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## A Follow-Up Study of Distributive Education in the Public High School Jamestown, North Dakota

Emeroy Anders Swanson

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A FOLLOW-UP STUDY  
OF DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION IN THE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL  
JAMESTOWN, NORTH DAKOTA

16

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School  
of the  
University of North Dakota

By  
Emeroy Anders Swanson  
" "  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
Master of Science in Education

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This thesis, submitted by Emeroy Anders Swanson, as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Education, is hereby approved by the Committee of Instruction under whom the work has been done.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS . . . . .	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS . . . . .	iii
LIST OF TABLES . . . . .	v
I INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
The Problem . . . . .	1
Need for the Study . . . . .	1
Delimitations . . . . .	2
Definitions . . . . .	3
History of Development of Jamestown Program . . . . .	4
Method of Study . . . . .	5
II ANALYSIS OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE QUESTIONNAIRE RETURNS . . . . .	8
Personal Data . . . . .	9
Present Occupations . . . . .	10
Present Status of Student-Learners Who Completed Training During Period 1944-47 . . . . .	12
Employment Since Graduation . . . . .	13
Reasons for Changing Store Positions . . . . .	14
Additional Training Since Graduation . . . . .	15
Aid Given by Course in Securing and Holding a Job . . . . .	16
Aid Given by Course in Receiving a Promotion . . . . .	17
Additional Information Recommended . . . . .	18
III ANALYSIS OF MERCHANT QUESTIONNAIRE RETURNS . . . . .	20
Hiring of Distributive Education Students in Preference to Others . . . . .	22



## TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

CHAPTER	PAGE
Promotion of Distributive Education Students in Preference to Others . . . . .	22
Comparative Beginning Wage . . . . .	23
Comparative Turnover . . . . .	24
Additional Training Recommended . . . . .	25
Encouragement of Students to Remain in Employment . . .	26
Encouragement of Other Students to Enter Employment . .	27
V SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS . . . . .	29
Summary of Distributive Education Graduate Response . .	29
Summary of Merchant Response . . . . .	31
Conclusion . . . . .	33
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	34
APPENDIX A . . . . .	35
APPENDIX B . . . . .	37

# LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
I ANALYSIS OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE QUESTIONNAIRE RETURNS—SUMMARY . . . . .	8
II PERSONAL DATA . . . . .	9
III PRESENT OCCUPATIONS . . . . .	10
IV PRESENT STATUS OF STUDENT-LEARNERS WHO COMPLETED TRAINING DURING PERIOD 1944-47 . . . . .	12
V EMPLOYMENT SINCE GRADUATION . . . . .	13
VI REASONS FOR CHANGING STORE POSITIONS . . . . .	14
VII ADDITIONAL TRAINING SINCE GRADUATION . . . . .	15
VIII AID GIVEN BY COURSE IN SECURING AND HOLDING A JOB . . . . .	16
IX AID GIVEN BY COURSE IN RECEIVING A PROMOTION . . . . .	17
X ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RECOMMENDED . . . . .	18
XI ANALYSIS OF MERCHANT QUESTIONNAIRE RETURNS—SUMMARY . . . . .	20
XII HIRING OF DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION STUDENTS IN PREFERENCE TO OTHERS . . . . .	22
XIII PROMOTION OF DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION STUDENTS IN PREFERENCE TO OTHERS . . . . .	22
XIV COMPARATIVE BEGINNING WAGE . . . . .	23
XV COMPARATIVE TURNOVER . . . . .	24
XVI ADDITIONAL TRAINING RECOMMENDED . . . . .	25
XVII ENCOURAGEMENT OF STUDENTS TO REMAIN IN EMPLOYMENT . . . . .	26
XVIII ENCOURAGEMENT OF OTHER STUDENTS TO ENTER EMPLOYMENT . . . . .	27

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### The Problem

The main purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the High School Part-Time Cooperative Training in Jamestown, North Dakota. This was determined by a study of the graduates and merchants taking part in the Jamestown program over a period of eight years, from 1946 to 1953 inclusive. The writer attempts to show 1. the number presently employed in the distributive occupations; 2. their employment since graduation; 3. additional training or courses since graduation; 4. whether distributive education graduates are hired and promoted in preference to others; 5. if the turnover of distributive education graduates is lower than the turnover of non-distributive education graduates; and 6. if distributive education graduates have been adequately prepared for full time careers in retailing.

