8-1978

An Examination of the Effectiveness of a Junior High School Career Exploration Program in the Hopkins County School System

Cynthia Mason
Western Kentucky University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/theses
Part of the Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Commons, Educational Leadership Commons, Elementary and Middle and Secondary Education Administration Commons, and the Student Counseling and Personnel Services Commons

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/theses/2582

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by TopSCHOLAR®. It has been accepted for inclusion in Masters Theses & Specialist Projects by an authorized administrator of TopSCHOLAR®. For more information, please contact topscholar@wku.edu.
Mason,

Cynthia Palmer

1978
AN EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL CAREER EXPLORATION PROGRAM IN THE HOPKINS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

A Project
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Educational Specialist Degree

by
Cynthia Palmer Mason
August, 1978
AN EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL CAREER EXPLORATION PROGRAM IN THE HOPKINS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

Recommended May 8th 1978

Stephen B. Johnson
Director of Thesis

Chief Comptroller

Approved July 17, 1978

Dean of the Graduate College
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to acknowledge with sincere appreciation the assistance given her in the writing of this paper. With gratitude, I would like to thank Dr. Stephen Schnacke, my project committee chairman; and the members of my committee, Dr. Emmett Burkeen and Dr. Phil Constans. The support and guidance of my committee have been a tremendous help in the completion of this study.

I would also like to thank Mr. Paul Armstrong and Mr. William H. Dunning, principals of the schools participating in the study. Sincere thanks are also extended to Mrs. Wanda Whitledge, guidance counselor at South Hopkins High School, who was extremely helpful in collecting data.

A special note of appreciation is extended to Mrs. Carolyn Marks, Staff Assistant at the Western Kentucky Computer Center, who was so pleasant and helpful.

Finally, the writer wishes to express her sincere appreciation to her husband, Ernest; and her children, Lori Anne and Scott Palmer; for their patience and understanding during the past several months.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Problem</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypotheses</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Career Education</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antecedents of Career Education</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madisonville Junior High School Career</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Program</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Objectives</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploratory Cluster Offerings</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Education Effectiveness Studies</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Population</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Subjects</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Program Descriptions</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Exploration Program</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

iv
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Results</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Discussion</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of the Study</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Occupational Classifications for Heads of Households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Means, Standard Deviations, and $t$ for the Experimental and Control Groups on the Career Maturity Inventory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Means, Standard Deviations, and $t$ for the Experimental and Control Groups on the Total Number of Days Missed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abstract

AN EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL CAREER EXPLORATION PROGRAM IN THE HOPKINS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

The problem investigated in this study was a comparison of the effectiveness of a career exploration program in a junior high school curriculum versus a traditional curriculum with regard to increased career competence and positive attitudes toward the world of work as measured by Form A-1 of the Career Maturity Inventory.

The population for this study consisted of the ninth-grade classes of two Hopkins County Schools. The subjects for the control group (South Hopkins) consisted of 25 ninth-grade students who had not been exposed to a career exploration program and the subjects for the experimental group (Madisonville Junior High School) consisted of 25 ninth-grade students who had been involved in a career exploration program in grades seven and eight. With the exception of the two-year career exploration program, the formal academic education of the ninth-grade students in the two schools was basically the same.

After the subjects were selected, they were administered Form A-1 of the Career Maturity Inventory. The mean ages, IQ scores, Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills scores, and number of days missed were compared for significant differences. The parents' occupations were categorized into the 12 Occupational Classifications published by the U.S. Department of Commerce and considered for possible differences in trends. Independent samples means were compared by t test.
Results of the study revealed that there was a significant difference in the attitudes toward the world of work and in the five areas that were measured on the Career Competence Test. The results also indicated a significant difference in the attendance records of the two groups that participated in the study.

It was concluded that the Madisonville Junior High School Career Exploration Program had a beneficial impact upon students. More positive attitudes toward the world of work, increased career knowledge, and an increased interest in school in general were found among those children who participated in a career education program in the experimental group.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, leaders in education, the world of work, and government have witnessed shortcomings in the transition of young adults from school to the world of work. In general, schools have presented students with little experience in career decision making. Counseling, as a part of education, has not been deeply involved with the aspects of career education. These educational conditions have contributed in some ways to a high dropout rate which leads to difficulties in employment for the employer, former students, and ultimately society. The financial and human cost to the individual and to society is staggering.

The need for career education is readily apparent when one considers the full range and intensity of the problems facing our present society. Drug addiction, crime, dropouts from society, dropouts from schools, unemployment, and underemployment are everyday concerns that must be dealt with.

Each year approximately 750,000 students drop out of our elementary and secondary schools, and a majority of these dropouts end up on the unemployed or underemployed rolls (Freuhling, 1974). These students drop out for many diverse reasons but one cause has been proffered to be the school curriculum and the teaching methods employed in the schools. Most criticism has been leveled at the "school for schooling's sake" tendencies in the American Education System. Each school should have as one of its primary goals that of providing for each student a program relevant to
the development of youth into the kind of adults who can find the greatest satisfaction and make the most useful contributions in their lives (Howard & Stoumbis, 1970).

Most junior high schools, grades seven through nine, aim their attention at the years best described as "early adolescence," roughly ages twelve through fifteen. According to Faunce and Clute (1961), the three major functions of the junior high school have been listed as follows:

1. To attack the common problems faced by young adolescents in our society, employing and improving command of basic skills and knowledge from many sources for this purpose.

2. To enrich and differentiate learning by exploration of vocational and other individual interests.

3. To assist the early adolescent to make satisfactory personal-social adjustment.

Academic subjects taught in the middle/junior high school should take into consideration the characteristics of early adolescents, including a desire to explore one's self in relation to possible life styles, vocations, and achievements. Career education should not be considered as an addition to the curriculum but as an integral part of it.

