

AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED DECISION MAKING VARIABLES AND THE
EFFECTS THEY HAVE ON THE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION PLANS OF
16 – 21 YEAR OLD YOUTH FROM THE UNITED STATES

A Dissertation

by

MARSHA JANE MCCORD TAKAO

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2007

Major Subject: Educational Administration

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Approved by:

Co-Chairs of Committee,	Bryan R. Cole Christine A. Stanley
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ABSTRACT

An Analysis of Selected Decision Making Variables and the Effects They Have on the Post-Secondary Education Plans of 16 – 21 Year Old Youth from the United States.

(May 2007)

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Dr. Christine A. Stanley

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the importance of post-secondary education in the future plans of 16-21 year old youth from the United States. A secondary purpose of the study was to determine if selected individuals in their lives influence the post-secondary education decisions made by 16-21 year old youth in the United States. In addition, selected outcome options were analyzed to determine the effect these options have on post-secondary education decisions made by 16-21 year old youth from the United States.

The sample for the study consisted of 3,017 males and females between the ages of 16-21, collected by means of a telephone survey. The dependent variable for this study was the higher education plans of 16-21 year old youth; and the independent variables were age, gender, ethnicity, usual grades made in high school, strength of influence of selected outcome options, and influencers of the decisions made by the respondents.

The study found that 16-21 year old youth in the United States have a strong desire to attend post-secondary education full-time rather than part-time. A majority of the respondents indicated that they prefer attending a 4-year college or university with the second choice being a 2-year junior or community college.

The respondents indicated that they are influenced strongly by their parents, siblings, and close friends to make decisions; but there does not appear to be a strong influence by this group on the respondents to make decisions about post-secondary education.

The outcome options that appear to have the most influence on this age group are: having a job that makes you happy, having a good paying job, earning money for college, having an attractive lifestyle, preparing for a career, having job security, making a positive difference in the community and learning a valuable trade or skill. These factors, however, don't appear to have a strong influence on this group when making a decision to attend post-secondary education.

DEDICATION

For Alan, Nell and Andy, I miss you all.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Throughout life, most people move through a sequence of socially ordered transitions: from home to school, perhaps to college, and then to a job (Schmidt & Rich, 2000). Early on, high schools came to be seen not only as places where students could prepare for the practical demands of the workplace but also as self-contained communities in which they could grow to adulthood (Danesi, 2003). Students in high school refine their educational and career goals and demonstrate achievement of them by successfully completing their educational plans and career-life planning portfolios (Cobia & Henderson, 2003). High school is a time when career decisions begin through course selection, when the student is more mature and capable of assessing his abilities and interests as well as of processing occupational information (Mihalka, 1974). Schooling is ultimately designed to help students increase their cognitive knowledge and skills (Cobia & Henderson, 2003). Industrialized Western societies have been built on a foundation represented by the work and productivity of their populations (Vondracek, Lerner, & Schulenberg, 1986).

For most people, particularly the youth, the period during and beyond high school is marked by important career decision-making that is, like most in life, not irrevocable (Ireh, 2000). Teenagers acquire in classrooms much of the knowledge, attitudes, values, and habits that will help them become productive adults (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000). Education also provides students with the

The style and format for this dissertation follows *The Journal of Higher Education*.

credentials they need to practice their careers, which in turn advance the nation's economic growth through a skilled labor pool (Cobia & Henderson, 2003). During childhood and youth, emerging occupational paths are strongly shaped by family characteristics and experiences; until about two centuries ago, children learned adult work skills within the family (Rathunde, Carroll & Huang, 2000). Most adolescents followed the path their parents did (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000). Adolescents' parent-identifications (agreement between self-concept and concept of parent) are related to type of vocational interest (Super, 1963). A farmer's son helped his father in the fields, the mason's son apprenticed to be a mason, and the girls learned from their mothers the complex skills required to run a household (Rathunde, Carroll & Huang, 2000). The idea of a career is tied in with the beginning of bureaucratic organization in public administration, the military, and the Christian church (Harper & Lawson, 2003). Most youth of high school age – as many as 80 percent by some measures – say that they would like to be professionals; this expectation is bound to be unfulfilled for the great majority (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000). Chances of getting into the top colleges are significantly higher for students who come from affluent schools, whose parents are well educated, who have maintained good grades, and who have a playful attitude toward life (Roney & Wolfe, 2000). This focus on higher education is justified because colleges now prepare the majority of young people for entry into the labor force (Roney & Wolfe, 2000). The overwhelming majority of adolescents expect to get at least a bachelor's degree, and half of these expect to earn some kind of advanced degree (Hoogstra, 2000).

Choosing a college can be a critical choice, but by no means is the college option the only or even the best way for one to achieve the fullest potential and satisfaction in life (Miller, 1978). Education has long been associated with the promise of financial gain, status, prestige, social mobility, and a satisfying life (Mihalka, 1974). At the same time, it should be recognized that no matter how important, the choice of a college is only one aspect of this transition (Roney & Wolfe, 2000). Education no longer guarantees a good job or, for that matter, any kind of job (Mihalka, 1974). Some teenagers battle with choosing a college and a course of study that will lead to a satisfying career (Ireh, 2000). The increased earning power that a college degree provides almost guarantees higher education to be one of the most remunerative investments on the market (Herzberg, 1966).

The choice of a vocation is an expression of personality (Holland, 1966). Research results have shown that students rated interesting high school classes and their families as the most helpful factors in their career decision-making and planning processes (Noeth, Engen, & Noeth, 1984). A person's vocational interests and preferences are associated with a great range of personal and background information (Holland, 1966). Work involves not only the organized interaction among individuals (such as people rowing a boat together) but also the unorganized, fleeting interaction between people, some who may be patients, customers, students, or clients of others (Harper & Lawson, 2003). There may be some floundering and certainly some error in the process of trial and error which may last several years (Havighurst, 1982).

Man has two sets of basic needs – his animal needs, which relate to the environment, and his distinctive human needs, which relate to the tasks with which he is uniquely involved (Herzberg, 1966). Vocational preferences are sometimes moderately correlated with personality and originality scales, self-ratings on various personality traits, daydreams about future accomplishment, responses to certain projective devices, values and goals, attitudes of parents, and many other personal and situational forces (Holland, 1966). By early adolescence, work acquires a host of negative connotations that persist throughout high school (Hektner & Asakawa, 2000). A young person's attitude toward a future career begins to take shape as he or she learns to associate the concept of work with specific activities and with certain experiential states, either positive or negative (Schmidt & Rich, 2000). Whenever teenagers report being in high challenge, high skill situations, the quality of their experience is positive (Hektner & Asakawa, 2000). Many jobs are avoided because they are too much like work, while other jobs are preferred because they provide more leisure opportunities (Schmidt & Rich, 2000).

One of the first things we want to know about the development of career attitudes is how young people learn to perceive work and play in their own lives (Schmidt & Rich, 2000). How teenagers visualize their futures influences the kinds of adults they will grow up to be (Asakawa, Hektner, & Schmidt, 2000). Career and educational planning are intertwined, and the successful preparation for careers is predicated on appropriate academic preparation (Cobia & Henderson, 2003). The task of the school is

never completed; there is always another level to achieve, more to learn, more to know (Bernard & Fullmer, 1969).

The choice of a career is one step in this process which is heavily influenced by other decisions and is open to change (Schmidt & Rich, 2000). As they move through school and try out part-time jobs, they begin, at first with little regard for reality but then with increasing earnestness, to fantasize about the kind of work they would like to spend their lives pursuing (Asakawa, Hektner, & Schmidt, 2000). As the world of work becomes more complex and technologically dynamic, the career decision-making processes the youth undergo also become much more complex (Ireh, 2000). Young people in general are developing rather negative images of work; even though everyone agrees that work is important to one's future, it is still, by and large, felt to be depressing and dull (Schmidt & Rich, 2000). People search for environments and vocations that will permit them to exercise their skills and abilities, to express their attitudes and values, to take on agreeable problems and roles, and to avoid disagreeable ones (Holland, 1966).

The social preparation of youth for work is a combined function of the family, education, and the community (Mihalka, 1974). Families, schools, and communities offer varying levels of support that can influence teenagers' futures (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000). The home and school are key factors in providing learning experiences and adequate environment (Mihalka, 1974). Vocational guidance in high school or college may be helpful (Havighurst, 1982). Vocational guidance and counseling have dealt largely with occupational choice, information, and career

development; but equally important is the type of work habits being learned (Mihalka, 1974).

Experiencing high levels of challenge and skill is part of an important dynamic in the transition from adolescence to adulthood (Hektner & Asakawa, 2000). Many of today's youth take courses from various curricula areas, without any idea where such courses lead, career wise; and as a result, they graduate without adequate preparation necessary to fit into the world of work, into higher education, or into the military (Ireh, 2000). A young person who sees few opportunities ahead is likely to settle for less than one who has more optimistic beliefs about the future (Asakawa, Hektner, & Schmidt, 2000). People differ both in their self-concepts and in the ways in which they translate self-concepts into occupational terms; hence, people choose different occupations (Starishevsky & Matlin, 1963). The way in which the person has reacted in the past, constructing his formulation of the world, determines his future and his choice of occupation as part of that future (Starishevsky & Matlin, 1963). Although differences still exist, it would appear that neither gender nor social class is as great an obstacle to occupational aspirations as each once was (Asakawa, Hektner, & Schmidt, 2000).