#### Need for the Study

If one is to maintain and improve standards for any type of program or class in education, evaluation is needed.

Mere enthusiasm and belief in this type of training does not prove that it is worthwhile or practical. Neither does the fact that a type of training has been in use and has continued to grow in use over a period of time prove that it is effective. The fact



that many high schools include a distributive education training program in its curriculum does not prove that it meets the needs of students and merchants. A sound evaluation of any program is based upon facts. An answer to the question "What is distributive education doing for those most vitally concerned?" is needed. For this reason it is apparent that there is a need for a study to provide factual information as to the outcomes of a Distributive Education Program.

#### Delimitations

This problem was limited to a follow-up study of an individual high school distributive education program, the Jamestown program.

Sources of information for this study were limited to the two parties most vitally concerned, the graduate and the merchant.

The problem was further limited to a study of an eight year period, from 1946 to 1953 inclusive. This period of years in the history of the Jamestown program was recommended by the Coordinator of Distributive Education, Miss Mabel Hartje, for the following reasons:

1. By 1946, the program had been established on a sound basis.
2. Prior to 1946, during World War II, our economy was disrupted to a large extent. High school graduates were going either into the armed forces or war industry work. Addresses of many of these graduates could not be found. It was felt that it

would be impossible to locate an adequate percentage of these graduates to justify including them in the study.

### Definitions

The following definition for "distributive occupations" will be used in this study.

"Distributive Occupations are those followed by workers directly engaged in merchandising activities, or in contact with buyers and sellers when:

1. distributing to consumers, retailers, jobbers, wholesalers, and others, the products of farm and industry, or
2. managing, operating, or conducting a commercial service or personal service business, or selling the services of such a business.

Distributive Occupations do not include clerical occupations such as stenography, bookkeeping, office clerical work and the like; nor do they include trade and industrial work followed by those engaged in railroad, trucking, or other transportation activities<sup>1</sup>."

"Distributive Education" is the teaching of distributive subjects in the classroom and job experience to those who are preparing to enter distributive occupations.

The term "coordinator" as used in this study means one who teaches distributive subjects and also regulates and combines the formal school instruction with actual job experience. It is realized that the term "coordinator" very often means only the one who is in charge of combining school instruction with actual on-the-job experience. However, in this study, it also included the one who teaches related instruction.

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<sup>1</sup> Administration of Vocational Education, Vocational Education Bulletin No. 1, Federal Security Agency, Revised 1948, p. 45.

### History of Development of the Jamestown Program

The distributive education training program in the Jamestown High School, a high school with an average enrollment of 450 to 500, had its origin in 1935 under the direction of Miss Mabel Hartje. The need had been realized before this time but the lack of another teacher prevented its addition to the curriculum.

Thirty students enrolled in the first class which ran only the second semester. They worked on a part-time basis in stores, at first three hours per week and later eight hours, without pay. The enrollment has been as high as forty-two, but has decreased with the addition of a cooperative trade program and an agricultural department in the high school. The present enrollments average from eighteen to twenty.

In the fall of 1948, the program at the Jamestown High School became associated with the State Program under the supervision of Mr. O. M. Hager.

In the spring of 1953, Miss Mabel Hartje and the Jamestown distributive education students attended the organization meeting of the North Dakota Distributive Education Club. During the fall of the same year, a local affiliate of the State Club, was organized in Jamestown.

Students who enter the course are encouraged to take business mathematics, which includes arithmetic and bookkeeping, in the sophomore year. Juniors are recommended to take typewriting and



salesmanship. The salesmanship course consists of filing, clerical practices and selling. In the senior year, the students study bookkeeping and retail merchandising. Retail merchandising consists of merchandise practices, advertising, and part-time cooperative training. Girl students, taking distributive education, usually take home economics.