With an effective career education program, dignity can be given to workers in all occupations. Career education is a process through which the manpower needs of industry and society can be met while maintaining and increasing individual freedom of choice and providing challenging and well-paid employment. It provides an objective to which all students can relate. It offers real world themes which can provide a common thread
through a body of knowledge and experience. It both motivates and offers a learning vehicle whose attractiveness is meant to be universal (Burns, 1973).

For the junior high school group especially, career education offers a means for exploration of their three vital questions: Who am I? Why am I? What can I become? Career education can not be expected to solve all the problems that today's adolescents may have, but because of the reported results of the educational research that has been done in this area, it can reliably be offered as a possible solution to many of them.

Statement of Problem

The problem investigated in this study was a comparison of the effectiveness of a career exploration program in a junior high school curriculum versus a traditional curriculum with regard to increased career competence and positive attitudes toward the world of work as measured by Form A-1 of the Career Maturity Inventory (Crites, 1973).

A number of studies have shown that at the middle school level there is a pressing need for a career exploration program that will broaden the experiences of students by providing them with an opportunity to explore and become aware of the variety of job opportunities and training programs available, the necessity of work, and help them to become self supporting citizens who can take their places in the world of work and make a positive contribution to their community.

The purpose of this study was to examine the career exploration program of the Madisonville Junior High School with regard to its validity and reliability as a predictor of career competence and positive attitudes toward the world of work.
Hypotheses

For the purpose of this study, the following research hypotheses were developed: (the level of probability necessary to justify the rejection of any testable hypothesis considered in this study was .05).

1. Ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will score higher on a measure of positive attitudes toward the world of work than students who have not had this career exploration experience.

2. Ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will score higher in the area of "Knowing Yourself" on a career competency test than students who have not had this career exploration experience.

3. Ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will score higher in the area of "Knowing About Jobs" on a career competency test than students who have not had this career exploration experience.

4. Ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will score higher in the area of "Choosing A Job" on a career competency test than students who have not had this career exploration experience.

5. Ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will score higher in the area of "Looking Ahead" on a career competency test than students who have not had this career exploration experience.
6. Ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will score higher in the area of "What Should They Do In The Future?" on a career competency test than students who have not had this career exploration experience.

7. Ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will show a more positive attitude toward school as evidenced by better attendance than students who have not had this career exploration experience.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature for this study includes an accepted definition of career education, the antecedents of career education, Madisonville Junior High School Career Exploration Program, and specific studies related to the effectiveness of career exploration programs.

Definition of Career Education

Hoyt (1975) has offered one of the most widely accepted definitions of career education. In general, he believed that career education consists of all the activities and experiences through which individuals prepare themselves for and engage in work—paid or unpaid—during their lives. As a response to a call for educational reform, career education seeks to make preparation for work both a prominent and a permanent goal of American education at all levels. By doing so, it hopes to make work—paid or unpaid—possible, meaningful, and satisfying for each individual.

The U. S. Office of Education has identified 15 "Career Cluster" areas for career education programs. The occupations within a cluster range from professional to unskilled. All school levels must assume responsibility for exposing students to certain clusters or portions of clusters. The organizational scheme is as follows: (a) awareness programs in grades K-6, (b) exploration programs in grades 7-9, and (c) preparation and decision programs in grades 10-12.
**Antecedents of Career Education**

During the last three years an increasing number of people, professions and organizations have concerned themselves with vocational training, vocational counseling, vocational choice, and careers. This increased interest and its associated financial support have attracted so many new investigators to the vocational field that a comprehensive review is no longer possible (Holland & Whitney, 1969). The most comprehensive early work was done by Crites (1968), whose voluminous text, *Vocational Psychology*, deals with vocational choice, adjustment, success, theory, and satisfaction.

According to Hoyt (1975), the students of junior high school age are not the same children who were in elementary school one or two years ago. As a result of experience and growth, their horizons have widened. They are in a state of developing and strengthening the basic knowledge begun in the elementary school. They, now more than ever, are looking to the future. Hoyt further states that there is a relationship between the high school course selection and a student's future educational and occupational levels which makes the matter of choosing a high school program crucial.

Every school should strive to provide for each student a program relevant to his becoming a self-fulfilled, productive, and contributing citizen. Each school should assure that each exiting student was prepared for further career development and for immediate employment (Fruehling, 1974).

Implementation and the purposes of House Bill 70 (State Department of Education, 1976) required a redirection of practice in the field of career education. Occupational education was suggested for the elementary schools with a realistic picture of the world of work implemented throughout the curriculum.
A more sophisticated program was recommended for the junior high or middle school. At the junior high level, all students were to be given the opportunity to study the economic and industrial systems by which goods and services are produced. They should begin with an exploration of the make-up of the labor force, focusing on attempts to identify possible roles for themselves within the overall system. The exploration of career possibilities was to emphasize the technicians who play a major role in all business, industry, and service organizations.

According to Halverson (1974), the curriculum must offer concrete, life-oriented experiences. A necessary feature of this type program would be the inclusion of other than school personnel. This position was further supported by Aylor (1971), who believed that a program involving a commitment from many persons—businessmen, volunteer tutors, local school personnel, civic groups—brings together and causes a sharing and enriching that cannot be overemphasized.

In 1972, four conferences were held concerning the high school curriculum and career development. The conference speakers emphasized the fact that high school curriculums were inappropriate for 60% of the students (Borman & Reilley, 1972).

According to Stanton (1970), early recognition of the student's vocational needs has too often been lost in the welter of academic requirements to be met in case the student might need them for college entrance. Therefore, most high school students have little knowledge of their abilities or aptitudes as they relate to the world of work.

Donald Super (1955) stated that interest and capacity become stronger in the developing self-concept at ages 11 through 14. Havighurst (1953)
called the age span of 10-15 a time for "acquiring basic talents of industry" and stated that if good work habits are not developed at this time, the child may have difficulty accepting the responsibilities of work in later stages.