Statement of the Problem

The literature suggests that today's youth do not have a clear idea of what they want to do or what they are academically qualified to do after high school. Instead of clear occupational goals, most adolescents plan to pursue higher education in the hope that their vocational goals will become clearer along the way (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000). They spend most of their time, particularly as they get older, on

productive activities such as schoolwork and jobs rather than socializing and engaging in leisure activities (Hoogstra, 2000). We assume that aptitude and intelligence are less important than personality and interests in determining vocational choice (Holland, 1966). Determining what to do next in their lives remains an important but arduous developmental task for the youth leaving secondary school; and in response to pressure to make a definite career choice, some commit themselves prematurely (Ireh, 2000). In addition to determining the direction of vocational choice, the personality pattern also determines the person's level of vocational aspiration and achievement (Holland, 1966). One can view vocational choice as an expression of self-concepts formulated and reformulated throughout the life stages (Starishevsky & Matlin, 1963). While what to do after high school is a choice you must make, you must also be careful that you aren't heading somewhere without having determined if it is the best place for you to go (Miller, 1978). A significant task for students completing their high school education is determining what they will do during the next stage of their lives (Noeth, Engen, & Noeth, 1984). They have little idea what they will actually do when they grow up; and they do not know which role models, if any, are valid (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000). Clearly, no matter which path students choose to follow beyond high school, this is a time for important career decisions to be weighed and implemented (Noeth, Engen, & Noeth, 1984). These personal and social concerns influence the types of postsecondary opportunities pursued by high school graduates (Cobia & Henderson, 2003).

The pattern of one's life work may be clearly discernable and predictable, or it may be erratic and ever changing (Harper & Lawson, 2003). It is important for young people to learn what job opportunities will be available to them and to practice the appropriate skills to take advantage of these opportunities (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000). Certainly, the classic Weberian sense of career still holds for such occupations as the civil service, the military, and in some cases academic life (Harper & Lawson, 2003). As the boy or girl, young man or woman makes the transition from general education to specialized education or training, from school or college to employment, he is expected to convert his specified vocational preference into a reality, to implement his choice (Super, 1963). There are three basic career steps to organize the job search: the first is to learn about yourself – to self assess your own skills, values, and interests, the second is to learn about work – to research your job opportunities, and the third step is to find the educational and job pathways that will lead you to where you want to go (Mitchell, 1994).

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the importance of post-secondary education in the future plans of 16-21 year old youth, during the period October 15 to November 25, 2003, by analyzing their responses to questions about what they think they may be doing in the near future. A secondary purpose of the study was to determine if selected individuals in their lives such as parents, siblings, extended family members, friends, teachers, or school guidance counselors influence the post-secondary education decisions made by 16-21 year old youth in the United States, during

the period October 15 to November 25, 2003. In addition, selected outcome options such as earning money for college, having a good paying job, having job security, having a job that makes you happy, learning a valuable trade or skill, preparing for a future career, training in cutting edge technology, not going to college immediately after high school, making a positive difference in the community, and having a lifestyle that is attractive to you were analyzed to determine the effect these outcome options have on post-secondary education decisions made by 16-21 year old youth from the United States, during the period October 15 to November 25, 2003.

Research Questions

The study will address the following questions:

1. Do 16-21 year olds in the United States have an interest in attending some type of post-secondary education?
2. What type of post-secondary education are 16-21 year olds in the United States interested in attending?
3. Do selected individuals such as parents, siblings, extended family members, friends, teachers, or school guidance counselors influence the post-secondary schooling decisions made by 16-21 year olds in the United States?
4. When making post-secondary education decisions, are options such as earning money for college, having a good paying job, having job security, having a job that makes you happy, learning a valuable trade or skill, preparing for a future career, training in cutting edge technology, not going to college immediately after high school, making a positive difference in the

community, and having a lifestyle that is attractive important to 16-21 year olds in the United States?

Operational Definitions

Influencers: A person or group of persons who may influence decisions made by the respondents (for example: parents, siblings, extended family members, friends, teachers, or school guidance counselors).

Outcome options: Possible outcomes that can occur if the respondent selects certain career options (for example: earning money for college, having a good paying job, having job security, having a job that makes you happy, learning a valuable trade or skill, preparing for a future career, training in cutting edge technology, not going to college immediately after high school, making a positive difference in the community, and having a lifestyle that is attractive).

Propensity: A natural inclination or preference.

Race/ethnicity (four categories): White, Non-Hispanic; Black, Non-Hispanic; Hispanic; and other Non-Hispanic (for the purpose of this study).

Region: A 9-point geocode used by Wirthlin Worldwide to divide the United States into geographical areas.

Respondent: A young person between the ages of 16 and 21 during the time period October 15, 2003 to November 25, 2003 (for the purpose of this study).

Wirthin Worldwide: A national independent research firm used to collect the data for this study.

Assumptions

1. The database supplied by the Defense Human Resources Activity is valid for the purposes of this study.
2. Interpretation of the data collected accurately reflects that which was intended.
3. The methodology proposed and described here offers the most logical and appropriate design for this particular research project.

Limitations

1. The scope of this study is limited to the 16 – 21 year old respondents of the telephone interviews conducted from October 15, 2003 to November 25, 2003.
2. The study is limited to the information acquired from the review of literature and data contained in the October 2003 Department of Defense Youth Polling Survey obtained from The Defense Human Resources Activity.
3. The findings from this study may not be generalized to any group other than the 16-21 year old respondents of the telephone interviews conducted from October 15, 2003 to November 25, 2003.

Significance Statement

This research will help students prepare for their futures and will help parents and high school counselors lead these students in the right direction. Student decisions about curriculum track and program of study should match educational and career goals (Lee & Ekstrom, 1987). Studies of the interests of adolescents show that occupational planning and preparation are the principal interests of boys and of many girls aged 15 to

20 (Havighurst, 1982). Career and college counseling is important in facilitating the transition of students from secondary to postsecondary education and/or to the world of work (Lee & Ekstrom, 1987).

People in their late teens and early twenties, while preparing for their life's work, tend to think that their long struggle up the mountain of education will lead to a plateau called adult life, with grown-up work that may have a few gradual changes in elevation but mostly stays the same (Harper & Lawson, 2003). Career decisions will be easier if students realize that they will change jobs and directions many times in their lifetimes (Mitchell, 1994). The majority of students expect to reach high educational goals; overall, 80 percent of students expect to complete a four-year college or obtain advanced degrees (Hoogstra, 2000). Young people generally try themselves out in several different jobs in their early vocational history unless they have elected a professional career which involves university training; this has been called the trial work period (Havighurst, 1982).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Prior to the 1950's, fewer than two of every 10 high school graduates went on to college (Kinzie, Palmer, Hayek, Hossler, Jacob, & Cummings, 2004). Today larger numbers of people are completing college (Snyder & Tan, 2004). The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Higher Education Act of 1965 fostered continued growth in college attendance in the 1960's, and by the end of the decade more than half of all high school graduates were accepted into college (Kinzie, Palmer, Hayek, Hossler, Jacob, & Cummings, 2004). Between 1991-92 and 2001-02, the number of associate, bachelor's, master's, first professional, and doctor's degrees rose; associate degrees increased 18 percent, bachelor's degrees increased 14 percent, master's degrees increased 37 percent, and doctor's degrees increased 9 percent during this period (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004). College enrollment hit a record level of 15.9 million in fall 2001 with another record of 16.4 million anticipated for fall 2003 (Snyder & Tan, 2004). The college-choice process in the 1940's and 1950's was relatively straightforward, with students making decisions from a defined and limited set of institutions (Kinzie, Palmer, Hayek, Hossler, Jacob, & Cummings, 2004). Total undergraduate enrollment in degree granting postsecondary institutions has generally increased in the past three decades, and it is projected to increase throughout the next 10 years (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004).

The American Student

Every American high-school student knows something about college: they know it is a continuation of study, they know it will cost money and that this may be a problem, they know that older people think it is important, and they know that they cannot just walk into college in the fall as they did when they entered high school (Bowles, Pace, & Stone, 1968). In 1995, nine out of ten seniors attended public schools, approximately six percent of seniors attended Catholic schools, and four percent of seniors attended private (not including Catholic) schools (Green, Dugoni, Ingels, & Camburn, 1995). The proportion of all 16 to 24 year olds who were dropouts declined between 1998 (12 percent) and 2003 (10 percent) (Fox, Connolly, & Snyder, 2005).

Young adults have attained higher levels of education over the past decades: 16 percent of 25 – 29 year olds had completed college in 1970 compared to 29 percent in 2004 (Fox, Connolly, & Snyder, 2005). Today's college students respond that they decided to go on to college to get a better job, gain a general education, make new friends, experience diversity among people, and eventually make more money (Leana, 1990). High school students may or may not hope, or expect, to go to college, but if they do, depending on how much they want to, they probably can (Bowles, Pace, & Stone, 1968).

In 1992, about half of all seniors worked in addition to going to school (Green, Dugoni, Ingels, & Camburn, 1995). The Monitoring the Future project assessed that between 70 and 80 percent of high school seniors work and a substantial proportion of them, between 35 and 40 percent of males and between 25 and 30 percent of females,

work 21 hours a week or more (Bachman, Freedman-Doan, & O'Malley, 2000b). High school seniors are fairly optimistic about their job prospects with a majority of both male and female seniors rating "finding purpose and meaning in life" as an "extremely important" life goal, and "having lots of money" was rated as an "extremely important" life goal by almost one-third of the male seniors and almost one-quarter of the female seniors (Bachman, Freedman-Doan, & O'Malley, 2000b). The largest percentage of seniors chose business as their most likely field of study, followed by "pre-professional" programs, health, engineering, and education (Green, Dugoni, Ingels, & Camburn, 1995).

To a growing number of American undergraduates in the first third of the 20th century, attending college marked a pleasant interlude between the end of adolescence and the assumption of adult responsibilities (Lucas, 1994). Traditionally, four-year college students have enrolled full-time immediately after graduating from high school; depended on their parents to take care of most, if not all, financial responsibilities; and worked part-time or not at all (Choy, 2002). Roughly three-quarters of seniors plan to continue their education after high school (Green, Dugoni, Ingels, & Camburn, 1995). Today's college students are a diverse group: 30 percent are minorities, 20 percent were born outside the United States or have a foreign-born parent, and 11 percent spoke a language other than English while growing up (Choy, 2002).

College enrollment rates of 18 – 24 year olds have increased from 26 percent in 1980 to 38 percent in 2003; the enrollment rate for females has increased more rapidly than that for males (Fox, Connolly, & Snyder, 2005). Today, only 40 percent of four-

year college students fit this traditional mold (Choy, 2002). Youth is a period where dramatic physical, emotional, and educational changes take place; today's children and adolescents make the transition to adulthood; many leave home, or marry and start families of their own, or attend post-secondary education or begin careers (Snyder & Shafer, 1996).

