lives and what he does with a majority of his time. It determines, in large measure, his standard of living and that of his dependents, his social status and prestige in his community, and his friends and associates. Through one's occupation, an individual usually makes his chief contribution to society. Self-realization, happiness in life, and security in old age depend in large part on occupational choice and success.

Research indicates that interesting work is as important as the pay received for work. A 15-year study of the aging revealed that the best predictor of how long a person will live is "satisfaction in work"; the second best predictor is overall happiness. These two measures seem to be more reliable predictors of longevity than a physical examination rating, the use of tobacco, or genetic inheritance (Bennett, 1977).
Benneth (1977) suggested that the process of choosing an occupation includes the following steps: (1) gain knowledge of employment opportunities that exist in today's labor market and, more importantly, trends that indicate favorable and less favorable occupational opportunities of the future; (2) determine one's own personal interests, motivations, aptitudes, skills, and knowledge; and (3) determine what resources are available for further education and training to reach your goals. He further stated that today's world is rapidly changing--automation, computers, instant communication, television--and it is essential that every person prepare to retrain and upgrade their abilities for job changes many times during a lifetime of work.

The need for vocational guidance arises from technological developments, changes in the role of women, unawareness of youth, changes in the educational system, expansion of opportunities for minority groups, and changes in attitudes toward work. Occupations have changed, expanded, and require more extensive preparation. People have left the farms for employment in nonfarm occupations (London, 1973). Developments and changes such as these make vocational guidance a requisite for quality vocational agriculture programs.

**The Teacher's Role in Vocational Guidance**

The effectiveness of vocational guidance depends partially upon the performance of the vocational education teacher. In this section, attention was focused upon the role of vocational agriculture teachers in vocational guidance.
The role of the teacher in guidance is, in reality, extremely complex. Humphrey and Trakler (1954) suggested four basic reasons why the process of helping people solve their vocational problems is complex.

"1. In vocational guidance, the process of assisting an individual in vocational development requires time; it extends from the individual's initial approach to the problem of occupational choice into his entry into, and advancement in a desirable occupation.

2. The process is complex because it involves an individual whose personality is complex. The human personality has many facets. These facets include the individual's abilities, interests, and other personal characteristics. Because these characteristics are unique, the individuals have their own ideas about their vocational aptitudes and interests, their own attitudes toward particular jobs and occupational fields, and their own insights into ways to prepare for and to enter the career of their choice.

3. The process is complex because it is involved with a highly complex and fast-changing world of work. In this world, there are many thousands of jobs that vary in different degrees, in their requirements for entrance, and for success. Information that relates to these jobs must be tailored to the needs and characteristics of the students. This information will help prepare them for entrance into a selected occupation and advance in it thereafter.

4. The process usually entails not only a vocational problem but also educational and personal problems. The individual who is choosing an occupation must consider all of the significant factors that will ultimately affect his/her happiness and success in that situation" (p. 286).

Realizing that helping youths and adults in their vocational development is a complex process, it is essential that the teachers understand their role in the total guidance program.

Cox et al. (1948) emphasized that the role of the teachers in the educative process is a dual one. They manipulate the situations to which the pupils respond, and they act as a guide, philosopher, and friend to their
young companions as they engage in the activities which the situation calls forth. They seek to stimulate interests in connection with various projects and experiences of the curriculum; they endeavor to encourage in every student the desire to find out, to plan, to practice, to enjoy, to evaluate, to create whatever the project calls for or makes promising of richer experience.

Teachers must realize that somewhere in the experience of every youth there must be some interest, some enthusiasm, something that he wants to do that can be promoted in connection with his school life, if teachers are alert enough and resourceful enough. These enthusiasms which have been taught or developed furnish the raw material of guidance (Cox et al., 1948).

The amount and kind of guidance will, of course, vary greatly with different students and under different conditions. Not all students have the same physical needs or resources. Accordingly, the teacher needs to know the students and their background. It becomes a fundamental duty of teachers of agriculture, therefore, to know as much as possible about their students.

According to Peters and Shertzer (1973), "some of the ways in which teachers may create wholesome guidance activities for the students include independent work, pupil motivation, pupil planning, recognizing individual differences, helping children learn to evaluate, presenting challenging material, providing opportunity for social and emotional growth and security, and developing effective parent-teacher relations" (p. 148).

Peters and Shertzer (1973) further stated eight ways that the teachers engage in guidance functions. They were:
"1. By relating to, advising, and counseling students who seek their help
2. By conducting their classes and other student contacts based upon established principles of good human relationships
3. By being attentive and responsive to pupil behaviors that indicate that help is needed
4. By studying and observing pupils; by learning their interests, aptitudes, behavioral patterns, goals, and values and encouraging them in appropriate ways to utilize their potentialities
5. By incorporating career information and resource materials in their subject matter areas and encouraging students to plan career activities
6. By referring pupils with educational, vocational, or personal problems beyond their (the teachers') competence to qualified counselors
7. By encouraging students to utilize counseling services
8. By consulting with counselors about individual students who need help or specialized attention" (p. 148).

An article that appeared in the October, 1979, issue of the Journal of the American Vocational Association (American Vocational Association, 1979) suggested that the teacher's role in guidance might involve the items in the following checklist:

"1. Provide activities that will help students understand themselves in terms of their interests, abilities, values and goals?
2. Help students locate and use sources of occupational information--particularly in those occupations related to the subject matter you teach?
3. Emphasize the importance of planned vs. haphazard career-related activities?
4. Present material on how labor-market information can be used to assist with career planning?
5. Teach steps in the decision-making process?
6. Create a classroom environment where students can make decisions and then accept responsibility for them?
7. Assess your own feelings regarding the preparation of women and minorities in your classroom?
8. Present units of instruction on sex fairness in the world of work?
9. Make every effort to assure that the career development of handicapped students is being enhanced in your classroom?
10. Help your students gain access to role models in the world of work?
11. Design classroom activities that will help students learn how to get along in various kinds of work groups?
12. Design classroom activities that will help students learn how to get along with authority figures?
13. Design classroom activities that will help students interact with the opposite sex and minority group members in work settings?
14. Convey that in choosing an occupation an individual chooses a way of life?
15. Teach the importance of persistence, organization, use of resources, and productivity in the world of work?
16. Develop job seeking skills?
17. Support activities that will help in the job or educational placement of your students?
18. Obtain information on how some of your former students are succeeding in the world of work and modify your teaching based on feedback received?
19. Listen to students when they need you?
20. Listen to parents when they need you?"

Vocational agriculture supervised occupational experience programs provide a means of performing many of these guidance functions.