Barnett and LaDuca (1974) have pointed out that work functions as one of the most important criteria by which our society defines identity and assesses human worth. This belief is discernable in all segments of the population; therefore, emerging evidence of widespread worker dissatisfaction is extremely significant to school personnel, employers, and all concerned members of society as a whole.

The majority of the studies related to vocational choice have provided counselors with many factors related to vocational choice but with little that they alone can do to encourage young people to explore opportunities, broaden interests, and see the alternatives available (Johnson, 1967). Howard and Stoumbis (1970) indicated that the junior high student was at the stage of developing a sense of identity or a sense of accomplishment. Moreover, there is a danger at this period of acquiring feelings of inadequacy or inferiority within the learning environment. In order to help stabilize the student's personality, curriculum must be oriented toward success in academic experiences rather than failure.

According to Gribbons and Lohns (1971), compromise between preferences and expectations was an essential part of the process of occupational choice. If the individual student were able to realistically appraise his interests, abilities, values, strengths and weaknesses, and were able to relate this knowledge of self to future objectives, the confrontation between self-concept and reality would be facilitated and occupational exploration
would prove satisfying. Gribbons and Lohns also pointed out that poor planning, over-or-underestimation of abilities, and lack of information about opportunities left the individual with the single alternative of drifting into a potentially unsuccessful career.

Vocational maladjustment, like other emotional disturbances, was viewed as a symptom of inability to cope with the problems of reality. The vocationally mature person was the one who expressed satisfaction with his career and with his total picture of himself (Gribbons & Lohns, 1971).

Wiggins (1972) has stated that career exploration programs should include career counseling. Historically, the counseling and guidance process has been a process of helping individuals examine their life experiences with the goal that they might know themselves and their environment better and act on that knowledge more purposefully and creatively. Hansen and Gysbers (1975) strongly suggested that if career-oriented education is to be successful, then guidance and counseling must necessarily play a part in the effort.

**Madisonville Junior High School Career Exploration Program**

The need, program objectives, and career cluster offerings for the Madisonville Junior High School Career Exploration Program; funded by the Kentucky Bureau of Vocational Education (1975), were as follows:

**Need for the Program**

Based upon the concerns of the educators in the Hopkins County School System, the need for a career exploration program that would help students make better informed choices appeared to be of utmost importance. Accordingly
the school system developed the Madisonville Junior High School Career Exploration Program and submitted this program for funding in 1975.

Program Objectives

The program objectives were divided into two levels. The levels were annual objectives and long-range objectives. The annual program objectives were as follows:

1. To provide every junior high school student with the opportunity to explore his occupational interests and aptitudes from among the broadest possible range of occupational clusters.

2. To present classroom instruction and activities in such a manner that enables every junior high student to see clearly the relationships between the academic content he is being asked to master and his tentative occupational choices.

3. To develop a curriculum that will provide some work experiences and field observations as well as classroom instruction.

4. To provide students with some very basic skills which can be used as building blocks in their later career development.

5. To actively involve the community with the Madisonville Junior High School Career Exploration Program. This involvement will be illustrated by their visiting the school as guest speakers and allowing field trips to their businesses.

The long-range program objectives were as follows:

1. To decrease substantially the drop-out rate at Madisonville Junior High School.

2. To improve the daily attendance by making the entire curriculum more interesting and relevant to students.
3. To help students develop positive attitudes about the personal, psychological, social, and economic significance of work.

4. To help students prepare for the future and become worthy and productive members of society.

**Exploratory Cluster Offerings**

In grade seven, students begin with the Orientation to the World of Work and the Economic System and then select three other occupational clusters for a period of nine weeks each. The optional occupational clusters that are offered to the seventh grade are Business and Office Occupations, Consumer and Home Economics Occupations, Construction Occupations, Communications and Media Occupations, Fine Arts and Humanities Occupations, and Public Service Occupations.

In grade eight, students select four of the following clusters that were not previously explored for a nine-week period: Business and Office Occupations, Consumer and Homemaking Related Occupations, Construction Occupations, Communications and Media Occupations, Fine Arts and Humanities Occupations, Personal Services Occupations, Manufacturing Occupations, Marketing and Distribution Occupations, Health Occupations, and Marine Science Occupations.

The teachers that are involved in the career exploration program at Madisonville Junior High School were trained at Western Kentucky University during a summer workshop conducted by Kentucky State Department of Vocational Education personnel. Materials needed for the implementation of the program were purchased with the $4,850.00 budget that was approved by the Hopkins County Board of Education and the State Department of Vocational Education (Matching Funds).
Career Education Effectiveness Studies

Whatever the soundness of the theoretical underpinnings of the place of the career exploration program in the junior high school curriculum, its value ultimately must be attested to through research. Considering this fact, the following specific examples of research carried out with the Career Maturity Inventory and/or junior high school students that have contributed to present research generalizations in career development have been provided.

In a major research project conducted by Ashley (1976) the primary objective was to develop, implement, and evaluate guidance activities to better meet the vocational development and career planning needs of students in grades nine through twelve. Activity development was based on using students' interests and abilities in group and individual guidance sessions as a means of facilitating self-understanding and occupational exploration.

The project was conducted in a series of phases preceded by in-service training of counselors to implement each phase. Activity implementation involved utilizing interest survey results with ninth graders, aptitude results with tenth graders, combination of interest and aptitude with eleventh graders, and individual and small group conferences with twelfth graders. Student bulletins, sets of slides, sets of interpretation transparencies, and other products were developed and field tested as the project progressed through each phase. These included; evaluation of activities and materials, effectiveness of General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB) as a predictor of success in vocational courses, effects of private
test interpretations on students' self-understanding, and a comparison of career maturity of participating school students and other selected schools.

