To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Karen K. Doggette entitled "The Development and Application of a Procedure to Follow-Up Program Noncompleters at the State Technical Institute at Knoxville." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Vocational-Technical Education.

Melvin D. Miller, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

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THE DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATION OF A PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW-UP PROGRAM NONCOMPLETERS AT THE STATE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE AT KNOXVILLE

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Science

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Karen K. Doggette

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ABSTRACT

Purpose

The purpose of the study was to develop and test a procedure that could be used to follow-up noncompleters who attended the State Technical Institute at Knoxville (STIK). The specific questions to be answered in this study were:

1. What is the social description of noncompleters who have attended STIK?

2. What reasons do students give for leaving STIK?

3. What procedures, if any, could STIK have implemented which would have kept noncompleters in school?

4. Are noncompleters continuing their education?

5. Was the first full-time employment held by the noncompleter related to training received at STIK?

Method

The study employed the descriptive method of research. The population of the study included all 394 enrollees of the State Technical Institute at Knoxville from September, 1974 through June, 1977 who were reported by STIK to have left the school prior to completing their program of study. Responses were received from 199 respondents or 50.5 percent of the total population.

The survey instrument consisted of a two-page objective questionnaire designed to collect information to answer the five questions posed by the study. The questions were evaluated for content validity by a

three-member jury: two vocational-technical teacher educators and a career development specialist. The questionnaire was field tested for readability and understanding before being sent to the study population.

The procedure of activities for the study included bulk rate mailing of the questionnaire to the entire population followed by reminder telephone calls. A second first class or permit mailing of the questionnaire to the nonrespondents was also followed by reminder telephone calls offering to collect information via the telephone.

Findings

The following findings were a result of the analysis and interpretation of the data:

1. The follow-up procedure developed for the study provided information from and about the noncompleter which served as a basis for a social description of STIK noncompleters.

2. STIK has limited information about students who are enrolled and/or have been enrolled.

3. A substantial proportion of noncompleters leave STIK prior to the completion of two quarters of study.

4. Noncompleters left STIK more for reasons that existed beyond the control of STIK than for reasons that the institution could influence.

5. It appears, STIK could have done little to assist noncompleters in remaining in school.

6. A substantial proportion of noncompleters feel a need for additional postsecondary education.

7. The training received at STIK prior to leaving did not result in most noncompleters being employed in jobs related to their training.

Five recommendations are made based on the information collected and the follow-up procedure developed for the study. The recommendations can assist STIK in better meeting student needs and in conducting future follow-up studies of noncompleters. The recommendations regarding the procedure for follow-up studies of noncompleters may be of interest to others conducting such follow-up studies.

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CHAPTER I

PLAN OF THE STUDY

Introduction

> In exploring the problems of youth in making the transition from school to work, it is helpful to recognize that this is one of three concerns commonly voiced in public discussions of today's youth: delinquency, lack of employable skills, and lack of adequate opportunities to make a gradual transition into constructive adult roles. All of these problems are associated with rapid changes in a society in which the provisions for youth to learn to assume responsible adult roles have not caught up with those lost with the changes in the patterns of family life, community activities and employment situations. (Tyler, 1976, p. 89)

Vocational educators since the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917 have been concerned with the rapid technological changes evident in our society which have had social and economic impact on both youth and the world of work. Vocational-technical education has found increasing acceptance in areas of these technological changes and increased specialized manpower needs.

The need for the "technician," the "semiprofessional," to assist the professional has been recognized by vocational educators since the Smith-Hughes Act. The postsecondary need for technically related occupational education to be provided by junior colleges, technical institutes and vocational technical schools has been supported by federal legislation for the last sixty years. State vocational education systems operate on the belief that "the output of vocational training programs should be related in kind and quality to the employment demands of the efficient economic activities of the region"

(Schriver, 1971, p. 3). This built-in accountability to the local community implies the need for an evaluative process in all technical education programs, an evaluative process of which follow-up of both graduates and noncompleters is an integral part.

Problem of the Study

The State Technical Institute at Knoxville (STIK) is a technical training facility established in 1974 by the Tennessee State Department of Education, Division of Vocational Education. STIK was established as the fourth State Technical Institute in Tennessee

> to accept the broadest possible range of high school graduates and to provide the qualified aide to professional personnel in engineering, physical science, and computer science technologies, and the technician or technical worker in support of business and industry in the field of production, distribution, or service. (Bulletin of State Technical Institute at Knoxville, 1977, p. vi)

Since its beginning in 1974 STIK has graduated a total of 42 students. During the same period the noncompletion rate for the first two classes was 271 or 84.5 percent.

No evaluation process to provide information on the STIK noncompleters has been established. Data on former students ought to enable the staff to improve present educational procedures and to implement programs to better support enrolling students. A procedure to follow-up noncompleters needed to be developed and tested to identify the reasons students did not complete their course of study while at STIK. The procedure had to be tested to establish its usefulness in obtaining information useful to STIK staff.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to develop and test a procedure that could be used to follow-up noncompleters who have attended the State Technical Institute at Knoxville. The specific questions to be answered in this study were:

1. What is the social description of noncompleters who have attended STIK?
2. What reasons do students give for leaving STIK?
3. What procedures, if any, could STIK have implemented which would have kept noncompleters in school?
4. Are noncompleters continuing their education?
5. Was the first full-time employment held by the noncompleter related to training received at STIK?

Justification of the Study

The establishment and operation of STIK is based on its being able to demonstrate that it can help fill local manpower needs for technical personnel. In 1974, when STIK was in danger of being closed, members of the local business and industrial community supported STIK stating that the training provided by the institution was valuable to Knoxville and surrounding areas (Knoxville Journal, July 24, 1974).

The noncompletion rate was a problem recognized by State Technical Institute at Knoxville. A subcommittee of STIK faculty members had been appointed by the president to investigate the decreased enrollment and had been considering more formal follow-up procedures. In the initial

telephone interview with STIK President, Wayne Jones, his reaction was favorable. He stated that information on noncompleters was information that was needed and could be used by the institution (Jones, telephone conversation, April 7, 1977).

After an educational institution has adequate information regarding the reasons students have dropped out, it is in a better position to deal with institutional issues which may have contributed to the student's dropping out. The reasons for dropping out however do not reside solely with the student. Educational institutions can make changes in support services and in curriculum that can positively benefit all students especially those with a tendency to drop out. The follow-up "provides a periodic feedback mechanism for evaluation and accountability of vocational programs, establishes trends for planning, helps determine manpower supply, and provides an important input for resource allocation" (Paul, 1975, p. 11).

A general limitation of follow-up surveys serves as a reason for doing the study. Follow-up surveys are not generalizable beyond the population studied. STIK must follow-up its own program noncompleters to collect information that adequately reflects the population of STIK noncompleters.

Assumption of the Study

The assumption of this study is that respondents can identify the primary reasons for leaving STIK.

Organization of the Study

Further organization of this study is based on chapter divisions. Chapter II is a review of research and related literature. Chapter III documents the methods and procedures used in data collection. Chapter IV is a reporting of the data collected. The final chapter, Chapter V, consists of a discussion of the data, the conclusions and the recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND RELATED LITERATURE

An abundance of student follow-up studies at all levels of education, using numerous methodologies and conducted for different purposes are documented in the literature. "A follow-up study is a procedure for accumulating pertinent data from or about individuals after they have had similar or comparable experiences" (McKinny and Oglesby, 1971, p. 19). Follow-up studies have been conducted to both identify program deficiencies and publicize program strengths. Vocational education in particular has relied on the follow-up study as a method of documenting its accountability to the educational community and the general public.