Historical Aspects of Post-Secondary Education

The Christian tradition was the foundation stone of the whole intellectual structure which was brought to the New World; it is equally important, however, to keep in mind that the early colleges were not set up solely to train ministers; their charters make it amply clear that from the very beginning it was intended that they also educate professional men in fields other than the ministry and public officials of various kinds (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997). The university started as a single community – a community of masters and students (Kerr, 1996). Higher education in the United States has been molded and influenced by a variety of historical forces; the English-Americans, for example, were determined that their children should preserve those aspects of Old World civilization which their fathers held to be all important and in achieving this aim of the transmission and preservation of intellectual culture, higher education was the most valuable tool that lay at hand (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997). The emergence of the American university as a distinctive institutional type, separate and apart from the traditional college, was the product of the entire complex of social, economic, political, and cultural factors at work throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century (Lucas, 1996). In each part of the New World, the European settlers sought to create as close an

approximation as they could to the culture with which they had been familiar back home (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997). The formative period for American higher education may be said to have extended from the immediate post Civil War period up to about the eve of World War I; and by the midpoint of the 20th century's second decade, the university had acquired most of its essential features and was set upon the course that would carry it throughout the remainder of the 1900's (Kerr, 1996). Higher education in the United States was nearly two hundred years old before any considerable number of educators took occasion to give explicit statement to its underlying philosophy (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997).

Post-secondary education is characterized by diversity in both the types of institutions and the characteristics of the students (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004). On one hand, there are the patterns and tradition of higher learning which have been brought over from Western Europe, and on the other hand we find the local American conditions which have affected and modified the development of these transplanted institutions (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997). Post-secondary institutions vary in the types of degrees awarded, control (public or private), and whether they are operated on a not-for-profit or for-profit basis (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004). Higher education in the United States is now over three hundred years old and out of the interaction of influences from Western Europe and local American conditions and the growth of democracy in every area of American life, has developed into a truly unique system (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997). The university is being called upon to educate previously unimagined

numbers of students, to respond to the expanding claims of national service, to merge its activities with industry as never before, to adapt to and re-channel new intellectual currents (Kerr, 1996).

What few had anticipated was the extent to which professional training would begin to expand and encroach upon general undergraduate education; most people apparently expected or assumed that the two would remain separate and apart from one another and it was not long before pressures began building to install still more specialized, professional courses of instruction at the undergraduate level, paralleling standard four-year courses of instruction in the liberal arts disciplines (Kerr, 1996). At the end of the 1899-1900 academic year, institutions of higher education collectively awarded a total of about 29,000 degrees; for the 1949-50 academic year, the comparable figure had risen to nearly half a million (Lucas, 1994). So many of the hopes and fears of the American people are now related to our educational system and particularly to our universities – the hope for longer life, for getting into outer space, for a higher standard of living; our fears of hostile nations supremacy, of the bomb and annihilation, of individual loss of purpose in the changing world - it is for all these reasons and others, the university has become a prime instrument of national purpose (Kerr, 1996).

The Importance and Value of Post-Secondary Education

Naturally enough, many educators have wondered whether going to college makes any difference (Davis, 1977). Since the first student went off to college, we've been told that you go to college to study, to broaden your mind, fill it with the riches of learning, to acquire a "disciplined" mind (Turngren, 1952). In the 21st century,

American families, as well as public and institutional policy-makers, believe that everyone in a modern society should obtain some form of post-secondary education and training (Kinzie, Palmer, Hayek, Hossler, Jacob, & Cummings, 2004). The vast majority of Americans continue to believe that getting a college education is more important than it was in the past, that the country can never have too many college graduates, and that we should not allow the price of a higher education to exclude qualified and motivated students from getting a college education (Immerwahr, 2004). Educational attainment plays a fundamental role in the distribution of life's valued goods in the United States (Reynolds & Pemberton, 2001). College - the study part, the serious part - can be one of the most wonderful experiences a person will ever have, it can change a young person's whole life – though whether it does or not depends largely on the student (Turngren, 1952).

A likely motivation for obtaining a bachelor's degree is income, since individuals with more education earn more money (Wilson, Greenlees, Hagerty, & Hintze, 2000). Higher education influences economic well-being in three ways: first, the direct expenditures by the institutions, their employees, and their students impact the local economy (this spending multiplies through the local economy until the monies are used to purchase goods and services from outside the local area); second, higher education provides financial and non-financial benefits to the individual who pursues an advanced education and to society in general and; third, institutions of higher education are increasingly focused on knowledge creation (Hill, Hoffman, & Rex, 2005). Getting a college education has become increasingly important in order to participate fully in

today's labor market; in the past, students who either dropped out of high school or entered the labor market immediately after high school graduation may have relied on getting relatively well paying entry-level manufacturing jobs (Horn & Carroll, 1997). If the value of a college education is expressed on the same basis as the return on a financial investment, the net return is on the order of 12 percent per year, over and above inflation; these productivity gains translate into higher output and incomes for the economy (Hill, Hoffman, & Rex, 2005). In the United States, a four-year college degree continues to be viewed as the most certain path to personal fulfillment and economic success (Kinzie, Palmer, Hayek, Hossler, Jacob, & Cummings, 2004). Today the economy demands a more technologically sophisticated labor force; these youth may have limited opportunities for economic advancement unless they continue their education beyond high school (Horn & Carroll, 1997). The earnings premiums increase with the level of educational attainment, with both observed and adjusted earnings being higher for individuals who earn an associates' degree, bachelor's degree, or advanced degree than for individuals who attain only a high school diploma (Perna, 2003). Large majorities of the general public have consistently emphasized the importance of higher education; 87 percent said that a high school graduate should go on to college rather than taking any decent job after high school, and 76 percent said that getting a college education is more important than it was 10 years ago (Immerwahr, 2004).

Adults with higher levels of education are more likely to participate in the labor force with about 79 percent of adults, 25 years old and over with a bachelor's or higher degree, participating in the labor force in 2002 compared with 64 percent of persons who

had completed high school only (Snyder & Tan, 2004). For both males and females, earnings increase with education: full-time workers with at least a bachelor's degree have higher median earnings than those with less education; for example, in 2002 male college graduates earned 65 percent more than male high school completers and females with a bachelor's or higher degree earned 71 percent more than female high school completers (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004). Average annual earnings of individuals with a bachelor's degree are more than 75 percent higher than the earnings of high school graduates, which add up to over \$1 million over a lifetime; therefore, higher education provides considerable value to individuals, the economies where educated individuals work and live, and society in general (Hill, Hoffman, & Rex, 2005). We now live in a knowledge-based global economy (Callan, 2003). Most college graduates earn more over a lifetime than high school graduates (Klein, 1995). Studies show that graduates with a college degree do make about 80% more in their first few years on the job than do graduates with only a high school diploma (Leana, 1990).

Economics and the social advantages of going to college are not the only reasons for continuing one's education; some of the most important reasons have to do with the growth and maturity of the student (Bowles, Pace, & Stone, 1968). Four years after finishing high school, those young people who persist through college have not only more intellectual curiosity and more autonomous styles of thinking than their peers who spent the same four years in the world of work, they also are more tolerant of ambiguity, less authoritarian, and more receptive and responsive to a wider environment than non-

attenders (Trent & Medsker, 1968). Education provides a variety of benefits to students including enhanced social skills, greater awareness of human achievement, and an appreciation for cultural diversity (Hill, Hoffman, & Rex, 2005). A college education is as much a part of the continuing development of personality and values, as it is a continuance of intellectual growth (Barre, 1970). Education provides a student with skills that are valued by employers and increases lifetime earnings capacity (Hill, Hoffman, & Rex, 2005). The fact is that the differences, in terms of lifetime experiences, between the average student who goes to college and the average student who does not, are so favorable to the college-going student that any student who can reach college owes it to himself to do so (Bowles, Pace, & Stone, 1968). Social benefits of a workforce with greater educational attainment and skills can be traced to the enhanced worker productivity associated with greater educational attainment (Hill, Hoffman, & Rex, 2005). America today is striving to maintain its standard of living and its pre-eminent position among the countries of the world (Snyder & Shafer, 1996). Education is increasingly viewed as an economic investment (Hill, Hoffman, & Rex, 2005). The prospects for states and communities whose citizens and workers lack college level skills are equally poor and without college – education and training beyond high school – the prospects are that these young Americans will not find employment that supports a middle class life (Callan, 2003). Unprecedented amounts of technology will confront our youth with a continued array of new information as we conduct business in an increasingly competitive global economy (Snyder & Shafer, 1996). The fact that so many high school graduates now continue their education suggests that there

is a high value on college in American life (Bowles, Pace, & Stone, 1968). Talents will be identified earlier in the student's educational career, and the student and his parents will be oriented earlier to the opportunities and importance of higher education (Barre, 1970).

Although higher education may make a difference in income earned and the range of information at one's command, it makes little impact on the way one votes, looks upon ethnic groups different from one's own, construes the moral world, or responds to nature and the arts (Trent & Medsker, 1968). What the student gets out of college depends partly on each individual, whether they take advantage of all that's offered them; it can open fields to them that they never dreamed existed, show them new horizons, help them to reach their goals (Turngren, 1952). College should give young people skills to adapt to changes in the job market and help them develop interests that will sustain them throughout their lives (Leana, 1990). College can stimulate and arouse intellectual curiosity so that young people go on studying and learning all of their lives (Turngren, 1952). College is a safe "playpen" for young people to mature in over four years, and it's a place to meet new and different people (Klein, 1995). We will need to be comfortable acquiring new knowledge and learning new skills; how well society fares in the future will depend in part on today's youth who will be the leaders and the citizens of the 21st century (Snyder & Shafer, 1996). Flexibility, the capacity to adapt to changing circumstances, may in the end be one of the most desirable characteristics to emerge from any education (Leana, 1990). One line of criticism has suggested that a youngster's exposure to higher education is basically incidental to the background of

experience they bring with them to the university; it is not college that determines either their worldly success or the lineaments of their adult character, but the same elements in their history and make-up that lead them initially to seek education beyond the secondary level (Trent & Medsker, 1968). The emphasis will be on personal responsibility for one's education (Barre, 1970). College can give you the tools of learning – facility with words, the ability to read with ease and understanding, to express your thoughts, to conduct experiments and do research - but the fact that college can offer you all this and more is no guarantee that it will (Turngren, 1952).