Data for a comparison of the career maturity of twelfth graders in ten selected secondary schools and those five participating in the occupational guidance project were assessed through use of the Career Maturity Inventory. The ten control or comparison schools from Kentucky were randomly selected and matched with the five project schools on the following criteria: size of school by enrollment, counselor-student ratio, and urban-rural setting.

Patterns were obvious from inspection of the graphs and statistical analyses of the data. Students from the larger schools scored higher on the various subtests than students from the smaller schools. Schools were not significantly different from each other in terms of group means. In practically all cases the larger schools were not significantly different from each other in terms of group means.

Ehresman and Vincent (1976) reported on a study to determine the effects of a comprehensive and experiential system of vocational guidance and career development on junior high school pupils. This study attempted to establish comprehensive work experience and vocational guidance activities at the middle school level and to test their effects on the career maturity and attitudes toward school of ninth grade girls and boys. The project was federally assisted and locally directed in Bowling Green, Kentucky, during the academic school year of 1975-76.

The following results were based upon results obtained from the Career Maturity Inventory (CMI). The Career Maturity Inventory was
administered to all experimental and control groups in an attempt to assess
the individual and combined effects of the work experience/career exploration
program on students' career maturity. The following null hypotheses were
not rejected:

1. There is no significant difference between career decision-making
attitudes of ninth-grade students who have participated in a work-experience
guidance curriculum and career decision-making attitudes of ninth-grade
students who have not participated in a work-experience guidance curriculum.

2. There is no significant difference between the career maturity of
ninth-grade students who have participated in a work-experience guidance
curriculum and the career maturity of ninth-grade students who have not
participated in a work-experience guidance curriculum.

Thomas (1974) investigated the effects of sex, status of occupational
choice, and career development responsibility on the career maturity of
ninth-grade students from an urban, industrial, integrated community. The
instruments used were the Career Maturity Inventory and the Career Development
Responsibility Scale (Thomas). The objective was to determine whether there
were significant differences in the mean scores on the Career Maturity
Inventory between male and female students, between students who have decided
what occupations they wish to enter and those who are undecided, and between
students who believe their career development is controlled mostly by external
factors and those who believe that they control their own career development.
Interactions among these factors were also explored.
Results showed that the main effects of occupational choice and levels of the Career Development Responsibility Scale were significant. Students who were able to state an occupational choice had more mature career attitudes than those who were undecided. Although the main effect of sex was nonsignificant, the interaction between sex and career development responsibility levels approached significance suggesting that sex and level of career development responsibility may have differential effects on the development of mature career attitudes.

The higher level of career maturity exhibited by the students who were able to state an occupation they planned to enter when they left school as compared to those who were undecided appears to provide additional evidence of the validity of the Career Maturity Inventory.

The locus of control variable measured in the domain of career development appears to have a similar effect on the development of mature career attitudes as intellectual achievement responsibility has on academic achievement. This suggests that mature career attitudes are either mediated by or develop concurrently with career development responsibility.

A longitudinal career development research program was initiated by Gribbons (1964), who was later joined by Paul R. Lohnes. The basic sample consisted of 111 eighth-grade students (57 boys and 54 girls). Gribbons administered an eight scale instrument which he called Readiness for Vocational Planning to these students when they were eighth graders and again when these same students were in tenth grade. He found statistically significant differences on each of the eight variables, indicating, in general, a greater readiness for vocational planning on the part of tenth graders than for those same students when they were in the eighth grade.
These results supported the conclusion that middle and junior high school age youth were not, by and large, ready for specific vocational or occupational decision making. The researchers concluded that career exploration was more appropriate to emphasize at this point than occupational decision-making.

In a study conducted by Krippner (1963) data were collected from 351 seventh and eighth grade students, during the 1960–61 school year, in a junior high school located in an upper middle-class Chicago suburban community. Students were asked to state the occupation of their fathers and their mothers, to state their own tentative occupational choices, and to report the occupational choices that represented what their parents would like them to choose. It was found that statistically significant relationships existed between fathers' occupational level and the preferences of both boys and girls for various levels of occupational choice. Further, it was found that statistically significant relationships existed between the occupational preferences of girls and their mothers' occupations (where mothers were employed outside the home).

Krippner's results were not a new revelation for practicing counselors who have observed this process occurring for years. It does illustrate, however, the need for an emphasis in career education for broadening the occupational horizons of all students to maximize their freedom for choosing careers from the widest possible range of opportunities.

A study bearing more directly on the concept of career development as a maturational phenomenon was reported by Montesano and Geist (1964). These researchers, using the Geist Picture Interest Inventory, collected data from 30 ninth and 30 twelfth graders. They then asked these students
to state their occupational preferences and their reasons for choosing such occupations. Their results indicated that the twelfth graders used a greater variety of reasons for occupational choices than did the ninth graders. This led them to conclude that their results lend some credence to the concept of vocational development as maturation. These findings also supported the generalization that the vocational maturity of middle and junior high school students can be enhanced through systematic exposure to the world of occupations, sound counseling and guidance, and experience with work.
Chapter III includes the methods and procedures used to carry out this study. The school populations, selection of the samples, school program descriptions, and the instrumentation used in the study are included. The design for collecting data and implementing the study are also explained.

Definition of Population

The population for this study consisted of the ninth-grade classes of two Hopkins County Schools. Both schools are located in the middle-class section of the northeast area of Hopkins County. The main occupation of Hopkins County is coal mining. South Hopkins High School has 250 students in grade nine that were not exposed to a career exploration program in grades seven and eight. Madisonville Junior High School has 320 students in grade nine that were involved in a career exploration program in grades seven and eight. With the exception of the two-year career exploration program, the formal academic education of all students in the study was basically the same.