Byram (1936) summarized a comprehensive listing of vocational guidance activities in which many vocational agriculture teachers engage:

"I. Student information service
1. Obtain information regarding students' home background.
2. Obtain information regarding students' background in farming
3. Have students fill out information form or inventory for vocational agriculture records
4. Assist school staff in gathering and recording information about students
5. Observe and record significant behavior of students
6. Study recorded information to gain better understanding of students

II. Educational and occupational information service
1. Assemble information on agricultural occupations
2. Assemble information on educational programs for preparation to enter agricultural occupations
3. Acquaint students with information about occupations in agriculture and with educational requirements and
opportunities of them
4. Provide instruction for purposes of orientation in agriculture
5. Acquaint students, parents, and others with the objectives and program of vocational agriculture

III. Counseling service
1. Assist students to formulate occupational and educational goals
2. Assist students to make occupational and educational plans
3. Hold conferences with parents in regard to students' occupational and educational plans
4. Advise students in regard to enrollment in vocational agriculture
5. Assist students to broaden their experiences through farming and related experiences in agricultural occupations
6. Use recorded information on students from school guidance file to help them in solving individual problems
7. Refer students to qualified persons and/or agencies for occupational and educational information
8. Refer students to qualified persons for counseling

IV. Placement and follow-up service
1. Gather information regarding local placement opportunities in farming
2. Provide information on students for prospective employers
3. Make information on placement opportunities and job requirements available to students and former students
4. Assist young men to be placed and advance in farming
5. Conduct follow-up studies of former students in agriculture

V. Cooperation with entire staff on school guidance program
1. Cooperate with local school staff in developing or improving the school guidance program
2. Assist staff in giving students and parents information about total school program
3. Cooperate with school staff in evaluation of guidance program

VI. Other activities
1. Assist in orienting students to the high school
2. Use recorded information on students to individualize instruction in agriculture
3. Hold group discussions
4. Assist in preparing students for adjustment from high school to college

VII. Evaluation of guidance activities of the teacher
1. Recall and make notations of evidences of effectiveness of guidance
2. Make evaluations through follow-up visits and individual conferences
3. Make evaluations through survey of former students."
Supervised Occupational Experience and Vocational Guidance

In a broad sense, supervised occupational experience springs directly from the roots of vocational education, which is work. Work is defined as conscious effort, other than that involved in activities whose primary purpose is either coping or relaxation, aimed at producing benefits for oneself and/or others. Work does not necessarily involve pay nor is it necessarily associated with making a living. It is clear that supervised occupational experience (SOE) involves work in its most literal sense.

Some of the underlying goals of vocational guidance are to make work possible, meaningful, and satisfying for each individual. To accomplish this, vocational guidance assumes the mission of nurturing good job skills and attitudes conducive to accomplishment. Vocational guidance involves assisting the student in making and implementing career decisions. Supervised occupational experience is unquestionably an excellent vehicle for accomplishing these goals.

Educators recognize today that individuals have unique styles of learning. Not everyone learns best from books and lectures. Vocational agriculture calls for the use of alternative learning strategies so that education may meet the needs of the largest population. SOE, a means to learn by doing, is an important way to implement this concept. The SOE component of vocational agriculture helps to transcend school walls and exploit the full resources of the community for the benefit of student learning. Learning is the "name of the game" in quality SOE programs. The remainder of this chapter will be built around SOE as it relates to vocational guidance.
Vocational guidance affirms that all people should be given the opportunity to reach full occupational potential. SOE can be the means of introducing students, including the disadvantaged and handicapped, to employment situations which were formerly beyond their scope. Other students whose employment goals were limited by sex stereotyping may test new possibilities through SOE.

Vocational agriculture teachers must be sensitive to the changing needs of the job market and the economy. The continual involvement of the vocational agriculture teacher with employers through students' SOE programs can provide vital feedback which may be essential to enable school programs to become relevant to the needs of the job market. The needs may relate to course material as well as decisions regarding limitation or addition of curricula.

SOE programs are also a means whereby students can develop occupational skills. Williams (1977a), in a study of supervised occupational experiences programs of Iowa vocational agriculture students, found that students with employment SOE programs perceived their SOE to be most important in: (1) developing an appreciation for honest work; (2) establishing and maintaining working relationships with others; (3) developing acceptable personal and work habits; (4) maintaining and using records and reports; (5) using labor, land, money, and other resources in farm operations. Several of these skills have vocational guidance implications.
Phipps (1972) listed the values of SOE as follows:

"1. Provides an opportunity for the development of the abilities needed for proficiency in agriculture.
2. Provides an avenue to satisfactory, progressive establishment in farming or other occupation requiring knowledge and skill in agriculture.
3. Provides opportunities to earn, save, and use money.
4. Provides a desirable type of motivation and develops a boy's or girl's interest in agriculture.
5. Develops a boy's or girl's originality, pride of ownership, initiative, self-confidence, and managerial ability.
6. Provides opportunities for contributing to desirable family living.
7. Develops desirable habits, understandings, appreciations, ideals, abilities, and attitudes through challenging true-to-life situations.
8. Provides opportunities for a boy or a girl to plan work, make budgets, use financial agreements, review information, form judgments, evaluate, make decisions, solve problems, put plans into action, and keep accurate records.
9. Provides an opportunity to grow into farming or other occupation requiring knowledge and skill in agriculture.
10. Provides an opportunity for contributing to the improvement of the home.
11. Develops desirable relationships with parents or employers.
12. Contributes to community improvement.
13. Contributes to desirable relationships among the school, the home, and the community.
15. Develops opportunities for functionalized instruction based on individual needs, interests, and abilities of pupils, thus making the agriculture experience program the core of the instructional program.
16. Provides a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the instruction in agriculture.
17. Develops abilities in cooperation" (p. 203).

One can easily see that these values emerging from SOE are directly related to vocational guidance.

Burdine (1978) mentioned several ways that supervised occupational experience helps students. These were (1) bridging the gap between
school life and the world of work by blending job experience with related educational courses; (2) decreasing unemployment rates in the labor force because they have developed marketable skills and knowledge by relating education occupational interest; (3) giving responsibility, the student should develop occupational competencies in their selected areas of training which will aid in the motivation process; (4) providing a way for students to earn money, thus contributing to their education as consumers; (5) discouraging school dropouts, while encouraging an enriched school curriculum designed to stimulate desirable attitudes toward work; (6) improving personality by becoming aware of their weaknesses during training and working to correct them; and (7) providing an opportunity to receive training with equipment too expensive for the school to obtain.