A 1974 follow-up study Public and Proprietary Vocational Training: A Study of Effectiveness by Wellford Wilms was designed to test the effectiveness of public versus proprietary vocational training. This study used the descriptive method and the interview technique for gathering data. The sample for the study consisted of 2671 graduates of 21 public and 29 proprietary vocational training schools in four large metropolises. Eighty-five percent of the sample were traced and interviewed via telephone or in person. The findings of the study indicated that only two of ten graduates from both proprietary and public vocational schools found employment in their related training areas.

The findings and conclusions of the Wilms' study were so uncomplimentary to vocational education that the American Vocational

Association (AVA) examined the study, its purpose, its methodology and its instrumentation to assess the validity and reliability of the study's findings and conclusions. In "A Brief Review of Wellford W. Wilms' Study," the AVA rebutted the findings and conclusions primarily on the basis of the research design and methodology of the study (AVA, 1974).

The Wilms' study and the AVA rebuttal emphasize the importance and possible effect of follow-up studies. The Wilms' study and its potential national consequences to vocational education point out the need for precise accurate research techniques in conducting follow-up studies.

Project Baseline (Lee, 1974, 1975, 1976), a national follow-up research effort, initiated by Congress in 1971 to report on the status of Vocational-Technical Education exemplifies the importance of the evaluative process in vocational-technical education. The project analyzes federally reported data in a context meaningful to vocational-technical education. "Its purpose is primarily to report the developments that have taken place each year in the numbers and characteristics of students enrolled, programs, costs, and results" (Lee, 1976, p. 1). The project has expanded each year to collect and interpret more information that has impact on vocational-technical education. The results of such research efforts can affect the policy and funding decisions of future vocational-technical education programs.

The following review of research and related literature emphasizes actual follow-up studies conducted by community colleges and technical institutes on students who leave their programs before completion. Research studies and related literature have been examined over the last ten years. This review is organized around five topics:

Definition of Follow-Up Study Population,

Purpose of Follow-Up Studies,

Methodology of Follow-Up Studies,

Findings and Conclusions of Follow-Up Studies, and

Summary of Research and Related Literature.

Definition of Follow-Up Study Population

The term dropout is an accepted term generally referring to an individual who leaves an education program prior to completion or graduation. Literature concerning dropouts usually is associated with students at the secondary or elementary level. Davidson (1970) in a study conducted for the Laredo Independent School District defined "dropout" as "a pupil who leaves a school, for any reason except death, before graduation or completion of a program of studies without transferring to another school" (p. 27).

Researchers of the postsecondary level of education are negative regarding the labeling of individuals as "dropouts." Several authors (Boshier, 1973; Selo, 1974; Willett, 1973) feel the term dropout implies failure. They suggest that leaving an education program does not, and should not, label a student as a failure. Many of the research findings tend to indicate in some cases failure is not a correct assessment of what actually occurs.

Weigel (1969) refers to his population of students as "nonpersisters." The nonpersister is contrasted with the persister who in this study completes 80 quarter hours of study in two years with a grade point average

of 1.75 or above (p. 2). Selo (1974) and Gell (1975) define their population as "nonreturning" and give specific dates indicating when the students left the institutions.

The definition used by Snyder and Blocker (1970) for nonpersisting students is "matriculants who have discontinued their attendance for any reason without having earned an associate degree or certificate" (p. 1).

Noncompleter, the definition used to define the population of this study, is taken from Paul (1975). In A Manual for Conducting Follow-Up Surveys of Former Vocational Students Paul says that noncompleter includes "all those former students who enrolled in a vocational program but did not complete and left school or college without graduating" (p. 15).

Purpose of Follow-Up Studies

The preponderance of follow-up studies done on the noncompleter at the postsecondary level represent institutional research (Gell and others, 1975; Goetz, 1967; San Jose City College, 1968; Roesler, 1971; Selo, 1974; Snyder and Blocker, 1970; Terry, 1972; Weigel, 1969; Willet, 1973). Although done for or by educational institutions, the purpose of the self-studies varies depending on the institution.

Goetz and Leach (1967) in a study for the University of New Mexico attempted to answer specific questions of concern to the university. The questions to be answered by the study were:

> 1. Are there significant differences between continuers and withdrawees as regards their attitudes towards teachers, campus social environment, faculty advisors, counselors, personnel deans and general facilities and services of the University of New Mexico?

> 2. Are there significant differences between continuers and withdrawees as regards the experiencing of certain personal conditions and events during their period of attendance that could have a deleterious effect on continuance? (p. 883)

The study by San Jose City College (1968) was conducted to answer questions regarding why former students did not return to the institution. Weigel (1969) conducted a study to determine the reasons students leave the junior college. He compared the characteristics of the persisters with the characteristics of the nonpersisters.

Harrisburg Area Community College conducted an institutional study to provide a description of those students who left the program (Snyder and Blocker, 1970). The Louisiana Technical University (Terry, 1972) was interested in the present status of its former students, why they left and what action by the school would have prevented their leaving.

The stated purpose of the Willet study (1973) was to increase school retention. Selo (1974) used the follow-up of school noncompleters to aid in school recruitment.

Follow-up studies also have been conducted by private research coordinating units and state departments of education. The Center for Research and Development in Higher Education sponsored the Wilms study (1974). Hannah (1969) studied 13 colleges for the Vermont State Department of Education to ascertain why students leave college and other factors related to school attrition. A North Carolina statewide follow-up procedure was developed to gather data about employment and the educational status of students in community colleges and technical institutes in the state system (Gilford Technical Institute, 1972).

Hannah (1969) also conducted a national follow-up study. The Project on Student Development was a four-year longitudinal study to determine the personality characteristics of dropouts.

Thus follow-up studies concerning the students who do not complete their educational program are conducted for various purposes on the national, state, and local level. Most research is conducted in an attempt to find those factors that distinguish the potential school noncompleter from the completer. The preponderance of research is at the institutional level. Few studies have been completed using regional or national samples to provide a comparison group. No national norms were found on characteristics of technical institute graduates or noncompleters.

Methodology of Follow-Up Studies

Follow-up studies of graduates and noncompleters of an educational program typically utilize the descriptive method of research. Data for these studies are gathered from such sources as student files, mailed questionnaires and/or interviews. Numerous studies (Bowen and Meyers, 1976; Guilford Technical Institute, 1972; Paul, 1975; Snyder and Blocker, 1970; Weigel, 1969) all collected information using a mailed questionnaire. Brightman (1972) and Coast Community College (1973) used the telephone interview for collecting information. The Brightman study (1972) done for Coast Community College in California concluded that telephone interviews do not result in markedly higher response rates than mailed questionnaires. The data collected through telephone interviews, suggests

Brightman, tends to be more reliable because bias introduced between respondents and nonrespondents is virtually eliminated.

Davidson (1970) interviewed and recorded responses using a tape recorder. Terry (1972) also used an assortment of information gathering techniques. He collected available information from student files at the high school and college level. Other data were collected using a personal interview. When students were out of state they were interviewed by telephone. Terry's basic procedure for analysis of data was the comparative method, comparing the noncompleter with the graduates of the vocational education curriculum areas.

