8-1-1973

A Survey of Office Education Students in North Dakota to Determine Effectiveness of Lester Hill Office Simulation in Terms of Job Success

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A SURVEY OF OFFICE EDUCATION STUDENTS IN NORTH DAKOTA TO DETERMINE EFFECTIVENESS OF LESTER HILL OFFICE SIMULATION IN TERMS OF JOB SUCCESS

by
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Bachelor of Science, University of North Dakota, 1973

An Independent Study
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
of the
University of North Dakota
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Science

Grand Forks, North Dakota

August
1973

Permission

Title A Survey of Office Education Students in North Dakota to Determine Effectiveness of Lester Hill Office Simulation in Terms of Job Success

Department Business and Vocational Education

Degree Master of Science

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Office education is that area of business education which endeavors to educate students for work in a business office. Education of this nature must be as vocationally accurate as possible since this may be a way of life for those people enrolled in this program.

In striving to develop classroom experiences that lend themselves to providing pertinent office education instruction, numerous teachers have employed the instructional technique of office simulation. When employing this technique, the teacher tries to provide learning experiences that are meaningful and realistic in relation to work that would have to be completed in a typical business office. Office simulation, then, attempts to create a business office atmosphere with business-type situations as the basis for learning.

Office simulations may take several forms. One form simulation may take is that of a position simulation; the other popular form is that of a full-scale simulation.

Position simulation recreates one particular office job. In the classroom, the student is asked to carry out tasks that would normally be carried out by a person if he

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to determine whether students received experiences from office simulation that resulted in job success.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of Lester Hill Office Simulation. To achieve this purpose, a questionnaire-opinionnaire was administered to North Dakota students who had worked on the Lester Hill Office Simulation to determine:

1. The length of time the student spent working in the simulation.
2. The method by which beginning work positions were decided.
3. The number and types of work positions held in the office.
4. The method by which new positions were decided.
5. Whether the work completed seemed realistic.
6. Whether the work done in the simulation aided in the completion of present office tasks if the student was currently working.
7. Whether the students liked working on this type of project and their reasons.
8. Whether the students preferred to work on simulation projects or traditional classroom projects

indicate whether experiences gained through simulation help them make adjustments to the job and help them in a number of related situations.

Delimitations

The following were considered delimitations of the study:

1. The students who were part of the study were graduates of North Dakota high schools.
2. The students who were part of the study had all worked on the Lester Hill Office Simulation.

Program of the 70's," Banks (1971) stated that during the 70's there will be more individualized instruction, and the work students complete in school will be more relevant to the jobs they will enter upon graduation.

Changes in curriculum and modes of study will take place, and these changes will enable the student to have a greater working knowledge of the world of work.

Kemp (1970) said, in an article dealing with vocational education, that educators have finally realized that students do not all learn in the same manner or at the same rate. At times, people who really desire to learn experience little or no success at all in trying to learn in the traditional classroom.

In using the simulation technique, the opportunities for one person to learn one thing while several other people are learning different things will present themselves more frequently and can be taken advantage of more frequently.

Teacher Conclusions on Simulation

Nichols (1973) in an article on simulation in basic business pointed out that a student must be given thorough background information and learning experiences prior to starting the simulation in order to provide him with a number of reference-type learning experiences from which he can effectively draw information to complete his assigned tasks. It is definitely unfair to expect a student to successfully

Practice: A Wish Come True," that the motivational aspect of a simulation has tremendous possibilities. It provides something different and interesting for the student to do. Often it proves to be an activity that creates, generates, and maintains student enthusiasm over an extended period of time. For many students, this may be one of the few times they have had an opportunity to experience a sense of worthwhile accomplishment. Since simulation is learning on an individual basis much of the time, once a person has been helped with a difficult area, he may also develop some self-confidence and be able to solve the next difficult situation by himself.

As suggested by Archer (1969) in "Get Started On Simulated Experience," it is possible and advisable to enrich and add to a simulation with related classroom material. It can become a stronger and even greater individual learning experience if the supervisor of the simulation can provide input situations that will aid in the education of a person who might experience difficulty on the job had he not had these experiences. An outside assignment relating to a particular phase of work may be advisable for a person from time to time. This could be termed "in-service training" and integrated into the office work.