Another pattern of studies has raised doubts about the extent to which college has any modifying effect on the values of students, whatever may be its contribution to their marketable skills or general knowledge (Trent & Medsker, 1968). While college is teaching you how to live and to make your life richer and happier and more useful, it can also teach you to make a living (Turngren, 1952). The high school graduate who immediately goes to work does not have the benefit of the specialized training he could get in college, nor does he ordinarily have the benefit of a placement office which will make special efforts to find employment suitable to his interests, talents, and background, except to the United States Employment Services, or a comparable state agency (Trent & Medsker, 1968). Before you can practice most professions you'll need a college degree and even if a degree isn't required in the field you choose, the fact that you have it will make a difference in the job you can get, the salary you can command, and in advancement in your job (Turngren, 1952).

Educational Aspirations and Expectations

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines aspiration as a strong desire to achieve something high or great and expectation as the act or state of expecting (Mish, & Morse, 1999). Educational expectations are an important cognitive link between educational aspirations and eventual achievements and refer to the level of education that an individual would ideally like to obtain (Reynolds & Pemberton, 2001). It seems clear that aspirations and expectations do indeed represent two separate though related dimensions; one dimension, expectations, involves reality considerations and judgments or estimates of future performance, and the other dimension is more affective, and elicits desires or wishes concerning future performance (Tillery & Kildegaard, 1973). Aspirations are desired outcomes that are not limited by constraints on resources with changing levels of opportunity which may be expressed in changing relationships between plans and aspirations (Hauser & Anderson, 1991). Tillery and Kildegaard (1973) conducted studies of projections which students make about their future education or careers and concluded that students have been influenced by two concepts, namely, aspirations and expectations, and further state that academic attributes are generally of primary concern when considering the differential characteristics of high-school seniors having differing educational aspirations. For some high-school students this question of career has been settled, perhaps since the day they drew their first picture, played their first piano scales, raised a garden, were first fascinated by machinery, or nursed the family pooch back to health; these students are fortunate since they've known all along what they were destined to become - doctors, farmers,

musicians, engineers, or whatever; they know exactly what they're looking for, a school that can give them training in their specific field (Turngren, 1952).

Research on educational aspirations consistently shows that large numbers of high-school students report plans to attend college, and even higher numbers aspire to do so (Kleykamp, 2004). It appears that plans and expectations for college become more firm between 10th and 12th grades (Bachman, Freedman-Doan, & O'Malley, 2000a). Most adolescents, regardless of background, have very high educational aspirations (Hoogstra, 2000). High-school graduates possess high educational expectations, with virtually all (more than 90 percent) of the members of the 1992 high school graduating class, regardless of race, family income, or parents' education, saying they planned to continue their education (Choy, 2002). Most youth also aspire to go to college with almost 90 percent of those who plan to continue in school hoping to get at least a bachelor's degree (Wilson, Greenlees, Hagerty, & Hintze, 2000). Forty percent of 10th-graders in 2002 expected to complete a bachelor's as their highest degree; and another 40 percent expected to attain a graduate or professional degree, with about 11 percent expecting some post-secondary education but attaining less than a bachelor's degree (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004).

College expectancies increased dramatically during the two decades from 1976 through 1996, with percentages of female high school seniors expecting "definitely" to complete college doubling from about 27 percent in 1976 to about 62 percent in 1996; and the increase among male seniors was nearly as large, from about 27 percent to about 52 percent (Bachman, Freedman-Doan, & O'Malley, 2000a). The 1998 Youth Attitude

Tracking Study results showed 83 percent of male high school seniors and 88 percent of female high school seniors planned to continue their education after high school (Wilson, Greenlees, Hagerty, & Hintze, 2000).

Hanson (1994) discovered that although race and gender statuses may work in expected ways during earlier periods of the educational process, it is males and Whites who are more likely to experience the loss of talent in the late high school and post-high school periods examined. He postulates that lost talent occurs when students who show signs of early talent have educational expectations that fall short of their aspirations, have reduced expectations over time, or are not able to realize their earlier expectations. He further states that gender statements about the role of these two status variables in the educational-selection and cooling-out processes cannot be applied to all youths and all selection processes. The results of Hanson's (1994) research suggest that when the loss of talent is conceptualized as unrealized educational aspirations and expectations in a sample of youths who showed some early signs of talent and had positive educational attitudes in high school, stratification variables involving gender and race often work in unexpected ways. Hanson (1994) concluded that students' educational aspirations are highly correlated with their eventual attainment.

Hauser and Anderson (1991) discovered that the plans of Black and White seniors have followed similar paths in time that have included stable or declining interest in technical or vocational schooling and two-year college programs, and growing interest in military service and in four-year college programs. They surmise that there are good reasons to think that periodic measurements of youth's plans and aspirations will provide

useful and valid clues about the social and economic futures of high school seniors.

Hauser and Anderson's (1991) research revealed that from 1976 to 1985, the percentage of Black seniors with definite plans to attend a technical or vocational school fluctuated between 10 and 13 percent, while the percentage with definite or probable intentions fluctuated between 35 and 40 percent. They concluded that there is little indication of a trend in this series and certainly no suggestion that Black seniors' plans for post-high school technical or vocational training increased; but if there was a trend during this period, it was a decline in plans to attend technical or vocational school. The data from the Hauser and Anderson study (1991) does not suggest declining college aspirations among Black seniors; in fact, they found the same trends among Black men as among Black women, and even though there was no reason to find close agreement between aspirations and plans, either at the individual level or in the aggregate, changes in aggregate plans relative to levels of aspirations may indicate changes in the availability of resources for the pursuit of different activities. The main finding from the Hauser and Anderson (1991) study was that the college plans and aspirations of Black seniors and White seniors followed similar paths in time, even though the sources of these trends differed.

College enrollments have been rising over the past three decades as access to higher education has opened for many minorities and as students increasingly see the value of having a college education for their future earnings (Kleykamp, 2004). Some youth may aspire to getting a college education but expect that family resources and commitments will prevent them from obtaining a college degree, at least in the

foreseeable future (Reynolds & Pemberton, 2001). An adolescent's career expectations are no longer a very good indication of what work he or she will actually do (Schmidt & Rich, 2000). It seems self-evident that differing attitudes toward education, levels of ability and achievement, and academic striving behaviors would have a great deal to do with how long students aspire to stay in school; and such factors are known to be highly related to educational outcomes after high school (Tillery & Kildegaard, 1973). The expectation is not abstract devotion to education, but ordinary common sense based on the values of college (Bowles, Pace, & Stone, 1968).

Plans for the Future and Post-Secondary Education

There are mounting pressures during the adolescent years to take a stand on what to do after high school (Tillery & Kildegaard, 1973). A student's plan for pursuing higher education is but a culmination of long-range planning started as early as the junior high school years (Barre, 1970). Attending college and completing a college degree is but one of many future possibilities on which teenagers in the United States speculate (Reynolds & Pemberton, 2001). Although many of the high school seniors did not know what they wanted to do after graduation, almost none conceived of themselves as semiskilled or unskilled workers, and the vocational preferences of many of the non-college group were clearly unrealistic inasmuch as they were unattainable without further education (Trent & Medsker, 1968). A young man or woman of college age is more or less expected to be going to college simply because that is the best thing to be doing at that age; therefore, six out of ten high-school graduates now go to college (Bowles, Pace, & Stone, 1968). Other competing or sequential pathways include paid

employment and family formation (Reynolds & Pemberton, 2001). Many who do not plan to attend college apparently finished high school without a clear notion of what they wanted to do (Trent & Medsker, 1968). Trends in youth's plans to attend college and actual college enrollment rates over the past several decades document that college education is an increasingly popular pathway among high school youth (Reynolds & Pemberton, 2001). Vocational interests are important interests for secondary-school students to consider because they often play a controlling role in the selection of an educational program and a college (Wilson & Bucher, 1958).

Influencers of the Post-Secondary Education Decision

For some students there is a high congruence between what they say they want to do and what others want for them; but for others, lack of agreement among what their teachers, parents, and friends think right for them may exceed their own internal ambivalence (Tillery & Kildegaard, 1973). Parents are known to be the prime motivating factor in a student's college choice; however they are often the least informed as to current college admissions procedures and policies (Barre, 1970). Most students require assistance in making appropriate decisions concerning college attendance and other educational problems (Carmody, Fenske, & Scott, 1972). What students say about issues in their lives are reinforced, rejected, ridiculed, or compromised by the significant others in their lives (Tillery & Kildegaard, 1973). The student is confronted with his first major educational decision which will ultimately influence his adult life; therefore, the student has ideally evaluated himself as to his interests, his values, his individuality, and his vocational aspirations resulting in a goal he hopes to seek (Barre, 1970).

Teachers, counselors, administrators, and legislators are all vitally concerned with gaining as much comprehensive and reliable information as possible about students' backgrounds, needs, goals, and aspirations (Carmody, Fenske, & Scott, 1972). The counselor working with the student must realize that this process is continuous and subject to some change, the entire process assumes interaction among the counselor, the student and his parents (Barre, 1970). A declaration of educational aspiration brings both peer and adult intervention to the decision-making processes (Tillery & Kildegaard, 1973). High school students do not know what expectations are realistic, what skills are useful, or what values are relevant to their future (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000). The counselor, whose work with the student is the vehicle for the self-understanding and knowledge upon which the student bases his decisions, must be prepared with knowledge of individual assessment, college information, career trends and prerequisite training, as well as techniques which will assist the student and provide him with relevant data (Barre, 1970).