#### Method of Study

"An approach to the effectiveness of evaluation through student survey is the plan of following students for a period of years in order to see how many remained in the occupations for which they were trained. They should be checked also to find out how many were able to advance and progress in the career selected.

A second means of measuring the effectiveness of the cooperative work program is to obtain statements and judgments from the employers in charge of the training stations<sup>2</sup>."

This was the method employed in this study.

The names of graduates and merchants participating in the High School Distributive Education Program in Jamestown from 1946 to 1953 were secured from Miss Mabel Hartje, Jamestown Coordinator of Distributive Education. The data included the names of 153 graduates and 47 merchants.

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<sup>2</sup> W. H. Ivins and W. B. Runge, Work Experience in High School, Evaluating and Improving the Program, 1951, p. 414.

Using the questionnaire method to obtain information, questionnaires were sent to the graduates and the merchants. After three weeks, wherever possible follow-up was made by personal interview. From the 147 graduates, fifty replies were received for a 31.8 per cent return. Twenty-six replies were received from the forty-three merchants for a percentage of 60.5.

The procedure of the discussion will be treated in the following manner:

1. Analysis of the graduate questionnaire returns
  - a. Personal data
  - b. Present occupations
  - c. Employment since graduation
  - d. Reasons for changing store positions
  - e. Additional training since graduation
  - f. Aid given by course in securing and holding a job
  - g. Aid given by course in receiving a promotion
  - h. Additional information recommended
2. Analysis of merchant questionnaire returns
  - a. Hiring of distributive education students in preference to others
  - b. Promotion of distributive education students in preference to others
  - c. Comparative beginning wage
  - d. Comparative turnover



- e. Additional training recommended
- f. Encouragement of students to remain in employment
- g. Encouragement of other students to enter employment

CHAPTER II  
ANALYSIS OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE QUESTIONNAIRE RETURNS

TABLE I  
SUMMARY

Year	Number of Students Enrolled in Class	Number of Questionnaires Answered	Per Cent Replying
1946	16	4	25
1947	25	6	24
1948	19	6	31.6
1949	28	9	32.1
1950	17	5	29.4
1951	15	5	33.3
1952	21	7	33.3
1953	<u>16</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>50</u>
Total	157	50	31.8

Fifty, or 31.8 per cent of all the graduates of the Jamestown Distributive Education part-time cooperative program from 1946 through 1953, inclusive, answered the high school follow-up survey questionnaire.

The response was not greater for the following reasons:

1. The long period of time covered by the survey.

2. The high rate of marriage, as evidenced by the percentage of married people who returned the completed surveys. Change of names made it impossible to locate many of the former girl graduates.
3. The fact that many of the boy graduates served or are serving in the armed forces made it impossible to locate many of them.

TABLE II  
PERSONAL DATA

Status	Number	Percentage
Men	11	22
Women	39	78
Single	21	42
Married	29	58
Children	21	--

In studying these figures, we find that seventy-eight per cent of the Distributive Education graduates answering the questionnaire were women. It was also found that fifty-eight per cent of all graduates questioned are married.

The higher percentage of girl graduates may indicate that girls are more mature and conscious of being prepared vocationally

upon termination of high school, or that, because of the draft, boys have not projected their planning much beyond their careers in the armed service.

That fifty-eight per cent of those replying to the questionnaire are married is significant, especially when one takes into consideration the fact that many of the respondents are very recently out of high school and would normally not yet be married. Otherwise the percentage of married graduates may have even been a larger proportion. In any event, distributive education certainly does not discourage matrimony. Furthermore, these marriages have resulted in raising a family, to judge from the twenty-one children reported. Distributive education should prove of practical value to these graduates in carrying out the duties of managing a household.