The big change in a classroom using simulation opposed to one of traditional setting, as pointed out by Krevolin 1972) in "Bringing Reality Into The Classroom," is that the workflow does not go from teacher to student and back to the

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the Lester Hill Office Simulation from the point of view of students.

Since the students' viewpoint on effectiveness of business office simulation had not been stated definitely one way or the other, the writer felt that a survey should be sent to North Dakota students who had taken part in Lester Hill Office Simulation during the 1971-1972 school year.

Permission was received from the writer's major advisor to proceed with a study of this nature.

Related material was secured and examined to determine reactions of different people to the subject of simulation.

A letter was sent to the State Supervisor of Office Education for the state of North Dakota to obtain a 1971-1972 Directory of Office Education Instructors. From this directory, a mailing list of sixty-four office education instructors was constructed.

A covering letter was then drafted. This letter was to be sent to those instructors to determine whether they had used the Lester Hill Office Simulation during the 1971-

These names came from the six high schools in the state that had used Lester Hill Office Simulation in the office education classroom.

The results of this survey were tabulated, analyzed, and presented in the following chapters.

in order to form an accurate opinion.

Table 2 indicates that thirty-four percent of the respondents had the opportunity to apply for the position in which they had the most interest. However, 57.6 percent of the respondents were assigned positions by the instructor.

TABLE 1 (Question #2)

LENGTH OF TIME STUDENTS WORKED ON LESTER HILL OFFICE SIMULATION

Number of Students	Number of Weeks Students Worked				
	4-6	9-12	18	24-36	No Comment
57	2	13	24	6	2

TABLE 2 (Question #3)

HOW STUDENTS OBTAINED THEIR INITIAL POSITIONS IN THE SIMULATION

Number of Students	Methods of Obtaining Positions		
	Applied	Teacher Assigned	Other
47	16	27	4

Table 3, page 16, points out that 57.4 percent of the respondents worked in three or more of the six departments of the simulation.

TABLE 5

METHODS OF OBTAINING NEW POSITIONS

Number of Students	Applied	Means of Obtaining Positions: Assigned	Drew From Hat	Rotated Regularly	No Comment
47	14	27	2	3	1

Table 6, page 18, indicates that 42 of the 47 respondents, or 89.3 percent, believed the work completed was business-like in nature while four, or 8.5 percent, thought the work was not particularly business-like. One respondent made no comment.

Responses to questions seven and eight on the questionnaire are shown on Tables 7 and 8, pages 18 and 19, and indicate that seventeen, or 36 percent, of the respondents were working. Of these 17, fourteen, 82 percent, felt that the work completed had helped them. Two respondents, 11.7 percent, felt as though their work was not related to the simulation. One respondent made no comment to this question.

Table 9, page 19, indicates that 97.7 percent, or 46 of the respondents, liked working on the simulation. One respondent did not like the simulation.

Table 10, page 19, indicates that 91 percent, forty-three, of the respondents preferred the simulation classroom. Of those 43, 14 believed the simulation to be similar to an

TABLE 8

REASONS SIMULATION DID OR DID NOT HELP WORKING RESPONDENTS

Students Working	Do Related Work Now	Helped Adjust to Work	Learned Work Flow	Work Now Is Not Related	No Comment
17	7	4	3	2	1

TABLE 9

RESPONDENTS LIKING OR DISLIKING THE SIMULATION AND REASONS WHY THEY LIKED OR DISLIKED IT

Total Number of Students	Reasons					
	Similar to Office	Interesting	Learned Workflow	Fun	Boring	No Comment
Positive Comments	13	10	3	2		18
Negative Comments					1	

TABLE 10

TYPE OF CLASSROOMS RESPONDENTS PREFERRED AND REASONS FOR THEIR PREFERENCE

Preference of Students	Similar to Office	Interesting	Work at Own Rate	Split up Activites	No Comment
Simulation	14	19			10
Traditional			1		
Combination				1	
No Response					2

TABLE 12

REASONS SIMULATION DID OR DID NOT HELP
COLLEGE OFFICE EDUCATION STUDENTS

Number of Students	Similar to Office Work	Aids Office Procedures	Aids Accounting	No Aid in Secretarial Practice	No Comment
Helped - 17	6	5	5		1
Did Not Help - 2				1	1

projects or traditional classroom projects and their reasons.