Paul (1975) conducted a survey and developed a Manual for Conducting Follow-Up Surveys of Former Vocational Students. He pretested his questionnaire with a sample of 7,432 secondary, 2,908 postsecondary, and 437 adult terminators. Paul suggested as a procedure a "pre-letter" mailed to the study sample encouraging them to respond. He recommended that the first questionnaire be mailed two to three weeks after the pre-letter. Included in the mailing of all questionnaires should be a stamped preaddressed return envelope. In an assortment of different mailing sequences Paul had the highest return rate using the advance notice pre-letter, questionnaire, reminder card followed by a second questionnaire to the nonrespondents. His study found that one follow-up mailing lead to a 50-70 percent increase in returned questionnaires. Paul also sampled those who actually filled out and returned the questionnaire by having an experienced interviewer ask specific questions about the survey instrument.

The Bowen and Meyers manual (1976) had as its primary goal the development of procedures and materials to assist postsecondary education institutions in conducting attrition studies. In their study the authors explained the procedure, but do not document the actual field test results. They developed and field tested a questionnaire appropriate to the postsecondary level of education. Their manual was an accumulation of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

Bowen and Meyers included in their instrument questions to gain specific information regarding:

1. a social description of the sample,
2. activities engaged in before leaving,
3. reasons students left school,
4. degree of satisfaction with the educational institution,
5. changes at the institution that would have encouraged the students to stay and finish their program of instruction, and
6. future plans and activities of the student.

The authors also included information on their questionnaire that could be acquired from student files, stating that many times this information is lacking or inaccurate. The suggested length of the questionnaire according to Bowen and Meyers and Paul (1975) is two pages.

Findings and Conclusions of Follow-Up Studies

The findings and conclusions of research and related literature are postulated to help educators solve attrition problems. The purpose of studies on noncompleters is to help predict who might be potential non-completers and hopefully keep them in their education programs.

Goetz and Leach (1967) found no significant difference between school leavers and school persisters. The authors concluded that the usual choices included on questionnaires given to dropouts by researchers allowed them to save face and answer in a socially accepted manner. They suggest that typical questionnaires may not allow the dropout to share all the reasons why he left school.

These findings are consistent with Davis' findings (1970) and suggest the combined technique of questionnaire and interviewing would be most appropriate to determine the real reasons for individuals dropping out of school. Davis followed-up 141 freshman withdrawers from three Florida junior colleges. He found that withdrawers tended to be pragmatic, materialistic and able to recognize higher education as one of the major prerequisites for upward mobility. Despite these findings students did not perceive their college experience as positive. They were critical of the school and its services, but seemed more disappointed with themselves than the school.

In reporting the findings of a national study on dropouts Hannah (1970) found no easily separated factor or variable that identifies a student who drops out of a program and a student who completes a program. The Brightman study in 1972 also found there to be no significant difference between school leavers and school persisters.

Snyder and Blocker (1970) ranked the most frequent responses given for leaving Harrisburg Area Community College as (1) to attend another college, (2) to enter the armed service, (3) to become employed, and (4) objectives completed. The findings of a 1973 study done by Coast

Community College differed from those of Snyder and Blocker. Most former students at Coast Community College had not re-enrolled in college. Eighty-one percent of the former students felt college had not helped them at all. The remaining 17 percent felt they had completed their desired amount of education.

Terry (1972) found that nonpersisters at one institution could not be generalized as individuals having given up on future education. Out of a sample of 180 nonpersisters studied Terry found 102 continued their education at different educational institutions. He reclassified 57 percent of his nonpersisters as persisters.

Conrad (1974) found that dropouts tended to indicate on questionnaires socially accepted reasons for dropping out, but in the interviews 80 percent of the dropouts said they dropped out due to personal and family reasons. He also discovered dropouts were distinguishable from the general norm by a preponderance of negative descriptions for both male and female respondents. The dropout tended to indicate a less favorable personal development. Thus Conrad was able to distinguish in part the dropout from the nondropout.

Panos (1968) found that education outcomes are determined both by the individual's personal characteristics and the environmental context. Similarly Turner (1970) discovered that student leaving factors involved an interplay of actual and perceived ability, family and school background and motivation. He concluded from these findings that the student's adjustment to the school and faculty may play an important part in how the student perceives himself and his decision to continue or leave school.

The theme of Boshier's study (1973) was "that reasons for nonparticipation and dropout do not reside exclusively within the participant" (p. 279). This study was based on the Personality and Educational Environmental Scales (PEESC), a modified semantic differential measure. It incorporated fifteen reliable and relevant eleven step scales. The results of the use of this model found that nonparticipants manifested greater self/institutional incongruences than participants. Boshier concluded that "educators need to have a regard for environmental aspects which are formal (e.g., the stated requirements of the institution) and informal (e.g., the reception given enrolling students by office staff, arrangements for dining, informal study . . . etc.)" (p. 279).

Summary of Research and Related Literature

The findings of research and related literature on the noncompleter tends to indicate there is no single variable that results in a student leaving an educational institution. A student leaves an institution because of a number of multivariables that differ from institution to institution.

Studies on the noncompleter especially at the postsecondary level of education question the appropriateness of labeling him a dropout indicating the term itself implies failure. Findings of numerous research studies tend to indicate that some noncompleters are actually completers because either they are continuing their education elsewhere or they perceive they have completed their desired amount of education.

Among the potential multivariables for which a student may leave an educational program is the institution itself. Numerous studies concerned with the noncompleter find the environment and the student's perception of the institution a factor for leaving.

Research studies and related literature tend to indicate that each institution must follow-up on its own noncompleters. The findings of this type of follow-up will be more reflective of the reasons why students leave that particular program than generalizable to other institutions.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Methodology and Population

The study employed the descriptive method of research. The population of the study included all 394 enrolees of the State Technical Institute at Knoxville (STIK) from September, 1974, through June, 1977, who were reported by STIK to have left the school prior to completing their program of study. Those students enrolled in the Continuing Education Program were not included in the study.

The Questionnaire

Data were collected using a two-page, objective questionnaire developed by the researcher. The survey instrument was designed to gather information which assisted in answering the five basic questions posed by the study. The examination of research and related literature produced a list of reasons most commonly identified in follow-up studies and stated by noncompleters during interviews as reasons for leaving educational institutions. From this list, those reasons and questions that were applicable and of concern to the study and to STIK were included on the survey instrument.

The ad hoc STIK faculty subcommittee concerned with the decreasing enrollment, the dean of instruction, the head of student services and the president were consulted regarding the questionnaire and the wording of the cover letter. (See Appendices A and B.) The questions were

evaluated for content validity by a three-member jury: two vocational-technical teacher educators, Dr. Melvin D. Miller, and Dr. Gerald LaBorde, and a career development specialist, Dr. Siegfried Dietz.

A sample questionnaire and cover letter were field tested for readability and understanding. Seven randomly selected, enrolled students from STIK agreed to fill out the sample questionnaire. After the questionnaires were returned the individuals were interviewed over the telephone to better determine their reaction and understanding to the instrument and letter sent. The results of the field test indicated the questionnaire and cover letter met the readability and understanding requirements of the population for which it was intended.

Procedures for Collecting Data

A schedule of activities for collecting data was agreed upon by the researcher, academic advisors and the cooperating institution prior to conducting the study. The activities included:

1. Mail the questionnaire, cover letter and postage-paid return envelope to the total population bulk rate.

2. After an interval of two weeks, mail a follow-up of the complete materials first class to those who did not respond to the first questionnaire.