TABLE III  
PRESENT OCCUPATIONS

Occupational Grouping	Percentage of All Respondents	Number	Percentage Within Group
<u>Total Gainfully Employed</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>100</u>
Distributive Occupations	30	15	51.7
Secretarial and Bookkeeping	10	5	17.2
Professional and Semi-Professional	10	5	17.2
Communications	6	3	10.3
Miscellaneous	2	1	3.5
<u>Total Not Gainfully Employed</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>100</u>
Homemaking	32	16	76
Armed Forces	6	3	14
Students	4	2	10



Of the fifty respondents to this questionnaire, fifty-eight per cent are engaged in some gainful occupation. Those engaged in homemaking, the armed forces, and students, or forty-two per cent, are considered not to be gainfully employed. Of those graduates who are now gainfully employed, 51.7 per cent are engaged in some distributive occupation.

The fact that thirty per cent of those who responded to the questionnaire are at present in distribution, indicates that jobs in this field have considerable holding power. In other words, distributive education does train for permanent employment in distribution. Furthermore, all the occupations classified here could well put to use the training received in Distributive Education. For example, five reporting secretarial and book-keeping positions are actually performing these duties in distributive businesses.

The thirty-two per cent of the respondents who are now homemakers constitute a reserve labor for part-time work in stores for peak season employment.

Another study of a similar nature concerning the present status of distributive education graduates is taken from a publication of The Tennessee State Board for Vocational Education "A Manual for Coordinators of Diversified Occupations."



TABLE IV

PRESENT STATUS OF DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION STUDENT-LEARNERS  
WHO COMPLETED TRAINING DURING THE PERIOD 1944-47<sup>1</sup>

Status	Boys	Girls	Total	Per Cent
<u>Employed</u>				
Employed in the occupations for which they trained	115	374	489	53.6
Employed in allied occupations	17	40	57	6.2
Employed in other occupations	<u>40</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>8.4</u>
Total Employed	172	451	623	68.2
<u>Not Available for Employment</u>				
Continuing education	65	59	124	13.5
In armed services	69	1	70	7.7
Other (homemakers and those ill)	<u>17</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>10.6</u>
Total Not Employed	151	140	291	31.8
Total Not Completing Training	323	591	914	100.0

Direct comparison cannot be made for some of the percentages because of a difference in terms. For example, the writer does not know what is included in "allied occupations." However, comparisons can be made at some points. The Tennessee study

<sup>1</sup> W. H. Ivins and W. B. Runge, Work Experience in High School, Evaluating and Improving the Program, 1951, p. 414.

reports that of the total respondents, 53.6 per cent are employed in the distributive occupations and 13.5 per cent are continuing education. The Jamestown study reports thirty per cent of the gainfully employed are employed in the distributive occupations and four per cent are continuing education. It must be born in mind, however, that the Jamestown study covered eight years and the Tennessee study four years. This could well account for the lower percentages in the Jamestown study.

TABLE V  
EMPLOYMENT SINCE GRADUATION  
84 PLACEMENTS

Occupational Grouping	Number	Percentage
Distributive Occupations	46	54.8
Secretarial and Bookkeeping	12	14.3
Professional and Semi-Professional	8	9.5
Armed Forces	7	8.3
Miscellaneous	7	8.3
Communications	4	4.8

It appears that Distributive Education in the Jamestown High School has been very successful in that 54.8 per cent of the placements reported by graduates are in some phase of distribution. While it is recognized that many of those replying

to the questionnaire indicated they had been employed in two or more occupations since their graduation, this figure still shows that a high percentage of the distributive education graduates are at some time engaged in the field for which they are trained.

Secretarial and bookkeeping occupations are shown as second in importance with 14.3 per cent of placements. Many of these are actually in retail establishments, and secured their positions because of experience and training received in Distributive Education. While the work performed by these secretarial and bookkeeping employees is not directly distributive in nature, they are able to use to very good advantage their distributive training because of the nature of the business in which they are employed.

TABLE VI  
REASONS FOR CHANGING STORE POSITIONS  
39 RESPONDENTS

Reasons	Number	Percentage
<u>Voluntary</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>64</u>
Improve Position	7	18
Continue Education	6	15.3
Other Type of Work	5	12.8
Advancement	4	10.2
Increase in Salary	3	7.7
<u>Other</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>36</u>
Marriage	7	18
Moved	4	10.2
Armed Forces	3	7.7

The reasons given for changing store positions were classified as voluntary and involuntary. Of the sixty-four per cent who indicated voluntary reasons for changing positions, the largest number changed to improve their positions. This is certainly a good indication.