In today's economy, parents rarely teach children the work skills they will need as adults; instead, the role of the family in socializing children to an occupational future consists of arranging for schooling and of exposing children to the values, motivations, attitudes, and expectations that they will need to find a satisfying, productive niche when they reach adulthood (Rathunde, Carroll & Huang, 2000). Aspirations of urban respondents appear to come from two sources of significant-other influence-parental definer behavior and peer modeling; on the other side of the residence continuum, rural youths' aspirations are influenced less by parental definer considerations and more in

terms of the modeling behavior of peers (Picou & Carter, 1976). Parents, peers, and school personnel can help at-risk students overcome a variety of obstacles to college access and persistence (Choy, 2002). Parents of high school students have not changed much in their high level of emphasis on the necessity of college, but they are now much more likely to say they are concerned about access than they were a few years ago (Immerwahr, 2004). What students say about the education they seek after high school becomes the locus and perhaps the maelstrom of school and home relationships; so in reasonably predictable ways such declarations set into motion complex guidance activities and reactions from family, school people, and friends (Tillery & Kildegaard, 1973).

Time for college selection is crucial for the student and his parents (Barre, 1970). The high school counselor is the liaison for the student and his parents with the colleges (Leana, 1990). The counselor must be a proactive liaison between the faculty and the administration of both high school and college and must take a more active role in curriculum planning (Barre, 1970). The role of the counselor is not to get the student admitted but to help the student in the exploration of possibilities and the execution of the application process (Leana, 1990). Among the factors found to have bearing on vocational choice and development were community characteristics, educational opportunity, level of ability, and job availability (Trent & Medsker, 1968). The early empirical research in this area included a number of longitudinal studies of high school students which confirmed that the important factors influencing enrollment are family income, parental education, high school peer relationships (and tracking), and the

proximity of a college to the student's home (Kohn, Manski, & Mundel, 1974). The major importance of guidance counseling is curriculum track placement and course planning; however, another important function of the high school guidance counselor is to help students make wise decisions about their educational or career plans after they leave high school (Lee & Ekstrom, 1987). The discussion of the career is an extension of the subject of occupational socialization (Harper & Lawson, 2003). For some, choosing an occupation and finding their first full-time job will be the major immediate challenges; and for others, choosing a college and selecting a particular course of study will constitute the major decision-making goals at this stage (Noeth, Engen, & Noeth, 1984). During these final years of schooling, students have increased opportunities to make decisions that have long-term consequences for their professional and personal lives (Cobia & Henderson, 2003). The choice of what to do after high school is a critical one because it will have an impact on what one may or may not be able to do in the future professionally, financially, personally and emotionally (Miller, 1978). Parental influence was still higher than was teacher or guidance counselor influence, and guidance counselor influence was slightly below teacher influence (Lee & Ekstrom, 1987). Previous approaches to studying young people's school-to-work transitions were based on two fundamental assumptions that once seemed sound but now are questionable: first, that clearly structured and differentiated adult careers exist that correspond to particular traits, or skills, of young people and, second, that young people are generally motivated and prepared to pursue adult careers (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000). As the youth of today strive to find places for themselves in the world

of work, they are faced with considering not only the kind of job they will hold, but also the kind of work environment which will provide them personal satisfaction and growth (Ireh, 2000). The sense of urgency that once prompted young people to begin productive careers soon after high school graduation seems definitely less acute now than it had been in previous generations (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000). Teenagers typically say they feel pushed and pulled in many directions (Rathunde, Carroll & Huang, 2000). Teenagers detest the “pressure to succeed” that is put on them throughout the adolescent years (Danesi, 2003). It could be argued that teenagers’ values and attitudes about work are largely irrelevant to the determination of their future occupations (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000). These forces originate both in the individual and from such sources as friends, teachers, and family (Rathunde, Carroll & Huang, 2000).

Preparation for Post-Secondary Education

Unanimity of opinion prevails that a high-school education that is not good enough for college is not good enough for the purposes and pursuits of life; and on the other hand, a high-school education that does not afford a good preparation and equipment for life, fails also to give a proper preparation for college (Stout & Coffman, 1914). All the years that precede college are college-preparatory years (Wilson & Bucher, 1958). As students enter high school, they are going to have to start thinking about life after high school – perhaps moving on to college (Klein, 1995). Somewhere during the high school years (and the earlier the better) the question of what students are going to do after graduation becomes an important subject of family discussions;

meanwhile the family is talking of college as only a step onward to something else – to a career, perhaps (Turngren, 1952). If we would dignify an occupation we must render it worthy by encouraging preparation for it (Stout & Coffman, 1914). Couple the demands of personal changes that challenge today's youth with the demands of a changing society, and it is easy to see why this might be defined as a difficult time of life (Snyder & Shafer, 1996). Youth is actually constituted by interests, needs, and capacities and must be regarded as furnishing criteria for determining educational aim, means, method, and organization (Stout & Coffman, 1914). Obviously, if students are not prepared academically for further education, it is highly unlikely that they will advance to higher education immediately after high school (Horn & Carroll, 1997). The value of education can be measured in part by increased vocational efficiency, and the lack of preparation means not only a lack of ability to work effectively but also a lack of appreciation of its meaning; therefore, the choice of an occupation and the preparation are matters of large import and are primary considerations to parents (Stout & Coffman, 1914). The school usually does not complete the task of educating an individual for specialized participation in productive work (Bernard & Fullmer, 1969).

Career Goals and Plans

The idea that the career development of typical individuals passes through a series of relatively discrete stages is prevalent among developmental theorists (Rehberg & Hotchkiss, 1979). Some students define their goals early in life because of a special talent or interest, or the influence of family background; but they should be careful not to lock themselves into one field too hastily (Leana, 1990). The goal is to organize one's

plans and energies in such a way as to begin an orderly career and to feel able to make a living when necessary (Havighurst, 1982). Many careers do not require post-secondary education (Roney & Wolfe, 2000). The mania for the college diploma has created an overwhelming surplus of overqualified applicants, whom employers are reluctant to hire (Mihalka, 1974).

A career is predetermined by social position and unfolds according to the opportunities afforded by the economic system (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000). The current emphasis on occupational choice and skill training is extremely important, but it must be kept in mind that both the kinds of work and reasons for working are undergoing changes (Mihalka, 1974). There are dangers in specialized education such as: with special training, you may be limiting your chances of changing occupations later, should you wish to do so; there may be no openings in your specialty when you are ready for your job; it is not easy to get your “culture” later because the problems of continuing study for your job, of raising a family, and being a citizen in a community are themselves manifold; and your specialized training may not have taught you much about people and managerial occupations which today require a depth of human understanding (Wilson & Bucher, 1958). The prominence which students give to vocational preparation in their thinking means that the educational plans of most of these young people can be judged best in the light of their vocational goals (Spaulding, 1938). A high school senior or a beginning college student should not be overly concerned about not having a specific career goal in mind when selecting colleges because over 60% of students change their career plans at least once, often twice, during their college years

(Leana, 1990). The term occupational choice is frequently associated with a static conception such as the trait-factor approach and contrasted to the concept of career development, which is intended to convey the idea that numerous vocational choices are in process throughout one's life (Rehberg & Hotchkiss, 1979). Today, work is viewed as an imperative not only for socioeconomic well-being but also for physical and psychological well-being (Vondracek, Lerner, & Schulenberg, 1986).

Today the average young person can look forward to six or seven different jobs, six or seven mini-careers, which will make up a lifetime of work (Mitchell, 1994). In addition to gaining occupational information and making choices based on interest, aptitude, and attitude, high school students are also considering the kind of lifestyle and family life they wish to have in the future (Cobia & Henderson, 2003). Many jobs and occupations, however, do not form into a bureaucratically organized career (Harper & Lawson, 2003). It is becoming more evident that not only have there been drastic changes in the kinds of work performed and where and how one works, but also in the underlying reasons for work (Mihalka, 1974). All work is fundamentally rooted in social interaction (Harper & Lawson, 2003). There is a growing recognition as a result of psychological studies that developing acceptable attitudes and values for work should be an ongoing process in the maturing of youth (Mihalka, 1974).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Population and Sample

The target population for this study consisted of youth who were at least 16 years of age, and less than 22 years of age residing in the United States. Data was collected by means of a telephone survey from October 15, 2003 through November 25, 2003. The telephone interview lasted approximately 20 minutes for each respondent.

The sample for the study consisted of 3,017 males and females between the ages of 16-21. Stratified random sampling was used where the telephone exchanges were stratified by concentration of the rare population (under represented ethnicities within the population), and the strata with high concentrations were then over sampled. The exchanges were classified into strata; the telephone numbers in the exchanges with the higher proportion of members were sampled at a higher rate than numbers in the other strata. This procedure was used to improve the precision of estimates of African Americans and Hispanics.

Instrumentation

The October 2003 Department of Defense Youth Polling questionnaire administered by Wirthlin Worldwide was used to conduct telephone interviews of 16 to 21 year old youth living in the United States. Survey data from the October 2003 Department of Defense Youth Polling Survey was obtained from The Defense Human Resources Activity.

Research Question 1

Do 16-21 year olds in the United States have an interest in attending some type of post-secondary education?

Respondents were asked, “What do you think you might be doing ‘once you finish high school’, ‘once you finish college’, or ‘in the next few years?’”, depending on how they responded to question EDU1, “Are you currently enrolled in school or a training program?”. In addition, respondents were asked, “What is the highest grade or year of school or college that you would eventually like to complete?”

Research Question 2

What type of post-secondary education are 16-21 year olds in the United States interested in attending?

Respondents were asked, “What kind of school or college would you like to attend?” They were asked to select from the following list:

1. High school
2. Vocational, business, or trade school
3. 2-year junior or community college
4. 4-year college or university
5. Graduate or professional school

Research Question 3

Do selected individuals such as parents, siblings, extended family members, friends, teachers, or school guidance counselors influence the post-secondary schooling decisions made by 16-21 year olds in the United States?