Rawls (1978), in a study of parental perceptions of vocational agriculture supervised occupational experience programs in Iowa, found that parents perceived SOE to be most important to their sons and daughters in: (1) promoting the acceptance of responsibility, (2) developing self-confidence, (3) developing pride in ownership, (4) developing independence, and (5) providing an opportunity to learn on his/her own. It is interesting to note that all five of these benefits pertain to general human development, a concept in which vocational guidance is rooted.
CHAPTER III. DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the importance of vocational agriculture SOE programs in vocational guidance as perceived by Alabama vocational agriculture teachers. This chapter describes the design of the study, population for the study, sampling procedure, development of instrument, method of data collection, and analysis of the data.

Design

This study was in part descriptive, but primarily a causal comparative type study. Borg and Gall (1976) explained the causal comparative study and its relationships to a descriptive study as follows:

"Aim

The causal-comparative method is aimed at the discovery of possible causes for a behavior pattern by comparing subjects in whom this pattern is present with similar subjects in whom it is absent.

Reason

The causal-comparative method is often used instead of the experimental method to test research hypotheses about cause-and-effect relationships. The reason is that many of the relationships that we wish to study in education and the other behavior sciences do not permit experimental manipulation.

The causal-comparative method can be used to identify possible causes and thus give direction to later experimental studies that are more likely to produce clear-cut results.

Limitation

The limitation of causal-comparative research arises out of the fact that the research worker must start with observed effects and then attempt to discover the antecedents (causes) of these effects. In the process of discovery it is often difficult to determine whether a variable found to be related to the behavior being studied had been a contributing cause or has been a result of the behavior pattern" (pp. 297-299).
Although mainly used to search for possible causes, the causal comparative method can be used for descriptive purposes. Such studies are not aimed primarily at investigating causes, but rather at obtaining a better understanding of the relative characteristics of the groups compared (Borg and Gall, 1976).

The Population

The population for this study consisted of 440 Alabama public school agribusiness teachers. The teachers listed in the 1978-79 Alabama Agribusiness Teachers Directory constituted the population for the study.

Sample

The study was based on data collected from eighty-eight teachers, 20 percent of the population of Alabama agribusiness teachers. Using a table of random numbers, the researcher selected a sample from the population. Eighteen alternate teachers were also selected to be used as replacements in the event that some of the original eighty-eight teachers selected could not participate in the study.

Fourteen of the original eighty-eight teachers elected not to participate. The first fourteen alternate teachers contacted agreed to participate. After analyzing the reasons why the fourteen originally selected teachers were unable to participate in the study, the researcher concluded that there was no reason to believe that the alternates were different from the original sample. Therefore, research findings may be generalized to all agribusiness teachers in Alabama.
Instrumentation

A two-part instrument was developed for this study. Part I of the instrument gathered data on the teachers' perception of the importance of SOE in performing certain guidance functions. Part II of the instrument assessed selected personal and situational variables relating to the agribusiness teachers and their students.

Instrument items for Part I of the questionnaire were identified and compiled from a review of literature. The items were then reviewed by a panel of jurors consisting of the researcher's Program of Study (POS) Committee and other faculty members in the Department of Agricultural Education. This procedure reduced the instrument to 60 guidance items and 10 personal and situational items and identified ways to clarify wording of items and response framework.

A 1 to 99-point scale was used to assess perceived importance of SOE in helping with vocational guidance functions. A rating of 1 represented "no importance" while 99 represented "utmost importance". The 1 to 99 rating scale was used because research indicates that wider scales have more discrimination power than narrower scales (Wolins and Dickinson, 1973). Warren, Klonglan, and Sabri (1969) stated that the 1 to 99 scale is more reliable than a shorter scale. The instrument is presented in the Appendix.

Data Collection

Permission was secured from Alabama's State Supervisor for Agribusiness Education to meet with the sample of teachers during the Alabama FFA Convention. The teachers in the sample were then contacted by letter requesting their cooperation in this study. A self-addressed postcard
with a space for the teacher to indicate his/her willingness to participate in this study was included with the letter. A copy of the letter and the postcard appear in the Appendix.

The researcher met with the eighty-eight teachers in a group setting on June 6, 1979 and administered the instrument for the purpose of collecting data for this study. After reviewing the completed instruments, it was found that seven of the instruments had incomplete or inaccurate data. To rectify this situation, a follow-up phone call was made to each of these respondents to obtain the information necessary to complete or correct the data. Each participant gave the needed information which enabled the researcher to use all eighty-eight of the instruments.

Data Analysis

A coding system was developed, and the data were key punched into 80 column International Business Machine cards by the Computation Center at Iowa State University. Computer subprograms from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) were used to analyze the data (Nie et al., 1975). Specific subprograms used in the study were:

1. FREQUENCIES
2. CROSSTABS
3. ONEWAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

The statistical procedures employed to summarize and analyze data related to the 60 guidance functions were:

1. Mean scores and standard deviations were computed for all of the subgroups and for the total sample for each of the 60 vocational guidance functions. Based upon the mean scores, a rank
was assigned to each of the functions for all subgroups as well as the total sample.

2. Analyses of variance F-values were computed for each of the 60 guidance functions for the purpose of comparing the subgroups. If the F-value was significant at the .05 probability level, the Scheffé Test was used as a post hoc analysis to identify where the differences among the subgroups existed.
CHAPTER IV. FINDINGS

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the importance of SOE in providing certain guidance functions as perceived by Alabama Vocational Agriculture Teachers. The findings of this study are presented in two sections: (1) description of teacher respondents, communities, schools, and students; and (2) analysis of vocational guidance activities.

Description of Teacher Respondents

Respondents in this study were agricultural education teachers who were employed in Alabama schools (grades 7-12) during the 1978-79 school year.

Types of schools where respondents were employed

Data in Table 1 show the number and percentage of respondents who were employed in different types of vocational agriculture departments. In Alabama, teachers of vocational agriculture were employed in one of four different types of programs. These programs are as follows:

1. Junior high schools (grades 7 and 8). These programs focused on career exploration and introduction to vocational agriculture.

2. High schools (grades 9-12). These programs consisted mainly of Vocational Agriculture I, II, III, and IV.

3. Junior and senior high schools (grades 7-12). These programs offered vocational agriculture courses for grades 7 through 12.

4. Area vocational schools (grades 11-12) These schools offered specialized programs in agriculture and other vocational courses.
Table 1. Number and percent of teachers by type of school where employed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of school</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Junior high school</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>73.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior and senior high school</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area vocational school</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 5 (5.7 percent) of the teachers were teaching in junior high schools (grades 7 and 8) only. The majority, 65 (73.9 percent), of the teachers were employed in high schools (grades 9-12), while another 18.2 percent of the teachers were in junior high and high schools combined (grades 7-12). The additional 2.3 percent of the teachers were employed in area vocational schools (grades 11 and 12); these are schools with specialized agriculture programs.