Selection of Subjects

Schools that participated in this study used the Paducah Educational Center in the western region of Kentucky for computer scheduling. It was, therefore, assumed that each academic class represented a random selection
of students. The English classes at each school were used for the selection process because English is one of three required courses for all ninth-grade students in the Hopkins County School System. There were nine ninth-grade English classes at South Hopkins High School and twelve ninth-grade English classes at Madisonville Junior High School. Random cluster sampling was used to select one class from each of the two schools involved in the study.

The subjects for the control group (South Hopkins) consisted of 25 ninth-grade students. The mean age of the sample was 176.0 months or 14.6 years with a range of 168 months (14 years) to 184 months (15.4 years) and a standard deviation of 4.2 months.

The subjects for the experimental group (Madisonville Junior High) consisted of 25 ninth-grade students. The mean age of the sample was 179.04 months or 14.9 years with a range of 173 months (14.5 years) to 184 months (15.4 years) and a standard deviation of 3.7 months.

The .3 years difference in the mean ages of the two groups was not deemed sufficient to cause a significant difference on the performance of the two groups on the Career Maturity Inventory that was used to measure the maturity of attitudes and career competencies necessary for realistic career decisions.

The mean IQ score for the control group was 109.28 with a standard deviation of 10.8. The mean IQ score for the experimental group was 114.80 with a standard deviation of 11.3. The IQ scores of the experimental and the control groups were compared using a t test for independent samples with a probability level of .05. The t value (.085) was not significant
at the .05 level therefore it was concluded that there was no difference between the two groups with regard to intelligence.

The mean score for the control group on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills, eighth-grade battery composite test, was 9.5 with a standard deviation of 1.674. The mean score for the experimental group on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills was 10.9 with a standard deviation of 1.738. The battery composite scores were compared using a t test for independent samples with a probability level of .05. This computation was significant beyond the .05 level. However, since there was no significant difference between the mean IQ scores for the two groups in the study, the significant difference between the mean scores for the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills was not deemed to affect the final outcome of the study. Furthermore, the difference in achievement level of the two groups was assumed to predate the study. That is, historically, students who attend Madisonville Junior High School tend to enter with slightly higher grade equivalent scores than do students who attend the other county schools.

Twenty-six different occupations were listed for the heads of households for the fifty students in the study. These 26 occupations were placed in the proper categories of the 12 classifications for the Census of Population Occupations Classification published by the U.S. Department of Commerce (1970). On the basis of inspection, little or no difference in the occupational employment patterns of the parents or guardians of the students was found between the two groups. Table 1 includes a breakdown of parental occupations for both groups.
### Table 1

Occupational Classifications for Heads of Households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classifications</th>
<th>Experimental</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Technical, and Kindred Workers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial, Administrative, Except Farm</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Workers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical and Kindred Workers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmen and Kindred Workers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operatives, Except Transport</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport Equipment Operatives</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protective Service Workers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborers, Except Farm</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers Not Classified by Occupations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The one head of household in the experimental group not classified by occupations was unemployed.

### School Program Descriptions

The supervisors in the Hopkins County School System have allowed for very little variation in the course requirements for students in the county; therefore, the course offerings and requirements for the students in the experimental and control groups were quite similar.

The ninth-grade students at South Hopkins High School attended either Earlington, Mortons Gap, Nortonville, St. Charles, or White Plains Elementary School for grades seven and eight. All schools have a six-period
day with five required courses for grades seven and eight and one period when the students are assigned to a study hall. Some students, instead of study hall, had band or glee club during the study hall hour. The five required courses are English, math, social studies, science, and health and physical education.

The ninth-grade students at Madisonville Junior High School attended either Anton Elementary, Hanson Elementary, or Madisonville Junior High School for grades seven and eight. These three schools have a six-period day with four required courses for grades seven and eight and two periods when the students have a choice of either band, career exploration, glee club, or health and physical education. The students may select any two of the four subjects for one hour each during the school day. The four required courses at Madisonville Junior High School are English, math, social studies, and science. A total of 93% of the ninth-grade students at Madisonville Junior High School have completed the two-year career exploration program.

With the exception of the two-year career exploration program, the formal academic education of the ninth-grade students in the two schools was basically the same. The only difference in the course offerings for the students in the experimental and the control groups was that the ninth-grade students at South Hopkins had a study hall in grades seven and eight or they were in either the band or the glee club for one hour of the day and the students in the ninth-grade at Madisonville Junior High School had the opportunity to select a career exploration program as an elective in grades seven and eight instead of the study hall experience.
Career Exploration Program

The career exploration program at Madisonville Junior High School is a non-graded two-year program for grades seven and eight. It is a systematic program of logical sequences. The students in the seventh grade begin with the World of Work and then select three other occupational clusters for nine weeks each. In the eighth grade, students select four clusters for nine weeks each from a list of ten offerings. At the end of the program, the counselors take the students' report blanks and assist them as they select their ninth grade electives and again as they register for the tenth grade at the high school.

The purpose of the Madisonville Junior High School career exploration program is to broaden the experiences of the students by providing them with an opportunity to explore and become aware of the variety of job opportunities and training programs available, the necessity of work, and help them to become self-supporting citizens who can take their places in the world of work and make a positive contribution to their community. A more detailed description of the Madisonville Career Exploration Program can be found in Chapter II.

Instrumentation

Data relative to the career attitude and career competence maturity were assessed through use of the Career Maturity Inventory (Crites, 1973).

The Career Maturity Inventory was constructed to measure the maturity of attitudes and competencies that are critical in realistic career decision making. A fifty-item attitude scale designed to elicit feelings, subjective reactions, and dispositions that the individual has toward making a career
choice and entering the world of work comprises the measure of Career Attitude. The dimensions assessed within the context of the Attitude Scale are: involvement in the choice process, orientation toward work, independence in decision making, preference for career choice factors (extent to which an individual bases his choice upon a particular factor), and conceptions of the choice process (extent to which an individual has accurate conceptions about making a career choice).