3. Conduct a random sampling of the remaining nonrespondents by telephone three weeks after mailing the second questionnaire to determine if the nonrespondents differed from those who did respond to the questionnaire.

The first mailing resulted in an unusually low return, far below the 50 percent response set as a minimum needed for the study. (See Appendix C.) In assessing possible reasons for the meager returns three reasons were hypothesized. The reasons were:

1. The length of time between a person leaving STIK and his receipt of a questionnaire varied from a few months to as much as four years. The population from 18-20 who comprised a major percentage of the noncompleters, could be expected to be highly mobile after withdrawing from a school.

2. The information contained in the STIK files on noncompleters was in many cases incomplete or contradictory. While compiling the mailing list it was difficult to ascertain that information which was most current in many of the files.

3. The original mailing sent bulk rate did not provide for the questionnaires to be either forwarded or returned to STIK when the intended recipient had moved. Therefore, of the 363 persons who did not respond to the first questionnaire in the allotted time, it was not possible to know how many had actually received the questionnaire.

The need to modify the original follow-up procedure was based on the characteristics of the STIK population, the low first response rate and the intention to secure at least a 50 percent response. An extensive telephone effort was begun to remind noncompleters to fill out the questionnaire and to verify their current addresses. Using the telephone numbers obtained from the STIK files, the telephone numbers of relatives listed in the files, the local telephone directory and

operator assistance, reminder telephone calls were made. Calls were made to Knoxville numbers and all communities in East Tennessee from which students were enrolled.

Whenever possible the noncompleter was spoken to and asked to complete and return the questionnaire. If the person did not imply the first questionnaire was readily available, the interviewer expressed a willingness to mail a second questionnaire. At the request of eight noncompleters questionnaires were filled out over the telephone. The questionnaires were read verbatim to the noncompleter and his responses were written in or checked. Only three people stated they were not interested in the study and refused to answer.

The majority of the telephone calls were made to locate individuals. Messages were left with relatives with the request they remind the noncompleter to complete and return the questionnaire. If the person had moved the new address was requested and in all cases made available to the interviewer when it was known.

Sixty-one addresses of noncompleters were verified as being incorrect by someone answering the telephone at a number listed originally by the noncompleter. New addresses were acquired in 41 of those cases. In addition, a large number of wrong telephone numbers and no answers were realized when trying to reach members of the population. Follow-up questionnaires were immediately sent to the individuals when new addresses were obtained through the telephone reminder calls.

The follow-up to 323 people was mailed first class on August 12, 1977. A handwritten message encouraging the return of the questionnaire was included on the bottom of each cover letter. It was recognized that in many cases where the change of address was obtained the follow-up questionnaire was the only questionnaire received by the noncompleter.

The follow-up questionnaire brought an additional response of 72 questionnaires or a total of 143 by August 29, 1977. Forty-seven questionnaires were returned to STIK because of incorrect addresses.

To achieve the 50 percent response rate a second telephone campaign was conducted. Telephone calls were attempted to everyone with a listed telephone number. The noncompleter was asked to return the questionnaire; in addition the interviewer offered to complete the questionnaire over the telephone. Twenty-seven telephone interviews were completed and a sufficient number of mailed replies were encouraged to increase the response total to 199, a 50 percent return.

Reporting of the Data

The returned questionnaires were checked in using either the code number on the questionnaire or the respondent's name when it appeared on the return envelope. No further use was made of the identified questionnaires other than avoiding duplication.

Upon completion of data collection the questionnaires were coded, keypunched and computer programmed in readiness for data reporting. Data from the questionnaires are reported in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

REPORTING OF THE DATA

The data collected during the follow-up study represented the first effort to systematically collect information on the noncompleter by the four-year-old State Technical Institute at Knoxville. The operational definition as described in Chapter III has identified the study population of noncompleters as "all 394 enrollees of the State Technical Institute at Knoxville (STIK) from September, 1974, through June, 1977, who were reported by STIK to have left the school prior to completing their program of study" (p. 18).

Responses to the questionnaire were received from 199 members of the total population. (See Appendix C.) Nine of the respondents indicated on their questionnaire or during the telephone interviews that they had never actually attended STIK. They stated they had completed such activities as filling out an application to attend or taken a pre-admission test, but had never attended any classes or made further contact with STIK. Because these nine individuals did not meet the study definition of actual attendance the information provided by them is not included in the reporting of the data and the total population was reduced to 385. The data included in this chapter is based on information provided by 190 respondents.

The reporting of the data is organized to answer the five specific questions of the study. The five questions are:

1. What is the social description of noncompleters who have attended STIK?

2. What reasons do students give for leaving STIK?

3. What procedures, if any, could STIK have implemented which would have kept noncompleters in school?

4. Are noncompleters continuing their education?

5. Was the first full-time employment held by the noncompleter related to the training received at STIK?

Social Description

The social description of the noncompleter is derived from the responses to questions regarding personal information and employment experience while attending STIK. The characteristics included in the social description are: (1) sex, (2) age, (3) marital status, (4) class membership, (5) program affiliation, (6) number of quarters attended, (7) commuting distance to STIK, (8) employment status, and (9) job relatedness to training received at STIK.

Sex of noncompleters. Of the 385 noncompleters who made up the population of noncompleters 344 or 89.4 percent were male. The actual response rate as shown in Table 1 compared favorably to the total population. A greater percentage, 58.5 percent, of the total population of females responded to the survey questionnaire.

Table 1. Sex of Noncompleters for the Total Population and the Survey Respondents. (Expressed as a Percentage.)

Sex	Total Population	Percent N=385	Survey Responses	Percent N=190	Percent of Responses by Sex for Total Population
Male	344	89.4	166	87.4	48.2
Female	41	10.6	24	12.6	58.5
Total	385	100.0	190	100.0	--

Age of the noncompleters. The mean age of individuals who left STIK prior to completing their program of study is 25.8 years. The standard deviation is 9.1 years. Thus 68 percent of the respondents fall between 17 years and 35 years. The youngest respondent indicated he was 17 years old when he left STIK and the oldest respondent reported he was 63 years old, giving a range of 47 years.

Marital status of the noncompleters. The marital status of the respondents as shown in Table 2 indicate nearly as many students were married as single while attending STIK.

Table 2. Marital Status of Noncompleters for the Survey Respondents. (Expressed as a Percentage.)

Marital Status	Responses	Percent N=190
Single	96	50.5
Divorced	9	4.7
Married	83	43.7
No Response	2	1.1
Total	190	100.0

Class membership of noncompleters. The response rate for noncompleters from the three classes is shown in Table 3. The response rate is similar to the composition of the noncompleters who make up the total population.

Table 3. Class Membership of Noncompleters for the Total Population and the Survey Respondents. (Expressed as a Percentage.)

Class	Total Population	Percent N=385	Survey Responses	Percent N=190	Percent of Responses by Total Class Population
Fall 1974 through Summer 1975	61	15.8	27	14.2	44.3
Fall 1975 through Summer 1976	210	54.5	102	53.7	48.6
Fall 1976 through June 1977	114	29.6	61	32.1	53.5
Total	385	99.9	190	100.0	--

Program affiliation of the noncompleters. Program affiliation of the respondents is shown in Table 4. The largest response, 44.7 percent of the total respondents, came from noncompleters who were enrolled in the electrical engineering technology program.

