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

Roger E. Mergenthal

Follow this and additional works at: https://commons.und.edu/theses

Recommended Citation
https://commons.und.edu/theses/612

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, and Senior Projects at UND Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of UND Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact zeinebyousif@library.und.edu.
A SURVEY OF OFFICE EDUCATION STUDENTS IN NORTH DAKOTA
TO DETERMINE EFFECTIVENESS OF LESTER HILL
OFFICE SIMULATION IN TERMS
OF JOB SUCCESS

by
Roger E. Mergenthal
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

In presenting this independent study in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a graduate degree from the University of North Dakota, I agree that the Library of this University shall make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for extensive copying for scholarly purposes may be granted by the professor who supervised my independent study work or, in his absence, by the Chairman of the Department or the Dean of the Graduate School. It is understood that any copying or publication or other use of this independent study or part thereof for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission. It is also understood that due recognition shall be given to me and to the University of North Dakota in any scholarly use which may be made of any material in my independent study.

Signature

Date  July 25, 1973
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter I. Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter II. Review of Related Literature</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter III. Procedures</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter IV. Findings</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter V. Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations...</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

v
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Number of Weeks Students Worked</th>
<th>Number of Students Worked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>9-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 2**

(Question #3)

HOW STUDENTS OBTAINED THEIR INITIAL POSITIONS IN THE SIMULATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Methods of Obtaining Positions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.
Methods of Obtaining New Positions

Table 5 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Working</th>
<th>Do Related Work Now</th>
<th>Helped Adjust to Work</th>
<th>Learned Work Flow</th>
<th>Work Now Is Not Related</th>
<th>No Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 9

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Number of Students</th>
<th>Similar to Office</th>
<th>Interesting</th>
<th>Learned Workflow</th>
<th>Fun</th>
<th>Boring</th>
<th>No Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive Comments</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 10

**TYPE OF CLASSROOMS RESPONDENTS PREFERRED AND REASONS FOR THEIR PREFERENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preference of Students</th>
<th>Similar to Office</th>
<th>Interesting Work at Own Rate</th>
<th>Split up Activities</th>
<th>No Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simulation</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 12
REASONS SIMULATION DID OR DID NOT HELP COLLEGE OFFICE EDUCATION STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Similar to Office Work</th>
<th>Aids Office</th>
<th>Aids Accounting</th>
<th>No Aid in Secretarial Practice</th>
<th>No Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helped - 17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did Not Help - 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another school who used Lester Hill__________________________________________
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__________________________________________
BIBLIOGRAPHY