This question will be analyzed using descriptive statistics, inferential statistics (chi square), and factor analysis to determine differences between groups. Respondents were asked to rate, on a 7 point scale, how strongly they are influenced by a list of 7 individuals or group of individuals:

- A. Your mom
- B. Your dad
- C. Your extended family (cousins, uncles, aunts, grandparents...etc.)
- D. Your close friends
- E. Your teachers
- F. Your guidance and/or career counselor at school
- G. Your brothers and sisters

Research Question 4

When making post-secondary education decisions are options such as: earning money for college, having a good paying job, having job security, having a job that makes you happy, learning a valuable trade or skill, preparing for a future career, training in cutting edge technology, not going to college immediately after high school, making a positive difference in the community, and having a lifestyle that is attractive important to 16-21 year olds in the United States?

This question will be analyzed using descriptive statistics, inferential statistics (chi square), and factor analysis to determine differences between groups. Respondents were asked to rate, on a 7 point scale, the importance of outcomes to decisions they make:

- A. Earning money for college
- B. Having a good paying job that allows you to live comfortably
- C. Having job security
- D. Having a job that makes you happy
- E. Learning a valuable trade or skill
- F. Preparing for a future career
- G. Training in cutting edge technology
- H. Not going to college immediately after high school
- I. Making a positive difference in your community
- J. Having a lifestyle that is attractive to you

Procedures and Data Collection

Interviews were conducted during the evening and weekend hours. The fieldwork took place from Wirthlin Worldwide's telephone center located in Orem, Utah; Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) was used for the survey. Each household was screened for youth who were at least 16 years old and less than 22 years old. If there was more than one person in the household who met the criteria, the respondent in the household between the ages of 16-21 with the most recent birthday prior to the interview date was interviewed. If that individual was away at college (living in a dormitory, fraternity house or temporary housing), they were asked for the telephone number and name of the youth and that number was placed in the callback queue. If a household was not reached after ten calls, another randomly selected household was substituted, callbacks were scheduled on different days, different times of the day and in different weeks. All initial refusals were put into a queue to be worked by a group of interviewer specialists, trained and experienced in refusal conversion. Up to an additional three callbacks, conducted at different times and days were made. If a household was not reached after three callbacks or if a second refusal occurred, a "hard" refusal was recorded on the final disposition. A pretest of the survey instrument was conducted October 13-14, 2003 in the Orem, Utah telephone facility. The nine geographic regions indicating the states within those regions and the percentage of the sample from each region is depicted in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Wirthlin Worldwide 9-point Geocode for Region

Geographic Region	Percentage of Sample	States in Region
1 New England	5.06	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont
2 Mid-Atlantic	14.33	New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania
3 East North Central	16.01	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin
4 West North Central	6.82	Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota
5 South-Atlantic	18.73	Delaware, DC, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida
6 East South Central	6.09	Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky
7 West South Central	10.89	Oklahoma, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas
8 Mountain	6.33	Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming
9 Pacific	15.75	California, Oregon, Washington, Hawaii and Alaska
Total	100	

Wirthlin Worldwide, the independent research firm, which conducted the telephone survey, utilized a 9-point geocode to break the United States into 9 regions. Figure 1 shows how the United States was divided into the 9 regions. This illustration is shown to give the reader an idea of from where the data was obtained.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the importance of post-secondary education in the future plans of 16-21 year old youth, during the period October 15 to November 25, 2003, by analyzing their responses to questions about what they think they may be doing in the near future. A secondary purpose of the study was to determine if selected individuals in their lives such as parents, siblings, extended family members, friends, teachers, or school guidance counselors influence the post-secondary education decisions made by 16-21 year old youth in the United States, during the period October 15 to November 25, 2003. In addition, selected outcome options such as earning money for college, having a good paying job, having job security, having a job that makes you happy, learning a valuable trade or skill, preparing for a future career, training in cutting edge technology, not going to college immediately after high school, making a positive difference in the community, and having a lifestyle that is attractive to you were analyzed to determine the effect these outcome options have on post-secondary education decisions made by 16-21 year old youth from the United States, during the period October 15 to November 25, 2003.

This chapter will present the analysis of data collected from the October 2003 Department of Defense Youth Polling Survey fielded October 13th, 2003. The first part of the chapter will address the demographics of the respondents and the second part of the chapter will address each research question.

Demographics

The sample consisted of 1420 males, 47.1 percent of the sample and 1597 females, 52.9 percent of the sample. The frequency and percentage of gender within the sample is shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
Frequency and Percent of Gender in the Sample

	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
Male	1420	47.1
Female	1597	52.9
Total	3017	100.0

The frequency and percentage of the age categories from the sample is shown in Table 3. Half of the sample is in the 16 and 17 year old age categories. A bar graph of the sample distribution by age is depicted in Figure 2 which clearly shows the large percentage of 16 and 17 year olds accounting for 51.1% of the sample.

TABLE 3
Frequency and Percentage of the Age Categories in the Sample

Age	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
16	782	25.9
17	759	25.2
18	484	16.0
19	351	11.6
20	342	11.3
21	299	9.9
Total	3017	100.0

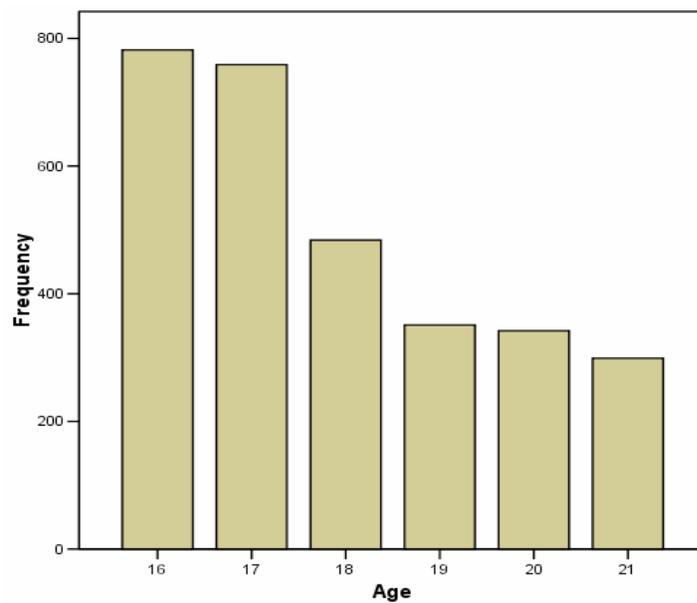


Figure 2. Bar Graph of Frequency of Age Categories in the Sample

The breakdown for ethnicity is displayed in Table 4. Respondents were asked to respond with yes or no to a list of racial categories: White, Black/African American, American Indian/Alaskan, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic; based

on the responses to these questions; ethnicity was divided into four categories: White, Non-Hispanic; Black, Non-Hispanic; Hispanic; and Other Non-Hispanic. Table 5 shows the frequency and percentage of the sample that were in the four ethnic categories.

TABLE 4

Frequency and Percent of Ethnic Categories for the Sample

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
White	2048	67.9
Black / African American	534	17.7
American Indian / Alaskan	120	4.0
Asian	111	3.7
Native Hawaiian / Pac Isl	48	1.6
Hispanic	266	8.8

TABLE 5

Frequency and Percentage of the Four Ethnic Categories in the Sample

Age	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
White, Non-Hispanic	1782	59.1
Black, Non-Hispanic	459	15.2
Hispanic	537	17.8
Other, Non-Hispanic	239	7.9
Total	3017	100.0

Shannon and Davenport (2001) have stated that the chi-square procedure is the most commonly used nonparametric measure of association. The chi-square procedure is used to compare observed cell frequencies with what you would expect if the two variables were independent of each other. It compares the frequency of cases found in the various categories of one variable across the different categories of another variable (Pallant, 2005). Chi-square analysis was conducted on the demographic data to determine if there were significant differences between gender, age, ethnicity and usual grades made in high school within this sample.

The cross tabulation of ethnic category by gender is shown in Table 6. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 7 and reveal that with respect to ethnic category the proportion of males is not significantly different from the proportion of females within the sample.

TABLE 6
Cross Tabulation: Ethnic Category by Gender

	Male	Female	Total
White, Non-Hispanic	872	910	1782
Black, Non-Hispanic	193	266	459
Hispanic	245	292	537
Other, Non-Hispanic	110	129	239
Total	1420	1597	3017

TABLE 7
Chi-Square Test: Ethnic Category by Gender

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.687 ^a	3	.053
Likelihood Ratio	7.711	3	.052
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 112.49.

The cross tabulation of gender by age is shown in Table 8. The chi-square test of gender by age is shown in Table 9. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between males and females with regard to the age categories within the sample.

TABLE 8
Cross Tabulation: Gender by Age

	16	17	18	19	20	21	Total
Male	371	358	233	177	147	134	1420
Female	411	401	251	174	195	165	1597
Total	782	759	484	351	342	299	3017

TABLE 9
Chi-Square Test: Gender by Age

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.760 ^a	5	.446
Likelihood Ratio	4.768	5	.445
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 140.73.

The cross tabulation of ethnic category by age is shown in Table 10. The chi-square test of ethnic category by age is shown in Table 11 which seems to indicate that there is not a significant relationship between the ethnic categories and the age categories within the sample.

TABLE 10
Cross Tabulation: Ethnic Category by Age

	16	17	18	19	20	21	Total
White, Non-Hispanic	446	465	268	209	195	199	1782
Black, Non-Hispanic	128	118	79	50	47	37	459
Hispanic	144	124	98	61	67	43	537
Other, Non-Hispanic	64	52	39	31	33	20	239
Total	782	759	484	351	342	299	3017

TABLE 11
Chi-Square Test: Ethnic Category by Age

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	17.592 ^a	15	.288
Likelihood Ratio	17.607	15	.284
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 23.69.