Quarters completed by noncompleters. The number of quarters completed by the respondents before they left STIK is shown in Table 5. The mean number of quarters completed by the respondents was 1.6 quarters. Of the respondents 60 percent left after completing one or less quarters at STIK. A total of 76.3 percent of the respondents left after completing two or less quarters.

Table 4. Program Affiliation of Noncompleters for the Survey Respondents. (Expressed as a Percentage.)

Program	Total Population	Percent N=385	Survey Responses	Percent N=190	Percent of Responses by Total Class Population
Electrical Engr. Technology	184	47.8	85	44.7	46.2
Mechanical Engr. Technology	107	27.8	58	30.5	54.2
Chemical Engr. Technology	43	11.2	22	11.6	51.2
Business Data Processing	33	8.6	20	10.5	60.6
Undecided	18	4.6	5	2.6	27.8
Total	385	100.0	190	99.9	--

Table 5. Quarters Completed by Noncompleters for Survey Respondents. (Expressed as a Percentage.)

Quarters	Responses	Percent N=190	Cumulative Percentage
0	55	28.9	28.9
1	59	31.0	60.0
2	31	16.3	76.3
3	15	7.9	84.2
4	19	10.0	94.2
5	7	3.7	97.9
6	2	1.0	98.9
7	2	1.0	100.0
Total	190	100.0	--

Commuting distance of noncompleters to STIK. The mean number of miles traveled one way to class was indicated by the respondents to be 12.4 miles. The standard deviation is 8.8 miles, thus 68 percent of the respondents traveled between four miles and 21 miles to class one way. The farthest distance that a respondent indicated he commuted one way was 43 miles, while the shortest distance indicated was less than one mile.

STIK is intended to be a regional training institute for Knox and surrounding counties and from the addresses of the respondents, students are being attracted from the region. The mean one way commuting distance of 12.4 miles, if used as a radius to draw a circle with STIK at the center, would be outside the Knoxville city limits at every point.

Employment status of noncompleters while attending STIK. Information regarding employment status and hours worked is shown in Table 6. Of the 130 respondents who indicated they were employed while attending STIK the mean number of hours worked is 36.9 hours. Using 35 hours or more as the basis for full-time employment, 95 or 73.1 percent of those employed were working full time while they attended STIK. The minimum number of hours reported worked by a respondent was four hours and the maximum reported was 60 hours per week.

The relatedness of employment while attending STIK to training received by noncompleters. All respondents who indicated they were employed while attending STIK were requested to indicate the degree to which their occupations were related to the type of training received

Table 6. Employment Status of Noncompleters while Attending STIK for Survey Respondents. (Expressed as a Percentage.)

Employment Status	Respondents	Respondents Employed	Percentage of Respondents N=190	Percentage of Respondents Employed N=13
Employed	130		64.4	
Full-Time		95		73.1
Less than Full-Time		35		26.9
Unemployed	55		28.9	
Unknown	5		2.6	
Total	190		100.0	100.0

while at STIK. Of the 130 respondents who worked while attending STIK only 126 of them indicated the relatedness of their job to the training received at STIK. Information as shown in Table 7 indicates that 72.2 percent of those who worked while attending STIK worked in areas either slightly related or not related to the training they received while at STIK.

Table 7. Employment During Training as Related to the Training Received at STIK by Noncompleters and Broken Down into Full-Time and Part-Time Employment for Survey Respondents. (Expressed as a Percent.)

Relatedness	Responses	Percent N=126	Full-Time Employment	Percent N=94	Part-Time Employment	Percent N=32
Related	35	27.6	32	34.0	3	9.4
Slightly Related	20	15.9	17	18.1	3	9.4
Not Related	71	56.3	45	47.9	26	81.2
Total	126	100.0	94	100.0	32	100.0

Reasons for Leaving STIK

The second question to be answered by the study is: What reasons do students give for leaving STIK? Each noncompleter in the study was asked to indicate by checking whether each reason listed was or was not a reason that influenced his leaving STIK.

Table 8 shows the reasons for noncompletion in order of most frequent selection as: (1) employment, (2) program dissatisfaction, (3) family, marriage or personal circumstances, (4) academic problem, (5) financial, (6) other reasons, (7) transportation, (8) health, (9) completed desired amount of education, and (10) school atmosphere dissatisfaction.

Table 8. Reasons Indicated for Leaving STIK for Survey Respondents. (Expressed as a Percentage.)

Reason	Responses	Percent N=190
Employment	87	45.8
Program Dissatisfaction	61	32.1
Family, Marriage or Personal Circumstances	56	29.5
Academic Problem	45	23.7
Financial	44	23.2
Other Reasons	28	14.7
Transportation	19	10.0
Health	15	7.9
Completed Desired Amount of Education	15	7.9
School Atmosphere Dissatisfaction	14	7.4
Total	384	--

Two most important reasons for leaving STIK. After respondents checked the reasons for leaving STIK they were asked to circle the two reasons that most influenced their leaving STIK. When asked to circle the two reasons that most influenced their leaving STIK respondents selected reasons that equated with the total number of reasons first indicated. (See Table 8 and Table 9).

A total of 384 reasons were indicated and of these 289 were circled as the two that most influenced students leaving. The reasons indicated by respondents as the two reasons that most influenced their leaving are shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Two Main Reasons Indicated for Leaving STIK for Survey Respondents. (Expressed as a Percentage.)

Reason	Responses Total Reasons Indicate as Major	Percent N=190
Employment	74	38.9
Program Dissatisfaction	53	27.9
Family, Marriage or Personal Circumstances	30	15.8
Academic Problem	36	18.9
Financial	30	15.8
Other Reasons	23	12.1
Transportation	12	6.3
School Atmosphere Dissatisfaction	11	5.7
Health	10	5.3
Completed Desired Amount of Education	10	5.3
Total	289	--

Employment remained the most important reason cited for leaving STIK with 38.9 percent of the respondents considering it a major reason. Program dissatisfaction remained the second most often selected reason representing 27.9 percent of the two reasons that most influenced

individuals leaving STIK. These two reasons were selected by a total of 66.8 percent of all the respondents as major reasons for leaving. Seventy-four noncompleters or 38.9 percent of the total respondents indicated only one reason for leaving STIK. Their reasons were reflective of both the total reasons selected and the two major reasons selected.

Activities by STIK which Could Have Aided the Noncompleter

A third question to be answered by the study is: What procedures could STIK have implemented which would have kept noncompleters in school? In an attempt to better determine the changes that STIK might institute to assist future students in completing their program the opinions of noncompleters to various questions were solicited. The questions on the questionnaire which assisted in answering this question are:

1. Could the staff at State Tech-Knoxville have done anything to assist you to complete your course of study?

2. If yes, check those items that would have assisted you in completing your program.

3. Please state your opinions about the quality of instruction facilities and services provided by State Tech-Knoxville.

4. Who did you talk to about leaving State Tech-Knoxville?

5. Would you recommend to a friend or relative that he/she attend State Tech-Knoxville?

Could the staff at State Tech-Knoxville have done anything to assist you to complete your course of study? The respondents were asked

to indicate yes or no as to whether the staff at STIK could have done anything to assist them in completing their course of study. The information indicated by the respondents is shown in Table 10.

In response to this question 65.3 percent of the respondents indicated STIK could not have assisted them in any way. Sixty non-completers or 31.6 percent of the respondents indicated that the staff could have assisted them in completing their program.

Table 10. Responses to the Question: Could the Staff at STIK Have Done Anything to Assist Noncompleters in Completing Their Course of Study? (Expressed as a Percentage.)