The career competence portion of the test is designed to measure cognitive variables involved in choosing an occupation. These include the following:

1. How well the individual can appraise his job related capabilities.
2. How much the individual knows about the world of work.
3. How adept the individual is in matching personal characteristics with occupational requirements.
4. How foresightful the individual is in planning for a career.
5. How effectively the individual can cope with the problems which arise in the course of career development.

The five parts associated with the competency test have 20 items each and the names of the subtests are as follows: Part 1 - Knowing Yourself (Self-appraisal), Part 2 - Knowing About Jobs (Occupational Information), Part 3 - Choosing A Job (Goal Selection), Part 4 - Looking Ahead (Planning), and Part 5 - What Should They Do? (Problem Solving).

Taken together, the Attitude Scale and the Competence Test provide both an extensive and intensive inventory of the critical behavior in mature career decision making and development. The required testing time for the entire inventory is two 60-minute sessions.
Research findings that have accumulated on the Career Maturity Inventory for more than a decade, dating back to the first administration of the attitude scale in 1961-62, indicate that it is a reliable and valid measure of career development. Four separate career education effectiveness studies were identified and included in this report where the Career Maturity Inventory was used as a measure of positive attitudes and career competencies that are necessary in realistic career decision making.

**Methodology**

The principals of Madisonville Junior High School and South Hopkins High School were contacted for permission to administer Form A-1 of the Career Maturity Inventory to a group of their ninth-grade students. Random cluster sampling was used to select 25 students from the ninth grade at Madisonville Junior High School who had completed a two-year career exploration program in grades seven and eight and 25 students from the ninth grade at South Hopkins High School who had not been exposed to a two-year career exploration program in grades seven and eight.

After the subjects were selected, they were administered Form A-1 of the Career Maturity Inventory. Vacant classrooms were used at both schools and the tests were administered by the school guidance counselors. All counselors involved in the administration and scoring of the Career Maturity Inventory were instructed as to proper procedures. Regular school schedule and hours were observed.

The Career Maturity Inventory was hand scored by use of the acetate stencil provided with the IBM-1230 answer sheets.
Processing of the data was completed by the computer services center at Western Kentucky University. Data were analyzed through the use of an IBM 370-165 computer. Standard statistical programs from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) were utilized to compute the desired statistics (Blalock, 1972). The mean and standard deviation scores were computed. The t test with a probability level of .05 was applied to the data to determine whether a significant difference existed between the means of the two samples.

The mean ages, IQ scores, Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) scores, and number of days missed were compared for significant differences. The parents' occupations were categorized into the 12 Occupational Classifications published by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. (1970).
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study and the discussions are presented in this chapter. The findings reported here were obtained through implementation of the research design presented in Chapter III.

Results

The Career Maturity Inventory was administered to both the experimental and the control groups of ninth-grade students. Inspection of the means revealed that they differed in all assessed areas. A $t$ test for independent samples was used to compare the results of the two groups on the inventory.

The seven original hypotheses concerning the difference in the attitudes of ninth-grade students toward making a career choice and entering the world of work, the competence of ninth-grade students with regard to their knowledge about occupations and the decisions involved in choosing a career, and the attendance records of ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program and non-participating students were all supported. The summary of $t$ test results have been included in Table 2.
Table 2
Means, Standard Deviations, and t for the Experimental and Control Groups on the Career Maturity Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (Control)</td>
<td>34.28</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>-2.88</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 (Experimental)</td>
<td>37.32</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing Yourself</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>13.20</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>-2.87</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>15.72</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing About Jobs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>14.40</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>-3.44</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>17.48</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing A Job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>13.20</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>-2.40</td>
<td>.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>15.32</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking Ahead</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>13.36</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>-3.88</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>16.24</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Should They Do?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>10.32</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>-3.01</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>13.16</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Composite</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>98.76</td>
<td>16.11</td>
<td>-4.27</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>115.24</td>
<td>10.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

df=48, p = .05
Data in Table 2 reveal that there was a significant difference \((p=.006)\) in the attitudes of the two groups toward the world of work as measured by the Attitude Scale of the Career Maturity Inventory. The first hypothesis stated that ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will have a more positive attitude toward the world of work than non-participating ninth-grade students. Therefore, the data supported this hypothesis.

Table 2 reveals that there was a significant difference \((p=.007)\) in the scores obtained by the two groups in the area of "Knowing Yourself" on the Competence Test of the Career Maturity Inventory; therefore, the second hypothesis that ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will score higher in the area of "Knowing Yourself" on the Competence Test of the Career Maturity Inventory than non-participating ninth-grade students was supported.

Inspection of Table 2 reveals that there was a significant difference \((p=.002)\) in the scores obtained by the two groups in the area of "Knowing About Jobs" on the Competence Test of the Career Maturity Inventory. The third hypothesis that ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will score higher in the area of "Knowing About Jobs" on the Competence Test of the Career Maturity Inventory than non-participating ninth-grade students was supported.

Table 2 reveals that there was a significant difference \((p=.020)\) in the scores obtained by the two groups in the area of "Choosing A Job" on the Competence Test of the Career Maturity Inventory. The fourth hypothesis stated that ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career
exploration program will score higher in the area of "Choosing A Job" on the Competence Test of the Career Maturity Inventory than non-participating ninth-grade students. Therefore, the data supported this hypothesis.

Inspection of Table 2 reveals that there was a significant difference \((p=0.000)\) in the scores obtained by the two groups in the area of "Looking Ahead" on the Competence Test of the Career Maturity Inventory. Therefore the fifth hypothesis which stated that ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will score higher in the area of "Looking Ahead" on the Competence Test of the Career Maturity Inventory than non-participating students was supported.