The second largest group gave continued education as their reason for changing positions. This would indicate that Distributive Education training does not hinder those who later decide on further training.

The fact that no respondents stated that they made changes because they could not get along may indicate an excellent training job or it may simply indicate an unwillingness to admit failure.

TABLE VII  
ADDITIONAL TRAINING SINCE GRADUATION  
15 RESPONDENTS\*

Type of Training	Number	Percentage
University or College (Time not determined)	7	46.7
Commercial Courses	4	26.7
Technical Schools	3	20.0
Nurse Training	1	6.6

\* Of the fifty returning questionnaires, fifteen or thirty per cent received some further training after graduation.



It seems, judging from the thirty per cent, that those who have had the high school distributive education training are not continuing training after graduation. They consider the training they received in high school as terminal training. It is important that distributive education students receive the very best training possible, since for many of them high school is their last opportunity.

TABLE VIII

AID GIVEN BY COURSE IN SECURING AND HOLDING A JOB  
HAS THE DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION COURSE HELPED YOU IN SECURING AND  
HOLDING A JOB?

47 RESPONDENTS

	Number	Percentage
Yes	35	74.5
No	12	25.5

IF SO, HOW?

12 RESPONDENTS

Learning how to meet and deal with people	11	37.9
Gaining store experience	11	37.9
Learning how to sell	5	17.3
Gaining better understanding of business	1	3.4
Learning how to apply for a job	1	3.4



Even though a good majority of graduates answering this question replied "yes," it is nevertheless felt that twelve people out of the total responding still represent too high a percentage to answer "no." However, it is known that most of the respondents answering "no" are those at present engaged in fields other than the distributive and related areas. It could also mean that the graduate failed to properly evaluate the training received in relation to later job success.

It is interesting to note that of the twenty-nine responding to "how distributive education helped in securing and holding a job," a large majority answered "ability to deal with people" and "gained store experience." In other words, the students evaluated the information learned on the job as more important than specific material learned in the classroom.

TABLE IX

## AID GIVEN BY COURSE IN RECEIVING A PROMOTION

IF A PROMOTION HAS BEEN RECEIVED ON THE JOB SINCE GRADUATION, DO YOU THINK THE DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION COURSE HELPED IN ANY WAY?

21 RESPONDENTS

	Number	Percentage
Yes	15	71.4
No	6	28.6

IF SO, HOW?

12 RESPONDENTS

Ability to do a better job	5	41.7
More experience gained	4	33.3
Capacity to assume responsibility	2	16.7
Improved attitude	1	8.3

While 74.5 per cent of the respondents feel that their training had helped them in securing and holding a job, 71.4 per cent expressed a similar conviction in relation to promotion. However, the response to this question was much smaller than the previous question, twenty-one respondents as against forty-seven.

It is encouraging to note that 41.7 per cent of those reporting a direct relationship between training and promotion attributed it to being able to do a better job.

TABLE X  
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RECOMMENDED  
13 RESPONDENTS

	Number
More sales experience in class	2
More drill on selling steps	2
Experience with business machines	2
More on human relations	2
Merchandising information	1
More bookkeeping	1
Develop better work habits	1
More work experience	1
More on how to apply for a job	1

The fact that there were only thirteen responses, well scattered, with the frequency of mention so low, would indicate that the need was not strongly felt by a group as a whole and that the program was meeting the needs of its graduates.

Most suggestions indicate specific parts of retailing. It would not be practical to train in every detail of work. Distributive education, as far as the classroom is concerned, cannot be too specific. Many of the suggestions indicate specialized techniques and skills that should be acquired individually through projects or on-the-job.