Item	Responses	Percent N=190
Yes	60	31.6
No	124	65.3
No Response	6	3.1
Total	190	100.0

If yes, check those items that would have assisted you in completing your program. The 31.6 percent of the respondents who indicated STIK could have assisted them in completing their program were requested to check one of eight items indicating what STIK could have done that would have assisted them. The eight possible items to be checked were: (1) provide additional programs of study, (2) provide more recreational or social activities, (3) made counseling services more available, (4) provide more individual help, tutoring, (5) assisted more in financial aid, (6) assisted in finding part-time employment, (7) provided more remedial courses, and (8) other, please specify. The responses to this request for information are shown in Table 11.

Twenty-seven of the 60 respondents indicated more individual help or tutoring would have aided them while enrolled at STIK. This item selected by 45 percent of those who indicated STIK could have assisted them in completing their program was by far the first preference of respondents.

Table 11. Responses of Sixty Respondents to the Question: What Would Have Assisted Noncompleters in Completing Their Program? (Expressed as a Percentage.)

Item	Responses	Percent N=96	Percent N=190
More Individual Help, Tutoring	27	45.0	14.2
Additional Programs of Study	12	20.0	6.3
More Counseling Services	12	20.0	6.3
Assistance in Finding Part-Time Employment	12	20.0	6.3
More Remedial Courses	8	13.3	4.2
More Financial Aid	6	10.0	3.2
More Social Activities	2	3.3	1.0
Other	17	28.2	8.9
Total	96		

Please state your opinions about the quality of instruction, facilities and services provided by STIK in the areas listed. A question was included on the survey questionnaire in an attempt to elicit opinions from the respondents on the quality of instruction and supportive services they encountered while attending STIK. The question requested non-completers to place a check in the box which best described the quality of each instruction or supportive service area. The areas of concern were: (1) related subjects, (2) lecture courses, (3) shop/laboratory, (4) counseling, (5) financial aid, and (6) school administration. Each

of these areas could be rated (a) superior, (b) very good, (c) average, (d) below average, (e) poor, and (f) no basis for opinion. The opinions of the respondents are shown in Table 12.

In response to the series of items on instruction, facilities and services provided by STIK the majority of students who responded to each question and felt they had a basis for opinion rated STIK above average in all areas. At least 60.7 percent of the respondents rated STIK either very good or superior in each category. Less than 8 percent of the respondents that indicated they had a basis for opinion rated STIK below average in any of the three subject related areas.

Table 12. Opinions of Respondents Toward the Quality of Instruction, Facilities, and Services Provided by STIK. (Expressed as a Percentage of Those who Stated an Opinion.)

	Related Subjects		Technical Lectures		Shop/ Lab		Counseling		Financial Aid		Administration	
Rating	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Superior	16	14.7	16	12.4	20	15.5	18	14.8	7	17.3	16	11.3
Very Good	67	61.5	79	61.2	70	54.3	56	45.9	31	50.0	76	53.5
Average	19	17.4	25	19.4	29	22.5	27	22.1	19	30.6	34	23.6
Below Average	5	4.6	3	2.3	6	4.6	9	7.4	2	3.2	6	4.2
Poor	2	1.8	6	4.6	4	3.1	12	9.8	3	4.8	10	7.0
Total	109	100.0	129	100.0	129	100.0	122	100.0	62	100.0	132	100.0
No Opinion	81		61		61		68		118		58	

Who did you talk to about leaving STIK? In an effort to determine how STIK can better assist future potential noncompleters respondents were asked to indicate who they talked to about leaving STIK. The respondents were asked to check one or more of the people listed on the

questionnaire. The people listed were: (1) counselor, (2) faculty technical advisor, (3) instructor, (4) dean of instruction, (5) president, (6) fellow student in the program, (7) friend or relative not associated with STIK, and (8) no one. The responses to this question appear in Table 13.

Table 13. Responses to the Question: Who Did You Talk to About Leaving STIK? (Expressed as a Percentage.)

Person	Responses	Percent N=190
Counselor	39	20.5
Faculty Technical Advisor	24	12.6
Instructor	36	18.9
Dean	7	3.7
President	3	1.6
Fellow Student at STIK	33	17.4
Friend or Relative	36	18.9
No One	86	45.3
No Response	3	1.6

Eighty-six or 45.3 percent of the respondents indicated they talked to no one before leaving STIK. The remaining 104 respondents checked some or all of the seven other persons listed on the questionnaire. Of the five possible staff and faculty listed for this question, the counselor was checked by 20.5 percent of the respondents, the instructor by 18.9 percent, the faculty technical advisor by 12.6 percent, the dean by 3.7 percent and the president by 1.6 percent. Of the respondents 57.3 percent talked to all of the STIK staff indicated above.

Would you recommend to a friend or relative that he/she attend STIK? Respondents were asked to indicate whether they would recommend

STIK to a friend or relative who was interested in the type of technological training available at STIK. The responses to this question are shown in Table 14.

Most respondents, 86.3 percent, indicated yes, they would recommend STIK. Only 19 respondents or 10 percent indicated they would not recommend STIK.

Table 14. Responses to the Question: Would You Recommend to a Friend or Relative That He/She Attend STIK? (Expressed as a Percentage.)

Item	Responses	Percent N=190
Yes	164	86.3
No	19	10.0
No Response	7	3.7
Total	190	100.0

Enrollment in Other Educational Programs

The fourth question to be answered by the study is: Are noncompleters continuing their education? Noncompleters were requested to check yes or no whether they had enrolled in any other education program since leaving STIK. The responses to this question are shown in Table 15.

A majority of the respondents, 66.8 percent, indicated they had not enrolled in another educational institution since leaving STIK.

The 57 individuals or 30.0 percent of the respondents who indicated they had enrolled in another program were requested to check the choice of program which most closely approximated the institution in which

Table 15. Responses to the Question: Since Leaving State Tech-Knoxville Have You Enrolled in Another Educational Training Program? (Expressed as a Percentage.)

Item	Responses	Percent N=190
Yes	57	30.0
No	127	66.8
No Response	6	3.2
Total	190	100.0

they enrolled. The choices listed on the questionnaire included: (1) vocational technical program, (2) private vocational school, (3) community or junior college, (4) four-year college or university, and (5) other. The responses to the question of enrollment in another educational program are shown in Table 16.

Table 16. Responses to the Question: What Type of Educational Training Program Did You Enroll in Since Leaving STIK? (Expressed as a Percentage.)

Item	Responses	Percent Enrolled in Another Program N=57	Percent N=190
Vocational Technical Program	23	40.4	12.1
Private Vocational School	1	1.8	0.5
Community or Junior College	5	8.7	2.6
Four-Year College or University	17	29.8	8.9
Other	11	19.3	5.8
Total	57	100.0	
No Further Education	127		66.8
No Response	6		3.2
Total	190		100.0

The highest percentage or 40.4 percent of those who did enroll in another education training program enrolled in a vocational technical program of study. This percentage represented only 12.1 percent of the total respondents. The majority of respondents, 66.8 percent, did not enroll in another educational institution.

A question was included on the questionnaire to ascertain whether noncompleters have future plans to re-enroll at STIK within the next 18 months. The responses to the question on re-enrollment are shown in Table 17.

Table 17. Responses to the Question: Do You Have Plans to Re-enroll at STIK within the Next 18 Months? (Expressed as a Percentage.)