Years teaching experience

The years of vocational agriculture teaching experience by respondents are summarized in Table 2. It was observed that thirty-four percent of the respondents had between 1 and 10 years of teaching experience; thirty-nine percent had between 11 and 20 years of experience; and twenty-seven percent had more than twenty years of teaching experience. The mean years of experience was 14.73, and the standard deviation was 8.18 for the sample.
Table 2. Number and percentage of teachers by years of vocational agriculture teaching experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of teaching experience</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 and over</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of teachers in department

The number of teachers in each vocational agriculture department is reported in Table 3. A majority (63.6 percent) of the respondents were teaching in one-teacher departments, compared to 37.4 percent who were employed in departments with two or more teachers. Only 1.1 percent of the sample had three-teacher departments while 13.6 percent of the respondents were working in four-teacher departments. It was further observed that one teacher (1.1 percent) was working in a five-teacher department, and one (1.1 percent) teacher was working in a six-teacher department. The mean number of teachers in each department was 1.73 with a standard deviation of 0.13.

Educational level of teachers

Participants were asked to report the highest educational level attained in reference to three categories. As shown in Table 4, the
Table 3. Number and percentage of teachers by number of teachers in department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers in department</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>88</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Number and percentage of teachers by highest educational level attained

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational level attained</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.S.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.S.</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>53.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.S. + 30</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>88</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
greatest number of respondents, 47 (53.4 percent), reported having received a Master's degree, while 26 (29.5 percent) respondents reported having attained a Master's degree plus thirty semester hours. The remaining category, Bachelor's of Science, consisted of 15 respondents and represented 17 percent of the participants.

It was interesting to note that 82.9 percent of the teachers had completed education beyond the B.S. degree. Alabama has three universities--Alabama A & M University, Auburn University, and Tuskegee Institute--that offer advanced degrees in agriculture education. Each offers off-campus graduate courses throughout the state. This may help account for the high percentage of teachers with advanced degrees.

**Teachers enrolled in agriculture while in high school**

As can be seen in Table 5, a majority (78.4 percent) of the teachers were enrolled in vocational agriculture classes while in high school. Only 21.6 percent of the teachers in the sample were not enrolled in vocational agriculture classes while in high school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrolled in high school vocational agriculture</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>78.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Population of town

This investigation revealed that more than half (62.5 percent) of the teachers in the sample were employed in towns with populations between 5,001 and 20,000. Twenty (22.7 percent) of the teachers taught in towns where the population was less than 5,000. The remaining 13 teachers (14.8 percent) were employed in school where the town population was over 20,000. These data are shown in Table 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population of town</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 5,000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,001 to 20,000</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,001 and over</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students with farm background

The mean number of students enrolled in vocational agriculture per department was 66.7. Data in Table 7 show that the majority of the teachers had less than 16 students enrolled in their classes with a farm background. Forty-nine (55.7 percent) of the teachers had less than 16 students with a farm background, whereas, 39 (44.3 percent) had more than 15 students with a farm background. The mean number of students with a farm background per department was 23.91.
Table 7. Number and percentage of teachers by number of students with farm background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of students with farm background</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-15</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>55.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 and over</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>44.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students with nonfarm background

As can be seen in Table 8, half of the teachers had less than 40 students with a nonfarm background. Forty-two (47.7 percent) of the teachers had more than 40 students with nonfarm backgrounds. The mean number of students per department without a farm background was 42.79.

Table 8. Number and percentage of teachers by number of students with a nonfarm background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of students with nonfarm background</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 40</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>52.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 40</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students' SOE participation

It was observed that most of the students taught by the teachers in the sample had some type of supervised occupational experience (SOE) program. In the sample of 88 teachers, 76 (83.36 percent) reported that all their students had some type of SOE program. Table 9 summarizes students' participation in different types of SOE programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student participation in different types of SOE</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Production agriculture SOE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some student participation</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No student participation</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm placement SOE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some student participation</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No student participation</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>64.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agribusiness placement SOE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some student participation</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No student participation</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School laboratory SOE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some student participation</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>79.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No student participation</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers reported that their students were involved in a variety of SOE programs. However, it should be noted that only one-third (37.5 percent) of the teachers reported that they had no students with production agriculture SOE programs, and almost two-thirds (64.0 percent)
reported that they had no students with farm placement SOE programs. These data along with the fact that 87.5 percent of the teachers reported that some of their students had agribusiness placement SOE programs may indicate that vocational agriculture instructional programs are emphasizing production agriculture programs less and agribusiness more in response to the background of the students enrolled in vocational agriculture. A large percentage (87.5 percent) of the teachers reported that they had some student participation in agribusiness SOE programs.

Analysis Of Guidance Activities

Analysis of total sample

Table 10 shows the means, standard deviations and F-ratios for guidance activities as perceived by the total sample and subsamples of teachers grouped by level of students taught. The activities are listed in the table in the order that they appear on the questionnaire.

The mean rating for all activities ranged from 59.84 to 92.40. All but two items, "identify employment opportunities in farming" and "become established in farming" had means above 75, indicating that teachers perceived SOE to be of utmost importance in providing vocational guidance.

The ten most important (items with highest means) were: (1) learn from mistakes, (2) build good work habits, (3) improve skills required for a job, (4) gain self-confidence, (5) learn what skill they can perform well, (6) recognize self-worth, (7) gain financial experience, (8) relate subject matter to occupations, (9) overcome obstacles to achieving their goals, and (10) accept responsibility. It is interesting to note that most of these activities are occupationally oriented.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item number</th>
<th>Guidance activity$^a$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Identify their occupational interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Formulate realistic occupational goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Identify employment opportunities in off-farm agribusiness jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Learn what skills they can perform well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Communicate with their parents about occupational goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Become aware of personal rewards from different jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Identify employment opportunities in farming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Stimulate their interest in work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Develop their public relations awareness and skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^a$Guidance activities are listed in the order they appeared on the questionnaire.

$^b$Group 1 is teachers with high school students only, N = 69; Group 2 is teachers with junior high students only and teachers with both junior high and high school students, N = 19.