CHAPTER III  
ANALYSIS OF MERCHANT QUESTIONNAIRE RETURNS

TABLE XI  
SUMMARY  
26 RESPONDENTS\*

	Number of Establishments	Percentage
Food Group		
Grocery	5	
Bakery	<u>1</u>	
Total	6	23
Apparel Group		
Ladies' Apparel	2	
Children's Ready to Wear	1	
Ladies' Shoes	1	
Men's Clothing	<u>1</u>	
Total	5	19
General Merchandise Group		
Department	3	
Variety	<u>2</u>	
Total	5	19



TABLE XII (continued)

	Number of Establishments	Percentage
<hr/>		
Other Retail Stores		
Jewelry	2	
Hardware	2	
Drug	2	
Stationery	1	
Furniture	1	
Auto Parts	1	
Service Station	<u>1</u>	
Total	10	39

\* Forty-three merchants who have cooperated with the Jamestown High School in providing Distributive Education Training were sent questionnaires.

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Of forty-three merchants who were sent questionnaires, twenty-six, or 60.5 per cent, responded.

The type of organizations employing the majority of students seem to fall into the food group, the apparel group and the general merchandise group. This seems normal in that they constitute the three largest retail groups. However, there seems to be a good distribution in all types of retail establishments.

One point may be brought out, and that is the lack of service establishments used as training stations. However, this condition



could easily vary with circumstances in the local community.

Distributive education trains to sell goods and services. The use of personal service establishments, such as food and clothing, would open up a new supply of training stations.

TABLE XII

HIRING OF DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION STUDENTS IN PREFERENCE TO OTHERS  
DO YOU HIRE DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION GRADUATES IN PREFERENCE TO OTHERS?

26 RESPONDENTS

	Number	Percentage
Yes	21	80.8
No	5	19.2

The percentage of merchants who give preference to distributive education graduates in hiring people is especially high. This certainly points out that the Jamestown Distributive Education Training Program has the confidence and respect of Jamestown merchants, and that the merchants are aware of the importance of training.

TABLE XIII

PROMOTION OF DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION STUDENTS IN PREFERENCE TO OTHERS  
DO YOU PROMOTE DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION GRADUATES IN PREFERENCE TO OTHER EMPLOYEES?

26 RESPONDENTS

	Number	Percentage
Yes	14	53.8
No	12	46.2

It is very encouraging when one considers that 53.8 per cent of the employers who replied to this question indicated that they would give preference to distributive education graduates when making promotions in the store. The remaining 46.2 per cent would perhaps rather wait for indications of performance before making such a decision.

In any event, because of training and experience, distributive education graduates should be able to qualify for promotion more readily.

TABLE XIV

## COMPARATIVE BEGINNING WAGE

IS THE BEGINNING WAGE FOR A DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION GRADUATE HIGHER, LOWER, OR THE SAME AS FOR OTHER EMPLOYEES?

26 RESPONDENTS

	Number	Percentage
Higher	10	38.5
Lower	5	19.2
The Same	11	42.3

The fact that five, or 19.2 per cent, of the merchants answered that they paid the distributive education graduate lower wages than others indicates, it is believed, a misunderstanding of this particular question. Perhaps they understood it to mean the distributive education trainee, who

very frequently receives a training wage which is less than the wage received by regular employees. If this is not the case, then these five merchants place no value whatever upon training. In fact they would consider the training a detriment.

The fact that 42.3 per cent pay the same rate as other employees receive is perhaps what should be expected. It is not to be expected that distributive education training will put the graduate in position to demand higher wages than those who have not had distributive education. It should be recognized, however, that the training provides a good background for the graduate to adjust himself to full time employment much quicker. This should enable the distributive education graduate to advance in a shorter period of time.

TABLE XV

## COMPARATIVE TURNOVER

IS THE TURNOVER OF DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION GRADUATES LOWER, HIGHER, OR THE SAME AS THAT OF OTHER EMPLOYEES?

24 RESPONDENTS

	Number	Percentage
Lower	11	45.8
Higher	2	8.3
The Same	11	45.8

The answers to this question indicate that there is less turnover of distributive education graduates than of other employees. This certainly indicates that distributive education graduates are better able to adjust to a life of employment. The Jamestown distributive education program has helped its graduates "bridge the gap" between school and work.