Item	Respondents	Percent N=190
Yes	73	38.4
No	109	57.4
No Response	8	4.2
Total	190	100.0

Over half, 57.4 percent, of the respondents indicated they had no plans to re-enroll at STIK. Those who indicated they had plans to re-enroll at STIK within the next 18 months accounted for 38.4 percent of the total response.

Relatedness of Employment Immediately After Leaving STIK

The fifth question to be answered by the study is: Was the first full-time employment held by the noncompleter related to the training

received at STIK? Noncompleters were asked to indicate the first full-time job held after leaving STIK and whether it was: (1) not related to training, (2) slightly related to training, or (3) related to training received while at STIK. There was no way on the questionnaire to differentiate whether the first full-time job was the same job held while attending STIK. The relatedness of the first full-time employment held after leaving STIK is shown in Table 18.

Table 18. First Full-Time Employment Held Immediately after Leaving STIK as Related to the Training Received at STIK by Noncompleters. (Expressed as a Percentage.)

Relatedness	Responses	Percent of Those Who Worked N=173
Related	46	26.6
Slightly Related	31	17.9
Not Related	96	55.5
Total	173	100.0
Not Working	17	
Total	190	

Of the 190 noncompleters who responded to the survey questionnaire 17 or 8.9 percent of them indicated they had not worked since leaving STIK. Of the 173 who indicated they were working 55.5 percent indicated their first full-time job after leaving STIK was in an area not related to their training received while at STIK. The areas not related and slightly related to training received while at STIK accounted for a total response of 73.4 percent. Only 26.6 percent of those working stated they were working in an area related to the training they received while at STIK.

The respondents were also asked to state their job title in the first full-time employment held after leaving STIK. The information was not found to be useful because of the lack of precision in the responses; and hence there was an inability to aggregate the open-ended responses. The job titles that were listed more than one time were electrician (5), machinist (5), draftsman (4) laborer (3), and construction (3). The job titles in some cases enabled verification of job relatedness.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION OF DATA, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the research was to develop and test a procedure that could be used to follow-up program noncompleters at State Technical Institute at Knoxville (STIK). A review of literature, consultation with STIK staff and thesis advisors aided in the development of the items that appeared on the survey instrument. Questionnaires were mailed to 394 individuals identified by STIK as the total population of noncompleters. The population was later adjusted to 385 noncompleters. Data were collected and reported on 190 noncompleters who responded to the questionnaire. The five questions answered by the study were:

1. What is the social description of noncompleters who attended STIK?

2. What reasons do students give for leaving STIK?

3. What procedures could STIK have implemented which would have kept noncompleters in school?

4. Are noncompleters continuing their education?

5. Was the first full-time employment held by the noncompleter related to the training received at STIK?

This chapter will present a discussion of the data as well as the conclusions and recommendations based on the study findings.

Discussion of Data

The social description of the noncompleter is based on the responses to questions regarding personal information. Responses received correlated closely with the total population both by class and program eliminating the possibility of bias. Noncompleters were found to be:

1. 87.4 percent male,
2. average age of 25.8 years,
3. approximately evenly divided between married and single,
4. 60.0 percent completed one or less quarters at STIK,
5. commute an average of 16.4 miles one way to STIK,
6. 64.4 percent worked; 73.1 percent of those who worked were employed full-time while attending STIK, and
7. 72.2 percent of those who were working held jobs in areas unrelated or only slightly related to the training they received while at STIK.

The reasons given by respondents for leaving STIK in their order of frequency were:

1. employment (45.8 percent),
2. program dissatisfaction (32.1 percent),
3. family, marriage or personal circumstances (29.5 percent),
4. academic problem (23.7 percent),
5. financial (23.2 percent),
6. other reasons (14.7 percent),
7. transportation (10.0 percent),
8. health (7.9 percent),

9. completed desired amount of education (7.9 percent), and

10. school atmosphere dissatisfaction (7.4 percent).

Fifteen individuals or 7.9 percent of the respondents indicated they left STIK because they had completed their desired amount of education. These individuals although they represent a small percentage of the total respondents should not be theoretically labeled noncompleters because they view themselves as having attained their educational goal.

The frequency of the two most important reasons indicated for leaving STIK by noncompleters paralleled the frequency of the total responses. Employment and program dissatisfaction remained the number one and two reasons respectively for leaving STIK.

Most noncompleters, 65.3 percent, felt STIK could not have initiated activities which would have assisted them in completing their program. Of the 31.6 percent who indicated STIK could have provided activities which would have assisted them, 45.0 percent checked activities in the area of individualized help or tutoring.

Of the respondents who had a basis for an opinion regarding the quality of instruction, facilities and services provided by STIK at least 60.7 percent rated STIK very good or superior in each of the categories listed. The favorable view of STIK as an educational institution was substantiated by the fact that 38.4 percent of the respondents plan to re-enroll within the next 18 months. When the respondents were asked to check whether or not they would recommend STIK to a friend or relative interested in a technological program of study 86.3 percent checked they would recommend STIK.

There does appear to be evidence that STIK staff did not know what problems students were experiencing and thus could not be adequately responsive to the needs of potential noncompleters. A high percentage, 45.3 percent, of the respondents indicated they talked to no one before leaving STIK.

The majority of respondents, 66.8 percent, indicated they did not enroll in another educational training program since leaving STIK. Of the 30.0 percent who indicated they did enroll in another program the highest percentage, 40.4 percent and 29.8 percent, were enrolled in a vocational-technical program or a four-year college or university respectively.

The majority of noncompleters, 72.4 percent, held jobs after leaving STIK in areas that were unrelated or only slightly related to the training they received while at STIK. It was not possible to determine if the first full-time job held after leaving STIK was the same job held while attending STIK.

Conclusions

1. STIK has limited information about students who are enrolled and/or have enrolled.

2. A substantial proportion of noncompleters leave STIK prior to the completion of two quarters of study.

3. Noncompleters left STIK more for reasons that existed beyond the control of STIK than for reasons that the institution could influence.

4. It appears STIK could have done little to assist noncompleters in remaining in school.

5. A substantial proportion of noncompleters feel a need for additional postsecondary education.

6. The training received at STIK prior to leaving did not result in most noncompleters being employed in jobs related to their education.

Recommendations

1. STIK should collect data on students as they enroll which will aid in program planning and assisting students in selection of courses and in meeting student needs. This information should include social descriptive information and information on educational intent.

2. Action is needed by STIK to ensure the early identification of student academic deficiencies and school adjustment problems.

3. An exit interview should be conducted to ascertain the reasons for students leaving and to encourage their participation in the school's follow-up activities.

4. Periodic follow-up studies should be initiated to ensure noncompleters are contacted no later than six months after they leave the institution.

5. The procedure for future follow-up studies of progaram noncompleters at STIK should include:

-First class or permit mailing with return requested of the questionnaire and self-addressed, return envelope.

-Extensive reminder telephone calls to nonrespondents occurring two weeks after the first mailing with the caller offering the option of filling out the questionnaire via telephone.

-First class or permit mailing with return requested of the follow-up questionnaire and self-addressed, return envelope to non-respondents occurring two weeks after the reminder telephone calls.

-A second extensive telephone effort initiated to encourage nonrespondents to fill out the questionnaire and to solicit telephone interviews. The telephone effort should occur two weeks after the follow-up questionnaires are mailed.

-Two weeks should be given to allow for final questionnaires to be received.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY OF STUDENTS WHO DID NOT COMPLETE THEIR PROGRAM AT STATE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE AT KNOXVILLE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Check or complete each item as it applies to you.