$^c$Group means differed significantly at the .05 level.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Total sample</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>F-Ratio</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>Mean (S.D.)</td>
<td>Mean (S.D.)</td>
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<td>85.67 (11.31)</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>83.83 (13.57)</td>
<td>81.88 (14.30)</td>
<td>90.89 (07.03)</td>
<td>7.02c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
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<td>80.96 (12.95)</td>
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Table 10. (Continued)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Make a personal contribution to the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Improve their communication skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Develop independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Make job oriented decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Select and develop additional experience in light of their needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Become aware of the demand for people in different types of employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Select courses in high school based on occupational goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Get along satisfactory with other people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Recognize the need for education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Build good work habits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Make an occupational choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Recognize barriers which may limit goal accomplishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Gain financial experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Mean (S.D.)</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Develop interviewing skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Relate subject matter to occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Further establish their career goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Overcome obstacles to achieving their goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Prepare a resume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Develop a pleasant character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Determine their likes and dislikes</td>
</tr>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Develop their leadership skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Identify the type of life they want to live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Analyze job descriptions</td>
</tr>
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<td>Recognize the importance of agriculture occupations</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>Identify clusters of occupations requiring similar worker traits</td>
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<td>Learn educational preparation needs for jobs</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Identify sources of occupational information</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>Enter of Enter off-farm agribusiness jobs</td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Learn from mistakes</td>
</tr>
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<td>39</td>
<td>Makes post-secondary educational plans</td>
</tr>
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<td>Expand their interest in agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Explore different work situations</td>
</tr>
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<td>42</td>
<td>Become established in farming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Improve skills required for a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Complete employment applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Meet other people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Make choice of extra curricular activities to support occupational goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Recognize contributions made by people in different occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Use sources of occupational information in making job choices</td>
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<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Become aware of experiences, exams, etc. required for jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Recognize physical demands of different jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Use their own ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Develop pride in ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Accept responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Recognize self-worth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Recognize their personal strength and weakness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Select an occupation to pursue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Gain self-confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Recognize different occupations to select from</td>
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<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>Recognize qualifications for different jobs</td>
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<td>Explore occupational opportunities</td>
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</table>
The ten least important activities were: (1) become established in farming, (2) identify employment in farming, (3) use sources of occupational information in making job choices, (4) communicate with parents about their occupational goals, (5) further establish their career goals, (6) identify the type of life they want to live, (7) recognize contributions made by people in other occupations, (8) analyze job descriptions, (9) identify sources of occupational information, and (10) make post-secondary educational plans. It should be noted that the lowest rated activities were related to employment and self-employment in farming. The fact that a majority of the students of teacher respondents did not have a farm background and were not participating in farm-oriented SOE programs may help account for these low ratings by teachers.

**Analysis by grade level taught by teachers**

One-way analysis of variance was used to test for significance differences in responses of subgroups of teachers. The means, standard deviations, and F-ratios for the 60 guidance activities with teachers grouped according to grade level of students taught are reported in Table 10. There were significant differences beyond $P = .05$ among the two groups of teachers on the perceived importance of SOE in vocational guidance for 9 of the 60 guidance activities. For 8 of the 9 functions where significant differences were found; the means were significantly higher for teachers with students in grades 7-8 than for teachers with students in grades 9-12 only. These abilities were: (1) become aware of personal rewards from different jobs, (2) identify employment opportunities in farming, (3) develop a pleasant character, (4) develop their
leadership skills, (5) identify the type of life they want to live, (6) recognize the importance of agriculture occupations, (7) become established in farming, and (8) use sources of occupational information in making job choices. It was interesting to note that all eight of these guidance functions were highly related to career exploration and self-appraisal. These are vocational guidance areas that are highly emphasized when working with seventh and eighth grade vocational agriculture students. The seventh and eighth grade vocational agriculture courses, in Alabama, were designed primarily for career exploration and as an introduction to vocational agriculture.

The ninth guidance function where a significant difference was observed in the means was "overcome obstacles to achieving their goals". This variable was rated significantly higher by teachers with students in grades 9-12 only than for teachers with students in grades 7-8.

The ten guidance activities with the highest means for the teachers with students in grades 7-8 were: (1) learn what skills they can perform well; (2) make a personal contribution to the community; (3) build good work habits; (4) gain financial experience; (5) relate subject matter to occupations; (6) overcome obstacles to achieving their goals; (7) learn from mistakes; (8) improve skills required for a job; (9) recognize self-worth; and (10) gain self-confidence.

The ten guidance activities with the lowest means for the teachers with students in grades 7-8 were: (1) communicate with their parents about occupational goals, (2) identify employment opportunities in farming, (3) identify the type of life they want to live, (4) identify sources of occupational information, (5) make post-secondary educational plans,
(6) develop their leadership skills, (7) explore different work situations, (8) become established in farming, (9) recognize contributions made by people in different occupations, and (10) use sources of occupational information in making job choices.

The ten guidance activities with the highest means for the teachers with students in grades 9-12 were (1) identify their occupational interest, (2) learn what skills they can perform well, (3) become aware of personal rewards from different jobs, (4) build good work habits, (5) make an occupational choice, (6) learn from mistakes, (7) improve skills required for a job, (8) recognize self-worth, (9) develop pride in ownership, and (10) gain self-confidence.

The ten guidance activities with the lowest means for the teachers with students in grades 9-12 were (1) formulate realistic occupational interest, (2) develop their public relations awareness and skills, (3) improve their communication skills, (4) prepare resume, (5) become established in farming, (6) complete employment applications, (7) recognize contributions made by people in different occupations, (8) become aware of experiences, exams, etc. required for jobs, (9) recognize physical demands of different jobs, and (10) overcome obstacles to achieving their goals.

**Analysis by educational level of teachers**

The one-way analysis of variance was used to test for significant differences among teachers with different levels of education. Significant differences in means were observed for only five of the sixty vocational guidance functions. These five variables were as follows:
(1) become aware of personal rewards from different jobs, (2) recognize barriers which may limit goal accomplishment, (3) develop their leadership skills, (4) use sources of occupational information in making job choices, and (5) recognize different occupations to select from.

Since more than two groups--B.S., M.S., and M.S.+30--were included in the analysis, the Scheffe Test was used to identify significant differences between all the possible pairs of group means. The mean for teachers with an M.S. degree was significantly higher than for teachers with a B.S. degree for the following variables: (1) become aware of personal rewards from different jobs and (2) recognize barriers which may limit goal accomplishment. For the variable "develop their leadership skills," the mean for teachers with an M.S.+30 semester hours was significantly higher than for teachers with an M.S. degree. The Scheffe Test failed to identify significant difference in any two means at the .05 level for the variable "use sources of occupational information in making job choices." The mean for the variable "recognize different occupations to select from" was significantly higher for teachers with an M.S. degree plus 30 semester hours than for teachers with a B.S. degree.

All of the mean ratings for the three groups on the importance of SOE in vocational guidance functions were above the midpoint on a ninety-nine point scale. There were similarities among the three groups in the guidance activities with the highest means. The ten abilities rated the highest by the teachers with a B.S. degree as their highest level of education were (1) identify their occupational interest, (2) make job oriented decisions, (3) build good work habits, (4) make an occupational
choice, (5) gain financial experience, (6) relate subject matter to occupations, (7) further establish their career goals, (8) overcome obstacles to achieving their goals, (9) learn from mistakes, and (10) improve skills required for a job.