9. Whether working on the Lester Hill Office Simulation aided the students in college if they had enrolled in a subject area comparable to office education and their reasons.

Questionnaires-opinionnaires were mailed to 57 students throughout the state of North Dakota. These students had all spent some time working on the Lester Hill Office Simulation. Returns were obtained from 47, or 82.4 percent, of the students.

Conclusions

Data from the questionnaire-opinionnaire were compiled and reported in Chapter IV. The following constitute the conclusions of this survey study:

1. The respondents had worked on the simulation a sufficient length of time to be able to form some valid opinions.

2. The high percentage, 57.6, of assignment to a position by a teacher would indicate that the teachers wanted the student to begin at a position where his chances for success would be greatest. The 34 percent who applied for a position had the opportunity to gain the vocational experience of applying for a job.

3. With more than one-half of the respondents working in more than one-half of the departments of the simulation,

as having something to do with what the respondents felt an office was like. Again, since only seventeen of the respondents were working, it is difficult to determine whether these are ideas perpetrated by teachers, etc. or whether the students actually knew how an office actually functioned.

9. There is a definite preference for the simulation classroom. Again, business office similarities were among the most numerously stated reasons as shown on Table 9.

10. There is a significant relationship in the simulation to college office education curriculum demands. Of the people going to college in the area of office education, 80.9 percent felt that the simulation aided in the course work they are asked to complete.

Recommendations

As a result of the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Another study of the Lester Hill Office Simulation's effect on job success should be made at a later date, when more of the graduates of North Dakota high school office education programs using this simulation are out of college and working. Even though a majority of the people who were working, 82 percent, expressed the opinion that this simulation helped them on their job, it is not valid, at this time, to say that the Lester Hill Office Simulation has a positive effect on the work of students on the job. The number of

APPENDIX A

EXHIBIT 2

FORM ACCOMPANYING COVERING LETTER SENT TO
NORTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL OFFICE EDUCATION TEACHERS

Name of your school_____

Used Lester Hill Office Simulation during 1971-72 school year
_____Yes_____No (Check one)

Students from your school who worked on Lester Hill Office Simulation

	Name	Address
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		

Another school who used Lester Hill_____

EXHIBIT 4

QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO NORTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL OFFICE EDUCATION STUDENTS

Lester Hill Office Simulation Questionnaire

1. Were you enrolled in a class that used Lester Hill Office Stimulation in the 1971-72 school year?

If your answer to question #1 was "No," do not complete the remainder of the questionnaire, but return it to the sender just the same.

If your answer to question #1 was "Yes," complete the remainder of the questionnaire by checking the appropriate responses and return it to the sender.

2. How long did you work in Lester Hill? One month_____ Three months___One semester___Other___Explain_____

3. How did you obtain your beginning position in this simulation? You applied___Teacher assigned___Other___ Explain_____

4. In which departments did you work as a Lester Hill employee? Accounting___General Manager___Sales___ Tallidata____Traffic____Warehouse____

5. If you worked in more than one department, how were your new positions obtained? Applied____Teacher assigned____ Other___Explain_____

6. Did your work you completed in Lester Hill make you feel as though you were working in a business office? Yes___ No___Explain_____

7. Are you employed in a business office now? Yes___No____

8. If you are working now, do you find that the systems studied in Lester Hill helped you in any way in preparing for your job? Yes___No___Explain_____

9. Did you like working on this simulation? Yes___No___ Explain_____

10. What type of classroom would you prefer to work in--Office simulation (like Lester Hill)___ or Traditional (daily assignments made by the teacher and handed in by the student)___Explain_____

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