TABLE XVI

## ADDITIONAL TRAINING RECOMMENDED

DO YOU THINK DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION GRADUATES HAVE BEEN GIVEN ADEQUATE TRAINING FOR FULL TIME CAREERS IN RETAILING?

26 RESPONDENTS

	Number	Percentage
Yes	15	57.7
No	11	42.3

IF NO, WHAT ADDITIONAL TRAINING DO THEY NEED?

14 RESPONDENTS

More actual selling experience	4
More on the job training	4
More knowledge of how to meet the public	3
More experience in handling all types of customers	1
More merchandising training	1
More training in ordering merchandise	1



It is gratifying to know that a majority of the Jamestown merchants believe that the high school training program does provide adequate training for full time careers in retailing.

In answer to the question, "what additional training do they need?", eight out of the fourteen answering this question mentioned "more actual selling experience" and "more on-the-job training." In other words, the merchants placed more emphasis on sales knowledge and experience. This might well be expected from a group of merchants.

Three of the fourteen respondents answered with "how to meet the public." This may be due to an increased awareness on the part of merchants of the personality factor in retailing.

TABLE XVII

## ENCOURAGEMENT OF STUDENTS TO REMAIN IN EMPLOYMENT

DO YOU ENCOURAGE PART-TIME DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION STUDENTS TO REMAIN IN YOUR EMPLOYMENT AFTER GRADUATION?

26 RESPONDENTS

	Number	Percentage
Yes	24	92.3
No	2	7.7

At a glance it would seem that the negative replies to this question are discouraging; however, this cannot be conclusive.

It is definitely known that many of the students are employed in stores too small to encourage them to remain in full time positions after graduation. Yet these same stores have proved to be excellent training stations.

The fact that 92.3 per cent of the stores that train students encourage them to remain in their employment after graduation indicates a bright future for the distributive education student who wishes retail employment in Jamestown.

#### TABLE XVIII

ENCOURAGEMENT OF OTHER STUDENTS TO ENTER EMPLOYMENT  
DO YOU TRY TO INTEREST OTHER DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION GRADUATES IN  
JOINING YOUR ORGANIZATION?

26 RESPONDENTS

	Number	Percentage
Yes	18	69.2
No	7	30.8

The affirmative 69.2 per cent of the replies to this question indicate a favorable attitude on the part of the merchants towards the employment of distributive education graduates.

The fact that 30.8 per cent answered "no" to this question can partially be explained by the reminder that many of the stores are too small to need other distributive education graduates to work for them.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### Summary of Distributive Education Graduate Response

1. A total of fifty replies were received, or 31.8 per cent of all graduates from 1946 to 1953 responded. This is a gratifying percentage considering the length of period covered, the high rate of marriage, and the disruption of the program by the war.

2. Seventy-eight per cent of the distributive education graduates answering the questionnaire are women. Apparently, at this age, girls are more interested in vocational training than are boys.

3. Fifty-eight per cent of all respondents are married. Distributive education should prove of practical value to these graduates in carrying out the duties of managing a household.

4. Of the fifty-eight per cent of respondents gainfully employed, 51.7 per cent are still engaged in distributive occupations. Many of the others are in positions in which they can make use of training received.



5. The thirty-two per cent of the total respondents who are now homemakers constitute a reserve labor force for peak seasons.

6. Eighty-four job placements were reported by the respondents. Fifty-four and eight tenths per cent were in some phase of distribution and many of the others were in closely related fields.

7. Of the sixty-four per cent who indicated voluntary reasons for changing positions, a majority changed to improve their positions or to continue their education.

8. Only thirty per cent of the respondents reported taking additional courses since graduation. In other words, they consider their high school education as terminal.

9. Seventy-four and five tenths per cent of the respondents felt that the distributive education course helped them in securing and holding a job. Learning "how to meet and deal with people" and "gained store experience" were mentioned as contributing to success in 75.3 per cent of the cases.

10. Seventy-one and four tenths per cent of the respondents felt that the distributive education training had aided them in gaining a promotion.

11. The suggestions for additional information to be included in the distributive education course were widely varied. Many suggestions deal with specific parts of retailing, which

it would not be practical to include in the distributive education course work. Information of this nature should be taught on the job.