The ten guidance activities with the highest means for the teachers with a Master's degree as their highest level of education were (1) learn what skills they can perform well, (2) build good work habits, (3) recognize barriers which may limit goal accomplishment, (4) gain financial experience, (5) relate subject matter to occupations, (6) overcome obstacles to achieving their goals, (7) learn from mistakes, (8) improve skills required for a job, (9) recognize self-worth, and (10) gain self-confidence.

The ten activities receiving the highest ratings by teachers with a Master's degree plus 30 semester hours were (1) identify their occupational interest, (2) learn what skills they can perform well, (3) build good work habits, (4) relate subject matter to occupations, (5) learn from mistakes, (6) improve skills required for a job, (7) accept responsibility, (8) recognize self-worth, (9) recognize their personal strength and weakness, and (10) explore occupational opportunities.

**Analysis by teacher enrollment in vocational agriculture while in high school**

Only one variable was found to have a significant F-value at the .05 level when the one-way analysis of variance was run with teachers grouped according to whether or not they were enrolled in vocational agriculture while in high school. The one variable with a significant F-ratio was "expand their interest in agriculture." Teachers who were
enrolled in vocational agriculture while in high school rated this variable significantly higher than teachers who were not enrolled in vocational agriculture while in high school.

The ten guidance activities with the highest means for teachers who were enrolled in vocational agriculture while in high school were (1) learn what skills they can perform well, (2) build good work habits, (3) gain financial experience, (4) relate subject matter to occupations, (5) overcome obstacles to achieving their goals, (6) learn from mistakes, (7) improve skills required for a job, (8) accept responsibility, (9) recognize self-worth, and (10) gain self-confidence.

Teachers who were not enrolled in vocational agriculture while in high school rated the following the highest: (1) learn what skills they can perform well, (2) build good work habits, (3) recognize barriers which may limit goal accomplishment, (4) gain financial experience, (5) enter off-farm agribusiness jobs, (6) learn from mistakes, (7) improve skills required for a job, (8) accept responsibility, (9) recognize self-worth, and (10) gain self-confidence.

Analysis by population of town

When teachers were subdivided according to population of town, the one-way analysis of variance revealed that only five of the sixty vocational guidance activities had means that differed at the .05 level. Those five activities were (1) relate subject matter to occupation, (2) overcome obstacles to achieving their goals, (3) develop their leadership skills, (4) identify the type of life they want to live, and (5) become established in farming.
Since more than two population groups were included in the analysis, the Scheffe Test was used to identify significant differences between all the possible pairs of group means. The means for teachers employed in schools with a town population of less than 5,000 were significantly higher than for teachers employed in schools where the town population was between 5,001 and 20,000 for the following guidance functions: (1) develop their leadership skills, (2) identify the type of life they want to live, and (3) become established in farming. For the variable "overcome obstacles to achieving their goals," it was found that the mean for teachers employed in schools where the town population was between 5,001 and 20,000 was significantly higher than for teachers employed in schools where the town population was less than 5,000. The test further revealed that, for the variable "relate subject matter to occupation," no two groups were significantly different at the .05 level.

The group of teachers who were employed in towns with a population of less than 5,000 placed the highest ratings of importance of SOE in helping student perform the following guidance activities: (1) identify their occupational interest, (2) formulate realistic occupational goals, (3) learn what skills they can perform well, (4) build good work habits, (5) make an occupational choice, (6) determine their likes and dislikes, (7) learn from mistakes, (8) improve skills required for a job, (9) develop pride in ownership, and (10) gain self-confidence.

The ten guidance activities receiving the highest means for teachers employed in towns where the population was between 5,001 and 20,000 were (1) learn what skills they can perform well, (2) build good work habits, (3) gain financial experience, (4) relate subject matter to occupations,
overcome obstacles to achieving their goals, (6) enter off-farm agri-
business jobs, (7) learn from mistakes, (8) improve skills required for
a job, (9) recognize self-worth, and (10) gain self-confidence.

The ten guidance activities receiving the highest means for teachers
employed in towns where the population was above 20,000 were (1) learn
what skills they can perform well, (2) stimulate their interest in work,
(3) build good work habits, (4) gain financial experience, (5) learn
from mistakes, (6) improve skills required for a job, (7) accept respon-
sibility, (8) recognize self-worth, (9) recognize their personal strength
and weakness, and (10) gain self-confidence.

Analysis by school enrollment in grades 9-12

When teachers were grouped according to school enrollment in grades
9-12, the one-way analysis of variance produced F-values significant at
the .05 level for eight of the sixty guidance activities. These eight
variables were (1) learn what skills they can perform well, (2) stimulate
their interest in work, (3) develop their public awareness and skills,
(4) make a personal contribution to the community, (5) recognize barriers
which may limit their goal accomplishment, (6) overcome obstacles to
achieving their goals, (7) prepare a resume, and (8) learn from mistakes.

Since more than two groups were included in the analysis, the Scheffe
Test was used to identify significant difference between all the possible
pairs of group means. Teachers in schools with an enrollment of less
than 500 rated the following six variables significantly higher than
teachers in schools with enrollment above 500: (1) learn what skills
they can perform well, (2) stimulate their interest in work, (3) develop
their public awareness and skills, (4) make a personal contribution to the community, (5) recognize barriers which may limit their goal accomplishment, and (6) learn from mistakes.

The scheffe Test further revealed that teachers in schools with an enrollment of less than 250 rated the following two variables significantly higher than teachers in schools with enrollment above 500: (1) overcome obstacles to achieving their goals and (2) prepare a resume.

The ten activities rated the highest by teachers in schools with enrollment of less than 250 were (1) learn what skills they can perform well, (2) build good work habits, (3) recognize barriers which may limit goal accomplishment, (4) relate subject matter to occupations, (5) overcome obstacles to achieving their goals, (6) enter off-farm agribusiness jobs, (7) learn from mistakes, (8) improve skills required for a job, (9) recognize self-worth, and (10) gain self-confidence.

The ten highest means observed for teachers in schools with enrollment between 251 and 500 were for the following activities: (1) learn what skills they can perform well, (2) make a personal contribution to the community, (3) get along satisfactorily with other people, (4) gain financial experience, (5) relate subject matter to occupations, (6) overcome obstacles to achieving their goals, (7) learn from mistakes, (8) improve skills required for a job, (9) recognize self-worth, and (10) gain self-confidence.