TABLE 12
Cross Tabulation: Frequency and Percentage of Usual Grades Made in High School

	Frequency	Percentage
Mostly A's (avg 90-100)	437	14.5
Mostly A's and B's (avg 85-89)	1028	34.1
Mostly B's (avg 80-84)	403	13.4
Mostly B's and C's (avg 75-79)	703	23.3
Mostly C's (avg 70-74)	198	6.6
Mostly C's and D's (avg 65-69)	145	4.8
Mostly D's and Lower (64 and Below)	44	1.5
Never in High School	4	.1
Don't Know / Refused	4	.1
Subtotal	2966	98.3
Missing	51	1.7
Total	3017	100.0

The frequencies and percentage of usual grades made in high school by the sample are shown in Table 12. More than half of the sample (62%) reported that their usual grades in high school were B's or above and 23.3% percent of the sample reported that their usual grades made in high school were B's or C's. Only 12.9% of the sample reported that their usual grades in high school were C's or below.

An important assumption of the chi-square test is that the expected frequencies should be greater than 5 and the contingency tables should not exceed 20% of expected frequencies below 5, which would result in a loss of statistical power (Field, 2005). The cross tabulation of usual grades made in high school by gender is shown in Table 13. The categories of "never in high school" and "don't know/refused" were recoded and collapsed into one category prior to running the chi-square test to avoid having more than 20% of cells with an expected count less than 5. The result of the chi-square test is shown in Table 14 and the result of the effect size is shown in Table 15. The results of the chi-square test seem to indicate that there is a significant relationship between usual grades made in high school and gender, with $\chi^2(7) = 96.558, p = .000$. Cramer's $\phi = .180$ which indicates a small relationship. Females made higher grades than males in this sample.

TABLE 13
Cross Tabulation: Usual Grades Made in High School by Gender

	Male	Female	Total
Mostly A's (Avg 90-100)			
Count	161	276	437
Expected Count	204.8	232.2	437.0
Mostly A's and B's (Avg 85-89)			
Count	409	619	1028
Expected Count	481.8	546.2	1028.0
Mostly B's (Avg 80-84)			
Count	200	203	403
Expected Count	188.9	214.1	403.0
Mostly B's and C's (Avg 75-79)			
Count	368	335	703
Expected Count	329.5	373.5	703.0
Mostly C's (Avg 70-74)			
Count	118	80	198
Expected Count	92.8	105.2	198.0
Mostly C's and D's (Avg 65-69)			
Count	100	45	145
Expected Count	68.0	77.0	145.0
Mostly D's and Lower (64 and Below)			
Count	29	15	44
Expected Count	20.6	23.4	44.0
Never in HS / DK / REF			
Count	5	3	8
Expected Count	3.7	4.3	8.0
Total			
Count	1390	1576	2966
Expected Count	1390.0	1576.0	2966.0

TABLE 14
Chi-Square Test: Usual Grades Made in High School by Gender

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	96.558 ^a	7	.000
Likelihood Ratio	97.495	7	.000
N of Valid Cases	2966		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.75.

TABLE 15
Effect Size: Usual Grades Made in High School by Gender

	Value	Approx. Sig.	
Nominal by			
Nominal	Cramer's V	.180	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.178	.000
N of Valid Cases		2966	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The cross tabulation for usual grades made in high school by age is shown in Table 16. The categories of “never in high school” and “don’t know/refused” were recoded and collapsed into one category prior to running the chi-square test to avoid having more than 20% of cells with an expected count less than 5. The chi-square test for usual grades made in high school by age is shown in Table 17; the result seems to indicate that there is a significant relationship between usual grades made in high school and age, with $\chi^2(35) = 63.838, p = .002$. Table 18 shows the effect size for usual grades made in high school by age and shows that Cramer's $\phi = .066$; which indicates a small relationship between age and the usual grades made in high school. It appears that the respondents in the 16-17 year old age groups made higher grades than the 18-21 year old age group.

TABLE 16
Cross Tabulation: Usual Grades Made in High School by Age

	16	17	18	19	20	21	Total
Mostly A's (Avg 90-100)							
Count	116	141	59	41	41	39	437
Expected Count	114.5	111.4	68.2	50.7	48.8	43.5	437.0
Mostly A's and B's (Avg 85-89)							
Count	293	273	141	113	113	95	1028
Expected Count	269.3	262.0	160.5	119.2	114.7	102.2	1028.0
Mostly B's (Avg 80-84)							
Count	90	104	61	48	47	53	403
Expected Count	105.6	102.7	62.9	46.7	45.0	40.1	403.0
Mostly B's and C's (Avg 75-79)							
Count	182	153	142	83	81	62	703
Expected Count	184.2	179.2	109.7	81.5	78.5	69.9	703.0
Mostly C's (Avg 70-74)							
Count	43	44	32	32	28	19	198
Expected Count	51.9	50.5	30.9	23.0	22.1	19.7	198.0
Mostly C's and D's (Avg 65-69)							
Count	44	33	19	19	14	16	145
Expected Count	34.0	37.0	22.6	16.8	16.2	14.4	145.0
Mostly D's and Lower (64 and Below)							
Count	7	8	7	6	6	10	44
Expected Count	11.5	11.2	6.9	5.1	4.9	4.4	44.0
Never in HS / DK / REF							
Count	2	0	2	2	1	1	8
Expected Count	2.1	2.0	1.2	.9	.9	.8	8.0
Total							
Count	777	756	463	344	331	295	2966
Expected Count	777.0	756.0	463.0	344.0	331.0	295.0	2966.0

TABLE 17
Chi-Square Test: Usual Grades Made in High School by Age

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	63.838 ^a	35	.002
Likelihood Ratio	62.407	35	.003
N of Valid Cases	2966		

a. 8 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .80.

TABLE 18
Effect Size: Usual Grades Made in High School by Age

	Value	Approx. Sig.	
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	.066	.002
	Contingency Coefficient	.145	.002
N of Valid Cases		2966	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The cross tabulation of usual grades made in high school by ethnic category is shown in Table 19. The categories of “never in high school” and “don’t know/refused” were recoded and collapsed into one category prior to running the chi-square test to avoid having more than 20% of cells with an expected count less than 5. The chi-square test for usual grades made in high school by ethnic category is depicted in Table 20 and seems to indicate that there is a significant relationship between usual grades made in high school and ethnic category with $\chi^2(21) = 98.747$, $p = .000$. The effect size is shown in Table 21 with Cramer’s $\phi = .105$; which indicates a small relationship between ethnic category and the usual grades made in high school. It appears that the White, Non-Hispanic respondents in the sample made higher grades than the other ethnic categories.

TABLE 19

Cross Tabulation: Usual Grades Made in High School by Ethnic Category

	White, Non- Hispanic	Black, Non- Hispanic	Hispanic	Other, Non- Hispanic	Total	
Mostly A's (Avg 90-100)						
Count	327	26	42	42	437	
Expected Count	258.1	66.7	77.4	34.8	437.0	
Mostly A's and B's (Avg 85-89)						
Count	610	157	179	82	1028	
Expected Count	607.2	157.0	182.0	81.8	1028.0	
Mostly B's (Avg 80-84)						
Count	227	63	78	35	403	
Expected Count	238.0	61.6	71.3	32.1	403.0	
Mostly B's and C's (Avg 75-79)						
Count	354	146	147	56	703	
Expected Count	415.3	107.4	124.4	55.9	703.0	
Mostly C's (Avg 70-74)						
Count	114	29	43	12	198	
Expected Count	117.0	30.2	35.0	15.8	198.0	
Mostly C's and D's (Avg 65-69)						
Count	85	25	28	7	145	
Expected Count	85.7	22.1	25.7	11.5	145.0	
Mostly D's and Lower (64 and Below)						
Count	29	7	7	1	44	
Expected Count	26.0	6.7	7.8	3.5	44.0	
Never in HS / DK / REF						
Count	6	0	1	1	8	
Expected Count	4.7	1.2	1.4	.6	8.0	
<hr/>						
Total	Count	1752	453	525	236	2966
	Expected Count	1752.0	453.0	525.0	236.0	2966.0

TABLE 20
Chi-Square Test: Usual Grades Made in High School by Ethnic Category

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	98.747 ^a	21	.000
Likelihood Ratio	108.973	21	.000
N of Valid Cases	2966		

a. 5 cells (15.6%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .64.

TABLE 21
Effect Size: Usual Grades Made in High School by Ethnic Category

	Value	Approx. Sig.	
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	.105	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.180	.000
N of Valid Cases		2966	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Findings for Research Question 1

Do 16-21 year olds in the United States have an interest in attending some type of post-secondary education?

This research question was addressed with the following questions on the questionnaire:

FPP1 - "I'd like to ask you about your plans for the future. What do you think you might be doing – once you finish high school, once you finish college, or in the next few years?" depending on how they answered the question, "What grade or year of school are you in?"

FPP8 – "What is the highest grade or year of school or college that you would eventually like to complete?"

The frequencies and percentages of the responses for question FPP1 – “What do you think you might be doing . . .” are summarized in Table 22. Almost half, 48.1 percent, of the sample indicated that they would like to attend school full-time; and 430 or 14.3% indicated that they would like to attend school part-time. This gives a large percentage of the sample (62.4%) indicating that they would like to attend school either full-time or part-time. For this research question chi-square analysis was conducted to determine if there was a significant relationship between: gender, age, ethnicity, and usual grades made in high school, and future plans of going to school full-time and part-time and the type of school or college to attend.

TABLE 22
Frequencies for Future Plans of the Sample

Future Plans	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
Full-Time School	1451	48.1
Part-Time School	430	14.3
Full-Time Work	886	29.4
Part-Time Work	487	16.1
Joining Military	173	5.7
Stay at Home	20	.7
Do Nothing	5	.2
Undecided	69	2.3
Community Service	14	.5
Other	577	19.1
Don't Know / Refused	27	.9

The cross tabulation of gender by future plans of attending school full-time is shown in Table 23. The chi-square test for gender by future plans of attending school full-time is shown in Table 24. The Yate's correction for continuity, which compensates

for the overestimate of the chi-square value when used with a 2 by 2 table, was used to report significance (Pallant, 2005). There appears to be a significant relationship between future plans for going to school full-time and gender with $\chi^2 (1) = 7.469$, $p = .006$. Effect size was computed using odds ratios of males to females. Odds of males with future plans for going to school full-time = $645 \text{ (yes)} / 775 \text{ (no)} = 0.83$. Odds of females with future plans of going to school full-time = $806 \text{ (yes)} / 791 \text{ (no)} = 1.02$. Effect size = odds of females with future plans of going to school full-time divided by the odds of males with future plans of going to school full-time = $1.02 / 0.83 = 1.22$. The female segment of this sample was 1.22 times more likely to have future plans of going to school full-time than the males in the sample.