Many voluntary statements exhibiting confidence in the program were included by the respondents. Some are as follows:

A housewife says, "I do believe the distributive education training was worth while to me even though I did not stay in that line of work. I learned to meet the public and learned much that I otherwise would have not. I highly recommend this program."

An electrician says, "This type of educational training is very excellent and should be used more extensively in our schools today."

A sales girl says, "I really believe that distributive education is a wonderful program, and I'm sure that anyone taking distributive education will think the same. It has helped me very much."

#### Summary of Merchant Response

1. Forty-three merchants were sent questionnaires. Twenty-six, or 60.5 per cent, responded. The type of organizations relied upon for training stations are the food group, apparel group and the general merchandise group. Many other types of retail stores were represented. Service occupations are represented by one placement.

2. Eighty and eight tenths of the merchants indicated distributive education graduates to be preferable to untrained employees. Over half of the merchants look upon these graduates as promotional material. While compensation in terms of salary remains about the same for non-distributive education graduates, there is less turnover for distributive education graduates.

3. Fifty-seven and seven tenths per cent of the twenty-six merchants responding to the question agree that the distributive education graduate has received adequate training. In answer to the question "What additional training do they need?" eight out of the fourteen mentioned "more actual selling experience" and "more on-the-job training."

4. Ninety-two and three tenths of the merchants reporting encourage distributive education graduates to remain in full time employment.

Several merchants wrote concerning their convictions as to the effectiveness of distributive education. Their ideas may be expressed in the words of one Jamestown merchant who said, "I think the program is one of the finest given in the school set-up. It helps not only the student but the merchant in finding suitable sales personnel. Distributive education does a good job in preparing students for the retail field."

### Conclusion

While the primary value of such a study is the overall picture it gives of the effectiveness of the Distributive Education program in Jamestown, North Dakota, there are additional ways in which the findings may prove of practical value to other coordinators.

1. A summary of the study may be used as a guide in improving other programs.
2. The survey technique may be employed by each coordinator as a systematic method of continuous follow-up and evaluation of his program.
3. Tables and findings may be utilized in talks given to merchant and school groups.

Finally, we can all agree that such a study makes us aware as teachers of the need of taking stock of ourselves and our training programs in the light of the future success of those who are our responsibility.



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# APPENDIX A

## GRADUATES' QUESTIONNAIRE

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
                                     (Last)                                      (First)                                      (Middle)                                      (Maiden Name)

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Single \_\_\_\_\_ Married \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Children \_\_\_\_\_

Present Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Date Graduated \_\_\_\_\_

Employment Since Graduation:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Employer</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Full Time</u>	<u>Part Time</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Reasons for change in store or position \_\_\_\_\_

List below any additional training or courses you have taken since graduation:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluation of the Distributive Education Course:

1. Has the Distributive Education course helped you in securing and holding a job? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_

2. If a promotion has been received on the job since graduation, do you think the Distributive Education course helped in any

## APPENDIX A (continued)

way? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What additional information, if any, would have been helpful  
for you to have covered in this course? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B

### MERCHANT QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of Store \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Store \_\_\_\_\_ Merchant \_\_\_\_\_

#### EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE AND EXPERIENCE IN RELATION TO D. E. GRADUATES

1. Do you hire D. E. graduates in preference to others?  
Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
2. Do you promote D. E. graduates in preference to other employees? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
3. Is the beginning wage for a D. E. graduate higher \_\_\_\_ lower \_\_\_\_ the same \_\_\_\_ as for other employees?
4. Is the turnover of D. E. graduates lower \_\_\_\_ higher \_\_\_\_ the same \_\_\_\_ as other employees?

#### TRAINING OF D. E. GRADUATES

1. Do you think D. E. graduates have been given adequate training for full-time careers in retailing? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
2. If no, what additional training do they need? Indicate below:  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### INTERESTING D. E. STUDENTS AND GRADUATES IN RETAILING AS A PROFESSION

1. Do you encourage part-time D. E. students to remain in your employment after graduation? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
2. Do you try to interest other D. E. graduates in joining your organization? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

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