The group of teachers in schools with enrollment above 500 placed the highest ratings for the importance of SOE in vocational guidance on the following: (1) get along satisfactory with other people, (2) build good work habits, (3) gain financial experience, (4) relate subject
matter to occupations, (5) improve skills required for a job, (6) become aware of experiences, exams, etc. required for jobs, (7) develop pride in ownership, (8) accept responsibility, (9) recognize self-worth, and (10) gain self-confidence.
CHAPTER V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study was designed to identify personal and situational characteristics of Alabama vocational agriculture teachers, to identify the importance of SOE in helping students with vocational guidance functions, to determine if significant differences existed among teachers on the importance of SOE in vocational guidance when grouped according to selected situational variables, and to isolate the vocational guidance functions best provided by the SOE component of vocational agriculture as perceived by Alabama vocational agriculture teachers.

An instrument consisting of 60 guidance activities and 10 items relating to the characteristics of the teacher, school, and community was developed. This instrument was used later to collect data for this study.

Data were collected from eighty-eight agribusiness teachers representing a population of 440 agribusiness teachers in Alabama. The sample of teachers made up 20 percent of the total population. Data were collected during the Alabama FFA convention. The convention was held in Montgomery, Alabama, on June 6, 1979.

The statistical procedure used in analyzing the data consisted of analysis of variance, crosstabulations, Scheffé Test, and frequencies.

Conclusions

A summary of the findings regarding characteristics of the teacher-respondents produced the following profile of Alabama vocational agriculture teachers:
-- mean number of years taught was 14.7 years.
-- mean number of teachers per department was 1.73.
-- 82.9 percent had an M.S. or higher level of education.
-- 78.4 percent were enrolled in vocational agriculture while in high school.
-- 8.7 percent were employed in junior high schools.
-- 73.9 percent were employed in junior and senior high schools combined.
-- 5.7 percent were employed in area vocational schools.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that many of the teachers are making a career of vocational agriculture teaching. This is evidenced by the mean number of years teaching and the number of teachers with an M.S. or higher level of education.

It is interesting to note that Alabama has three institutions in the state that offer advanced degrees in agribusiness education, each of these institutions offer off-campus courses throughout the state. This may help explain the high percentage of teachers with an advanced degree.

Another conclusion that could be drawn is that most of the agricultural instruction is delivered through high schools, a level of education where many of the students should be preparing for a vocation. SOE is an educational method designed to span a four-year period and to help students develop the occupational skills they will need to enter and advance in an agricultural occupation. To accomplish such goals,
vocational guidance activities must be conducted as an integral part of instruction in agriculture.

The following summarize the findings pertaining to the enrollment in Alabama vocational agriculture departments:

a. The mean number of students enrolled per teacher of vocational agriculture was 66.7.

b. The mean number of students enrolled with a farm background was 23.91.

c. The mean number of students per teacher without a farm background was 42.79.

The student-teacher ratio is slightly above the 60 to 1 student-teacher ratio that was recommended in the Standard for Quality Vocational Programs in Agricultural/Agribusiness Education (Department of Agricultural Education, 1977) as developed by agricultural educators across the nation.

The low percentage of students with a farm background helps to explain why farm and farm placement related guidance activities received lower rating by the agriculture teachers than activities relating to agribusiness areas. Likewise, the low percentage of students with farm backgrounds can help explain why, in Alabama, the title "vocational agriculture education" was changed to agribusiness education. This title seems to better represent the type of emphasis that is being focused in the instructional programs.

Findings regarding the SOE programs of students enrolled in Alabama agribusiness education programs follow:
1. Eighty-three percent of the teachers had all of their students placed in some type of SOE.

2. Thirty-eight percent of the teachers had no students with production agriculture SOE programs.

3. Sixty-four percent of the teachers had no students with farm placement SOE programs.

4. Eighty-seven percent of the teachers had some student participation in agribusiness SOE programs.

5. Seventy-nine percent of the teachers had some student participation in school laboratory SOE programs.

These findings also emphasize the trend toward agribusiness type activities. From the findings, we can conclude that the majority of student SOE programs are agribusiness related, and that participation in production agriculture and farm placement SOE programs is minimal.

It was also interesting to note that more than three-fourths of the teachers had some students with school laboratory SOE programs. School laboratory type SOE programs are important for developing skills necessary for employment in most agribusinesses.

Findings regarding importance of SOE in vocational guidance are summarized as follows:

1. The mean rating for all activities ranged from 59.84 to 92.40. All but two activities, "identify employment opportunities in farming" and "become established in farming," had means above 75, indicating that teachers perceived SOE to be of utmost importance in providing vocational guidance activities.
2. Significant differences were observed in means between teachers with grades 7-8 and teachers with grades 9-12 on the importance of SOE in performing 9 of the 60 guidance functions. The means were significantly higher for teachers with students in grades 7-8 than for teachers with students in grades 9-12 for eight of the nine abilities.

3. Significant differences were observed among mean scores for teachers with different levels of education on the importance of SOE in providing 5 of the 60 guidance activities.

4. Significant differences were observed between means for teachers who were enrolled in vocational agriculture while in high school and teachers who were not enrolled in vocational agriculture while in high school on the importance of SOE in performing only one of the 60 guidance activities studied.

5. Significant differences were observed in means for teachers when grouped according to school enrollment in grades 9-12 for eight of the 60 guidance activities.

6. Perceptions of teachers when subdivided according to population of town were significantly different for four of the 60 guidance activities.

These findings lead to the conclusion that Alabama agribusiness education teachers perceive SOE to be important in vocational guidance. Even when teacher responses were analyzed according to grades taught and other teacher and situational variables, only a few significant differences were observed. This means that the agriculture teacher, parents, and employers who work closely with student SOE programs play important
roles in the vocational guidance process.

Additionally, these findings support research studies that were done at Iowa State University by Williams (1977b) and Rawls (1978). The two research studies identified SOE as being important in performing many of the guidance activities being considered in this study. This study also supports the values of SOE as presented by Phipps (1972) and the ways that SOE can help students as presented by Burdine (1978).

Finally, the study also confirmed the importance of the suggested guidance activities for agriculture teachers by Byram (1959) and Peters and Shertzer (1973).

Recommendations

The following recommendations, based on these findings, warrant consideration by those responsible for the administration, supervision, and operation of agribusiness education programs in Alabama:

1. The nonfarm background of students and student preference for agribusiness and school laboratory SOE programs implies a continued need for emphasis on agribusiness occupations.

2. Preservice and inservice teacher education programs should emphasize SOE as an educational method and the role of the teacher in providing vocational guidance.