1. Sex ___Male ___Female
2. Age ___ yrs, when leaving State Tech-Knoxville
3. When attending State Tech-Knoxville were you

   ___single

   ___married

   ___divorced or separated

   ___widowed
4. How far did you commute to class one way? ___miles.
5. What was your course of study while at State Tech-Knoxville?

   ___Business Data Processing

   ___Chemical Engineering Technology

   ___Electrical Engineering Technology

   ___Mechanical Engineering Technology
6. How many quarters had you completed when you left State Tech-Knoxville?

   Circle one 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION WHILE ATTENDING STATE TECH-KNOXVILLE

7. Were you employed while attending State Tech-Knoxville? ___YES ___NO

   If no, go to question #8. If yes, how many hours per week did you work? ___hours per week.

   What was your job title? _____

   How did your job relate to the training you were receiving at State Tech-Knoxville?

   ___not related to training

   ___slightly related to training

   ___related to training

EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION AFTER LEAVING STATE TECH-KNOXVILLE

8. What was the job title of the first full-time job you had after leaving State Tech-Knoxville? It may be the same job in question #7. _____

How did your job relate to the training you were receiving at State Tech-Knoxville?

___not related to training

___slightly related to training

___related to training

ATTITUDES TOWARD STATE TECH-KNOXVILLE

9. Please state your opinions about the quality of instruction, facilities and services provided by State Tech-Knoxville in the following areas. Check each one.

	Superior	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor	No Basis for Opinion
Related subjects (English, math, physics, social science						
Lecture courses in your major technical area of study						
Shop/Lab courses in your major technical area of study						
Counseling						
Financial Aid						
School Administration						

10. Listed below are various reasons a student might give for withdrawing from a technical institute. Please respond to each item by checking it yes or no and indicating it to be a reason or not a reason for your leaving State Tech.

	No	Yes
Academic Problems	( )	( )
Employment	( )	( )

	No	Yes
Completed desired amount of training at State Tech-Knoxville	( )	( )
Family, marriage or personal circumstances	( )	( )
Financial	( )	( )
Health	( )	( )
Program Dissatisfaction (such as course work, instructors, program choice)	( )	( )
School Atmosphere Dissatisfaction (such as lack of social life, school too impersonal)	( )	( )
Transportation	( )	( )

Other Reasons, please specify _____

_____

11. Looking back at the reasons you checked in question #10 for leaving, circle the two reasons in the above question which most influenced your leaving State Tech-Knoxville.

12. Who did you talk to about leaving State Tech-Knoxville? Check all that apply.

___Counselor
___Faculty Technical Advisor
___Instructor
___Dean of Instruction
___President
___Fellow Student in the Program
___Friend or relative not associated with State Tech
___No one

13. Could the staff at State Tech-Knoxville have done anything to assist you to complete your course of study? ___yes ___no

14. If yes, check those items that would have assisted you in completing your program.

___Provided additional programs of study
___Provided more recreational or social activities
___Made counseling services more available
___Provide more individual help, tutoring
___Assisted more in financial aid
___Assisted in finding part-time employment
___Provided more remedial courses
___Other please specify _____

_____

15. Since leaving State Tech-Knoxville have you enrolled in another educational training program? ___YES ___NO

16. If you did enroll in another educational program what type of school is it?

___Vocational Technical Program ___4-Year college or university

___Private Vocational School ___Other please specify _____

___Community or Junior College _____

17. Do you have plans to re-enroll in State Tech-Knoxville within the next 18 months. ___YES ___NO

18. Would you recommend to a friend or relative that he/she attend State Tech-Knoxville? ___YES ___NO

I would like to receive a copy of the survey summary ___.

Please return the questionnaire in the envelope provided. Sincere thanks for completing the questionnaire.

APPENDIX B

LETTERS

STATE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE AT KNOXVILLE

3435 Division Street
Knoxville, Tennessee 37919 615-637-4262

State Technical Institute at Knoxville is interested in all its former students, both those who have completed their program and those who have not completed their program. We are conducting a survey to find out the reasons why students from the first two classes elected not to complete their programs. You can assist us in this important work.

We need your help and want your honest opinion about our program. It will only take a short time to fill out the questionnaire. All answers will be confidential and will be used only with the combined answers supplied by other students. The questionnaire is coded only to indicate those students who have not returned their questionnaire so we can follow-up on them.

If you are interested, we will send you a summary of the survey results. Just check the space requesting the summary on the questionnaire.

Please return the questionnaire in the enclosed stamped, addressed envelope by August 1, 1977, so we can immediately complete the survey. Thanks for your help in filling out the questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Wayne Jones
President

Doug Perry
Counselor

Karen Doggette
Survey Coordinator

STATE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE AT KNOXVILLE

3435 Division Street
Knoxville, Tennessee 37919 615-637-4262

State Technical Institute at Knoxville is attempting to improve its program through contacting all persons who have ever been enrolled but did not complete two years and receive a degree. In July we sent you a questionnaire regarding your training and reasons for leaving State Tech-Knoxville. As yet, we have not received your questionnaire. Perhaps it did not arrive or you misplaced it.

Many persons whom we have contacted by telephone failed to return the questionnaire because they did not think it was intended for them. If you received one it means we would like your impressions of State Tech-Knoxville to be included in our study.

It will only take a short time to fill out the questionnaire. All answers will be confidential and will be used only with the combined answers supplied by other students. Your consent to participate in the study is assumed by your willingness to complete and return the survey. The questionnaire is coded only to indicate those students who have not returned their questionnaires so we can follow-up on them.

Please return the questionnaire in the enclosed stamped, addressed envelope by September 1, 1977.

Thank you for your help in completing the questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Karen Doggette
Survey Coordinator

APPENDIX C

RATES OF RETURN

Table 19. Rates of Response of the Noncompleters in the Population

	Population Size	Number of Responses	Percent
Population	394		100.0
Mailed Returns		164	
Telephone Interviews		35	
Total Responses		199	50.5
Responses Not Included in the Study		9	
Total Responses Included in the Study		190	48.2
Adjusted Population	385		100.0
Total Responses Based on Adjusted Population		190	49.4

Table 20. STIK Follow-Up Questionnaires Returned between July 22, 1977, and September 10, 1977

Activity	Date	Returns	
Mailing Bulk Rate to 394 Noncompleters	July 22, 1977 July 23 - August 2	Mailed Returns	31
Telephone Reminder and Address Verification and Telephone Interviews	August 3 - August 11	Telephone Mailed Returns	8 32
Follow-Up Mailing to 323 First Class	August 12		
Telephone Campaign	August 12 - August 29 August 30 - September 10	Mailed Returns Mailed Telephone	72 27 29
		Total	199

VITA

Karen K. Doggette was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She graduated from South Division High School in June 1964. The following September she entered the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and in January 1969 she received a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Welfare. She continued her educational studies at Washburn University of Topeka, Topeka, Kansas, and Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina. In 1969-1970 she taught second grade for the Anderson County School District, Pendleton, South Carolina.

In the spring of 1976 she began study toward a Master of Science degree with a major in Vocational-Technical Education. She received her Master of Science degree in March of 1978.

The author is a member of Omicron Tau Theta. Ms. Doggette hopes to work in a vocational-technical education program after graduation.

She is married to John R. Doggette of Knoxville, Tennessee. They have two children, Amy, six, and Jonathan, three.