Data in Table 2 reveal that there was a significant difference \((p=0.004)\) in the scores obtained by the two groups in the area of "What Should They Do In The Future?" on the Competence Test of the Career Maturity Inventory. The sixth hypothesis stated that ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will score higher in the area of "What Should They Do In The Future?" on the Competence Test of the Career Maturity Inventory than non-participating ninth-grade students. Therefore, the sixth hypothesis was supported by data in Table 2.

### Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Days Missed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (Control)</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.96</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 (Experimental)</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis number seven dealt with students' attitudes toward school. It was hypothesized that ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will tend to display a more positive attitude toward school than non-participating students. Inspection of Table 3 revealed that the mean number of days missed by the students in the control group was 5.6 and the mean number of days missed by the students in the experimental group was 2.4. There was a significant difference in the number of days missed by the students in the two groups as computed by t test (p<.009). Therefore, the seventh hypothesis was supported to the extent that following exposure to a two-year career exploration program, a difference does exist.

Discussion

The results of the present study have been reported in the preceding portions of this chapter. In this section a discussion of these results follows.

The specific purpose of this study was to examine the career exploration program of the Madisonville Junior High School with regard to its validity and reliability as a predictor of career competence and positive attitudes toward the world of work. Several hypotheses were proposed and each of them was supported.

The first hypothesis stated that ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will have a more positive attitude toward the world of work than non-participating ninth-grade students and the results of this study indicate that there is a significant difference in the attitudes of the two groups that were compared on the attitude scale of the Career Maturity Inventory. A positive attitude is an
important factor to consider when entering the world of work because attitude will determine to a considerable degree the adjustment, success, and satisfaction that an individual is able to make and enjoy on his job. This is consistent with the thoughts of Crites (1968), who stated that career development cannot be separated from personality development and that vocational guidance must therefore be concerned with attitudes and attitude changes.

The second hypothesis was concerned with the area of "Knowing Yourself." It stated that ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will score higher in the area of "Knowing Yourself" on a career competency test than non-participating students. With a possibility of a mean score of 20, the mean score for the control group in the area of "Knowing Yourself" on the Competence Test of the Career Maturity Inventory was 13.20 and the mean score for the experimental group was 15.72. There is a significant difference in the means of these two groups in this category; therefore, the students in the experimental group should be better prepared to realistically appraise their interests, abilities, values, strengths, and weaknesses. The results of this study indicated that students in the experimental group should be able to relate their knowledge of self to future objectives and the confrontation between self-concept and reality should be facilitated and prove more satisfying. These findings are consistent with the ideas of Gribbons and Lohman (1971), who insist that those who have not achieved an integrated realistic self-concept will be unprepared to face the limitations imposed by environment.

The third hypothesis dealt with the area of "Knowing About Jobs." This hypothesis stated that ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year
career exploration program will score higher in the area of "Knowing About Jobs" on the Competence Test of the Career Maturity Inventory than non-participating students. With a possibility of 20 points, the mean score for the control group was 14.40 and the mean score for the experimental group was 17.48. The difference is significant and this is a very strong point for the Madisonville Junior High School Career Exploration Program because according to Gribbons and Lohnes (1971), the lack of information about career opportunities leaves the individual with the single alternative of drifting into a potentially unsuccessful career. The result of this will be disappointment, frustration, and depressions which will soon be reflected in all other aspects of the person's life.

The fourth hypothesis stated that ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will score higher in the area of "Choosing A Job" on the Competence Test of the Career Maturity Inventory than non-participating students. The supporting of the first three hypotheses almost assured the supporting of this hypothesis for students that have positive attitudes toward the world of work, have achieved integrated realistic self-concepts, and are aware of the available career opportunities are better prepared to make satisfying job choices than the students who have not reached this level of career maturity. With a possibility of 20 points, the mean score for the control group in this area of career competence was 13.20 and the mean score for the experimental group was 15.32.

The fifth hypothesis was concerned with the area of "Looking Ahead." This hypothesis stated that ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will score higher in the area of "Looking Ahead"
on the Competence Test of the Career Maturity Inventory than non-participating
ninth-grade students. "Looking Ahead" is concerned with career planning and
adequate career planning is very necessary if students are to avoid drifting
into potentially unsuccessful careers. In order to help stabilize the
student's personality, curriculum must be oriented toward successes in
academic experiences rather than failure. According to Berch (1972), a
course that builds basic skills for the purpose of furthering the future
academic success is a justifiable input into the required curriculum. With
the highest possible score in this area being 20, the mean score for the
control group was 13.36 and the mean score for the experimental group was
16.24. There is a significant difference in the means of these two groups
in this category; therefore, hypothesis number five was supported.

The sixth hypothesis stated that ninth-grade students who have completed
a two-year career exploration program will score higher in the area of "What
Should They Do In The Future?" on the Competence Test of the Career Maturity
Inventory than non-participating ninth-grade students. The results of this
study indicated that the mean score for the control group in this area was
10.32 and the mean score for the experimental group was 13.16 with a
possibility of 20. This is an indication that some of the goals of the
new career education programs have been realized in the program that the
experimental group had been exposed to. "To discover what you really want
to be and do, to find out what you're good at, and above all to learn that
it takes just as much talent, skill, and intelligence to be a fine carpenter,
for example, as it does to be a professional man—these are the goals of the
new Career Education programs now being introduced into classrooms throughout
the country" (Burns, 1973, p. 46).
According to the seventh hypothesis, ninth-grade students who have completed a two-year career exploration program will tend to show a more positive attitude toward school as evidenced by better attendance than non-participating students. Results of this study show that the mean number of days missed by the experimental group is 2.4 and the mean number of days missed by the control group is 5.6. There was a significant difference in the attendance records of the two groups and this seemed to indicate that the students in the experimental group had been exposed to a curriculum that was more relevant to them and was in fact, the fulfillment of one of the goals of the career education program itself. Supporting this notion, Halverson (1974) stated "The curriculum must offer concrete, life-oriented experiences. Learners of all ages are asking for this kind of education. Even adolescents are much more likely to learn in a concrete context than in an abstract realm. Thus, career development becomes a way of making all education more relevant by providing a setting that is meaningful to most learners" (p. 122).
Chapter V contains three major sections. The first section is a summary of the procedures of the present study while the second section contains the conclusions of the study. The third section contains the recommendations based on the conclusions of the study.