3. Agribusiness education teachers should use SOE visits as an opportunity to provide vocational guidance on an individualized basis.
4. The student-teacher ratio should be reduced to provide optimum instruction in agribusiness education and to develop cooperative agribusiness SOE programs.

5. Agribusiness teachers should have a systematic way of guiding beginning students to select and plan individual SOE programs.

6. The teacher should work with parents and employees to help them recognize the importance of their responsibilities in the SOE program.

7. The extent to which students SOE coincide with their later occupations should be investigated.

8. Further research is needed to identify the variables that stimulate or inhibit teachers, students, and employers to participate in SOE programs.

9. The students' perception of the role SOE has in helping them with guidance activities should be studied.
REFERENCES


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Sayer, David Ernest. 1972. Differences in vocational maturity and selected behavioral tendencies between part-time cooperative education participants and nonparticipants in selected Texas secondary schools. Ph.D. Thesis. Texas A & M University, College Station, Texas. (Dissertation Abstract International 33:4147A)


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Finally, I appreciate especially my wife, Jewell, because of her encouragement, patience, understanding, and typing.
APPENDIX
Mr. Agribusiness Instructor
__________________________, Alabama

Dear Mr. ____________________:

I am a former Agriculture Instructor at Maplesville High School, Maplesville, AL. Since leaving Maplesville I have been enrolled at Iowa State University working toward a Ph.D. in Agricultural Education. I am in the process of conducting a research survey to collect data to be used in my doctoral dissertation. My research will focus on the Guidance functions carried out through Vocational Agriculture SOE programs. This letter is soliciting your help in conducting this study. Your name was randomly selected from the Alabama Directory for Agribusiness Teachers. The information furnished will be kept strictly confidential.

Dr. Prince Preyer and I would like to meet with you during the State FFA convention at 7:30 a.m. on June 6, 1979. It will not take more than 30 minutes of your time to fill out the survey instrument.

Mr. Hollis, State Supervisor for Agribusiness Education, has given permission to use the Civic Center where the convention will be held. Therefore, we can meet in the main lobby at which time we will go to the room that will be assigned to us. I will be present to assist with any questions you may have concerning the instrument.

Please check the appropriate blank on the enclosed postage card indicating your decision to participate. Please return the card regardless of your decision about participating in the study.

To express my appreciation to you for taking time from your busy schedule to participate, I am giving you a free chance to win an electronic pocket calculator. Returning the card entitles you to a chance to win this calculator. We will have the drawing immediately following the completion of all instruments. You must be present to win.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for participating. If you have questions concerning your participation, you may contact Dr. Preyer at Alabama A & M or me at 515-292-2302 (Home) 515-294-8607 (Office)

I am sincerely,

Willie Cheatham

Willie Cheatham
FROM

__________________________

__________________________

I will participate on June 6, 1979

I can not participate on June 6, 1979

Willie J. Cheatham
1449 Hawthorn Ct.
Ames, Iowa 50010
IMPORTANCE OF SOE IN VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE
AS PERCEIVED BY ALABAMA VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS

PART I

DIRECTIONS: Please indicate your perception of the degree to which vocational agriculture supervised occupational experience (SOE) programs help students. If you feel that SOE is of utmost importance in helping students in the way indicated, write "99" on the line in front of the item. If you feel that SOE is of no importance, write "1" on the line. Use any number between 1 and 99 to indicate how important you perceive SOE to be in helping students. Please respond to all items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance of SOE in helping students to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. identify their occupational interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. formulate realistic occupational goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. identify employment opportunities in off-farm agribusiness jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. learn what skills they can perform well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. communicate with their parents about occupational goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. become aware of personal rewards from different jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. identify employment opportunities in farming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. stimulate their interest in work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. develop their public relations awareness and skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. make a personal contribution to the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. improve their communication skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. develop independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. make job oriented decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. select and develop additional experience in light of their needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. become aware of the demand for people in different types of employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. select courses in high school based on occupational goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. get along satisfactory with other people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Importance of SOE in helping students to:

18. recognize the need for education
19. build good work habits
20. make an occupational choice
21. recognize barriers which may limit goal accomplishment
22. gain financial experience
23. develop interviewing skills
24. relate subject matter to occupations
25. further establish their career goals
26. overcome obstacles to achieving their goals
27. prepare a resume
28. develop a pleasant character
29. determine their likes and dislikes
30. develop their leadership skills
31. identify the type of life they want to live
32. analyze job descriptions
33. recognize the importance of agriculture occupations
34. identify clusters of occupations requiring similar worker traits
35. learn educational preparation needed for jobs
36. identify sources of occupational information
37. enter off-farm agribusiness jobs
38. learn from mistakes
39. makes post-secondary educational plans
40. expand their interest in agriculture
41. explore different work situations
42. become established in farming
43. improve skills required for a job
44. complete employment applications
45. meet other people
46. make choice of extra curricular activities to support occupational goals
47. recognize contributions made by people in different occupations
48. use sources of occupational information in making job choices
Importance of SOE in helping students to:

49. become aware of experiences, exams, etc. required for jobs
50. recognize physical demands of different jobs
51. use their own ideas
52. develop pride in ownership
53. accept responsibility
54. recognize self-worth
55. recognize their personal strength and weakness
56. select an occupation to pursue
57. gain self confidence
58. recognize different occupations to select from
59. recognize qualifications for different jobs
60. explore occupational opportunities

PART II

DIRECTIONS: Please respond by printing the requested information in the blanks or by checking the alternative response that best describes your situation.

1. NAME__________________________________________
   (Last) (First) (Middle)

2. SCHOOL CURRENTLY EMPLOYED BY:______________________________

3. YEARS OF AGRICULTURAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE IN:
   PRESENT POSITION:_______
   JR. HIGH:_______
   HIGH SCHOOL:_______
   JR. & SENIOR HIGH:_______
   AREA VOCATIONAL SCHOOL:_______
4. Number of persons teaching in your vocational agriculture department is __________.

5. Highest level of education that you have completed is:
   a. ( ) B. S. degree
   b. ( ) M. S. degree
   c. ( ) M. S. + 30 or more quarter hours (20 or more semester hours)
   d. ( ) others, please specify ________________________.

6. What is the total enrollment in your school (1978-79)?
   grade 7-8 _________
   grade 9-12 _________

7. What is the population of the town where your school is located or the town closest to your school?
   ______________________

8. Were you enrolled in Vocational Agriculture while in high school?
   ___yes
   ___no

9. How many students do you have with the following types of SOE:
   _______ on-farm placement
   _______ agribusiness
   _______ production agriculture
   _______ school lab (greenhouse, etc.)
   _______ no SOE program

10. How many of your students have a:
    _______ farm background
        _______ non-farm background