Summary of the Study

The study was designed to examine the Madisonville Junior High School Career Exploration Program with regard to its validity and reliability as a predictor of career competence and positive attitudes toward the world of work. The major focus of concern in this study was the examination of the measured differences in the mean scores of the two ninth-grade groups in the areas of career competence and positive attitudes toward the world of work as measured by Form A-1 of the Career Maturity Inventory.

The population for this study consisted of the ninth-grade classes of two Hopkins County schools. South Hopkins High School had 250 students in grade nine that were not exposed to a career exploration program in grades seven and eight. Madisonville Junior High School had 320 students in grade nine that were involved in a career exploration program in grades seven and eight. With the exception of the two-year career exploration program, the formal academic education of all students in the study was basically the same.
Data relative to the career attitude and career competence maturity were assessed through use of the Career Maturity Inventory (Crites, 1973). Random cluster sampling was used to select one ninth-grade class from each of the two schools involved in the study.

After the subjects were selected, they were administered Form A-1 of the Career Maturity Inventory which was hand scored by use of the acetate stencil provided with the IBM-1230 answer sheets.

Processing of the data was completed by the Western Kentucky University Computer Services Center. Data were analyzed by the use of an IBM 370-165 computer. Means, standard deviations, and t scores were computed on the assessed data for the experimental and control groups. Ages, number of days missed, parents' occupations, achievement battery composite scores, and IQ scores for individuals in each group were compared for significant differences.

Inspection of the means revealed that there was a significant difference in the attitudes toward the world of work, the five areas that were measured on the Career Competence Test, and the attendance records of the two groups that participated in the study. Therefore, the seven original hypotheses were supported.

It was concluded that the career exploration program at Madisonville Junior High School was having a beneficial impact upon students, resulting in an increased interest in school, increased career knowledge, assistance in planning future studies, provision of a more realistic view of the world of work, an increased curiosity about careers, and an increased student awareness of themselves as future participants in the world of work.
These findings are consistent with the opinions of Holland and Whitney (1969), Crites (1968), Frushling (1974), and Hoyt (1975) on the necessity of the inclusion of career exploration programs in the junior high school curriculum.

Conclusions

Based on the results reported for this study, the following conclusions are presented:

1. Considering the recent inception of the Madisonville Junior High School's Career Exploration Program, the findings of this study indicate that this program has been efficiently and effectively implemented.

2. Ninth-grade students who had completed a two-year career exploration program at Madisonville Junior High School had a more positive attitude toward the world of work than the students in the study who had not had this experience.

3. Ninth-grade students who had completed a two-year career exploration program at Madisonville Junior High School showed a higher level of competency in the area of choosing an occupation with respect to their own interests and capabilities than the students in the study who had not had this experience.

4. Ninth-grade students who had completed a two-year career exploration program at Madisonville Junior High School showed a more positive attitude toward school, as evidenced by better attendance, than the students in the study who had not had this experience.
5. The Career Exploration Program at Madisonville Junior High School is having a beneficial impact upon students by providing a more realistic view of the world of work, an increased curiosity about careers, and an increased student awareness of themselves as future participants in the world of work.

6. With the school world tied more closely to the work world, more students should see the value of staying through high school and even going on to junior college or other post-high school studies.

7. Career exploration and development as a new focus for education has the potential to restructure substantially the processes and activities of education, modify the values and attitudes of education, and maximize the opportunities for student involvement and responsibility.

8. When career education begins working in a community there is a payoff for the world of work by increased productivity from workers who are on the job consistently and who are committed to doing a good job.

9. When career education begins working in a community there is a payoff for society in a citizenry that is self-fulfilled, productive, and cooperative. There is a more effective and accountable use of the available education dollar with more youth being motivated to stay in school and to learn causing a significant reduction in the cost of supporting out of school/out of work youth.

10. When career education begins working in a community there is a payoff for the individual. The payoff is a chance to live a more meaningful, productive, and satisfying life.
Recommendations

Based upon the preceding conclusions of the present study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Replication of this study is recommended because of the small sample size, limited generalizability, and number of threats to internal validity caused by lack of control within academic courses.

2. It is recommended that future studies of the career education program in the Madisonville Junior High School would include the specific effects on academic achievement of a career education program.

3. It is recommended that a longitudinal study be initiated on the students in the present study to determine their drop-out rate, achievement level, and post-high school vocational adjustment.

4. Following completion of the three previous recommendations, it is recommended that strong consideration be given to instituting career education programs in all middle and junior high schools in the Hopkins County School System.
References


Bureau of Vocational Education, Practical Arts Education Unit, Kentucky State Department of Education, Frankfort, Kentucky 1975.


Ehresman, N. D., & Vincent, R. D. *A study to determine the effects of a comprehensive and experimental system of vocational guidance and career development on junior high school pupils*. Research project in vocational education. Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky, 1976.


Gribbons, W. D. *Changes in readiness for vocational planning from the eighth to the tenth grade.* *Personnel and Guidance Journal,* 1964, 42.


Hoyt, K. B. *Straight answers on career education.* *Today's Education,* 1975, 64, 60-62.


Krippner, S. *Junior high school students' vocational preferences and their parents' occupational levels.* *Personnel and Guidance Journal,* 1963, 41.

Montesano, N., & Geist, H. *Differences in occupational choice between ninth and twelfth grade boys.* *Personnel and Guidance Journal,* 1964, 43.


Super, D. The dimensions and measurement of vocational maturity. Teachers College Record, 1955, 57, 155.