TABLE 23
Cross Tabulation: Gender by Future Plans (Full-Time School)

		No	Yes	Total
Male	Count	775	645	1420
	Expected Count	737.1	682.9	1420.0
Female	Count	791	806	1597
	Expected Count	39.3	471.3	1597.0
Total	Count	1566	1451	3017
	Expected Count	1566.0	1451.0	3017.0

TABLE 24
Chi-Square Test: Gender by Future Plans (Full-Time School)

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)	Exact Sig (2-sided)	Exact Sig (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.670 ^b	1	.006		
Continuity Correction ^a	7.469	1	.006		
Likelihood Ratio	7.674	1	.006		
Fisher's Exact Test				.006	.003
N of Valid Cases	3017				

a. Computed only for 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 682.94.

The cross tabulation of gender by future plans of attending school part-time is shown in Table 25 and the chi-square test for gender by future plans of attending school part-time is shown in Table 26. Once again, using Yate's correction for continuity to compensate for the overestimate of the chi-square value when using a 2 by 2 table (Pallant, 2005), there appears to be a significant relationship between future plans for going to school part-time and gender with $\chi^2(1) = 8.466, p = .004$. However, with respect to future plans of attending school part-time both males and females had much higher "no" response rates than "yes" response rates; so computing odds ratios for not having future plans of part-time school would be: odds of males with future plans of not going to school part-time = $1246(\text{no}) / 174(\text{yes}) = 7.16$ and odds of females with future plans of not going to school part-time = $1341(\text{no}) / 256(\text{yes}) = 5.24$. The effect size = odds of males not having future plans of attending school part-time divided by the odds of females not having future plans of attending school part-time = $7.16 / 5.24 = 1.37$.

Males are 1.37 times more likely not to have future plans of attending school part-time than females in this sample.

TABLE 25
Cross Tabulation: Gender by Future Plans (Part-Time School)

		No	Yes	Total
Male	Count	1246	174	1420
	Expected Count	1217.6	202.4	1420.0
Female	Count	1341	256	1597
	Expected Count	1369.4	227.6	1597.0
Total	Count	2587	430	3017
	Expected Count	2587.0	430.0	3017.0

TABLE 26
Chi-Square Test: Gender by Future Plans (Part-Time School)

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-Sided)	Exact Sig (2-Sided)	Exact Sig (1-Sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.772 ^b	1	.003		
Continuity Correction ^a	8.466	1	.004		
Likelihood Ratio	8.833	1	.003		
Fisher's Exact Test				.003	.002
N of Valid Cases	3017				

a. Computed only for 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 202.39.

The cross tabulation for age by future plans of attending school full-time is shown in Table 27. The chi-square test for age by future plans of attending school full-time is shown in Table 28. There appears to be a significant relationship between future plans for going to school full-time and age with $\chi^2(5) = 513.090, p=.000$. Table 29

shows the effect size with Cramer's $\phi = .412$ which indicates a medium to large relationship between age and future plans of going to school full-time. Odds ratios were calculated and yielded ratios of 2.30, 1.84, 0.69, 0.33, 0.26, and 0.25 for 17, 16, 18, 19, 20, and 21 year olds respectively. The 16-17 year old segment of the sample appears to be more likely to have future plans of going to school full-time than the 18-21 year old segment of the sample.

TABLE 27
Cross Tabulation: Age by Future Plans (Full-Time School)

		No	Yes	Total
16	Count	275	507	782
	Expected Count	405.9	376.1	782.0
17	Count	230	529	759
	Expected Count	394.0	365.0	759.0
18	Count	287	197	484
	Expected Count	251.2	232.8	484.0
19	Count	264	87	351
	Expected Count	182.2	168.8	351.0
20	Count	271	71	342
	Expected Count	177.5	164.5	342.0
21	Count	239	60	299
	Expected Count	155.2	143.8	299.0
Total	Count	1566	1451	3017
	Expected Count	1566.0	1451.0	3017.0

TABLE 28
Chi-Square Test: Age by Future Plans (Full-Time School)

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	513.090 ^a	5	.000
Likelihood Ratio	536.311	5	.000
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 143.80.

TABLE 29
Effect Size: Age by Full-Time School

	Value	Approx. Sig.	
Nominal by			
Nominal	Cramer's V	.412	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.381	.000
N of Valid Cases		2966	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The cross tabulation for age by future plans of going to school part-time is shown in Table 30. The chi-square test results shown in Table 31 indicate that there does not appear to be a significant relationship between age and future plans of going to school part-time.

TABLE 30
Cross Tabulation: Age by Future Plans (Part-Time School)

		No	Yes	Total
16	Count	668	114	782
	Expected Count	670.5	111.5	782.0
17	Count	667	92	759
	Expected Count	650.8	108.2	759.0
18	Count	401	83	484
	Expected Count	415.0	69.0	484.0
19	Count	305	46	351
	Expected Count	301.0	50.0	351.0
20	Count	297	45	342
	Expected Count	293.3	48.7	342.0
21	Count	249	50	299
	Expected Count	256.4	42.6	299.0
Total	Count	2587	430	3017
	Expected Count	2587.0	430.0	3017.0

TABLE 31
Chi-Square Test: Age by Future Plans (Part-Time School)

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.417 ^a	5	.135
Likelihood Ratio	8.324	5	.139
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 42.62.

The cross tabulation for ethnic category by future plans of going to school full-time is shown in Table 32. The chi-square test results shown in Table 33 indicate that there does not appear to be a significant relationship between ethnic category and future plans of going to school full-time.

TABLE 32
Cross Tabulation: Ethnic Category by Future Plans (Full-Time School)

		No	Yes	Total
White, Non- Hispanic	Count	912	870	1782
	Expected Count	925.0	857.0	1782.0
Black, Non- Hispanic	Count	230	229	459
	Expected Count	238.2	220.8	459.0
Hispanic	Count	303	234	537
	Expected Count	278.7	258.3	537.0
Other, Non- Hispanic	Count	121	118	239
	Expected Count	124.1	114.9	239.0
Total	Count	1566	1451	3017
	Expected Count	1566.0	1451.0	3017.0

TABLE 33
Chi-Square Test: Ethnic Category by Future Plans (Full-Time School)

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.520 ^a	3	.137
Likelihood Ratio	5.536	3	.137
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 114.94.

The cross tabulation for ethnic category by future plans of going to school part-time is shown in Table 34. The chi-square test results are shown in Table 35 and the results for effect size are summarized in Table 36. There appears to be a significant relationship between future plans for going to school part-time and ethnic category, with $\chi^2(3) = 15.163, p = .002$. Cramer's $\phi = .071$ indicates that there is a small relationship between ethnic category and future plans of going to school part-time. However, examination of the cross tabulation of ethnic categories by future plans to attend school part-time reveals that there was a much higher response rate for "no" than for "yes" for all ethnic categories. It appears that there is not a strong desire to attend school part-time regardless of ethnic category within this sample.

TABLE 34
Cross Tabulation: Ethnic Category by Future Plans (Part-Time School)

		No	Yes	Total
White, Non- Hispanic	Count	1552	230	1782
	Expected Count	1528.0	254.0	1782.0
Black, Non- Hispanic	Count	400	59	459
	Expected Count	393.6	65.4	459.0
Other, Non- Hispanic	Count	433	104	537
	Expected Count	460.5	76.5	537.0
Total	Count	2587	430	3017
	Expected Count	2587.0	430.0	3017.0

TABLE 35
Chi-Square Test: Ethnic Category by Future Plans (Part-Time School)

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.163 ^a	3	.002
Likelihood Ratio	14.280	3	.003
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 34.06.

TABLE 36
Effect Size: Ethnic Category by Part-Time School

	Value	Approx. Sig.	
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	.071	.002
	Contingency Coefficient	.071	.002
N of Valid Cases		3017	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The cross tabulation for usual grades made in high school by future plans of going to school full-time is shown in Table 37. The categories of “never in high school” and “don’t know/refused” were recoded and collapsed into one category prior to running the chi-square test to avoid more than 20% of cells with an expected count less than 5. The chi-square test results are shown in Table 38 and the results for effect size are summarized in Table 39. There appears to be a significant relationship between future plans for going to school full-time and usual grades made in high school with $\chi^2 (7) = 149.906, p=.000$. Cramer’s $\phi = .225$, which indicates a small to medium relationship between usual grades made in high school and future plans of going to school full-time. The respondents in the sample reporting higher grades seem to be more likely to have future plans for attending school full-time.

TABLE 37
 Cross Tabulation: Usual Grades Made in High School by Future Plans (Full-Time School)

	No	Yes	Total
Mostly A's (Avg 90-100)			
Count	145	292	437
Expected Count	226.2	210.8	437.0
Mostly A's and B's (Avg 85-89)			
Count	483	545	1028
Expected Count	532.0	496.0	1028.0
Mostly B's (Avg 80-84)			
Count	212	191	403
Expected Count	208.6	194.4	403.0
Mostly B's and C's (Avg 75-79)			
Count	409	294	703
Expected Count	363.8	339.2	703.0
Mostly C's (Avg 70-74)			
Count	141	57	198
Expected Count	102.5	95.5	198.0
Mostly C's and D's (Avg 65-69)			
Count	105	40	145
Expected Count	75.0	70.0	145.0
Mostly D's and Lower (64 and Below)			
Count	33	11	44
Expected Count	22.8	21.2	44.0
Never in HS / DK / REF			
Count	7	1	8
Expected Count	4.1	3.9	8.0
Total			
Count	1535	1431	2966
Expected Count	1535.0	1431.0	2966.0

TABLE 38
Chi-Square Test: Usual Grades Made in High School by Future Plans (Full-Time School)

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	149.906 ^a	7	.000
Likelihood Ratio	154.078	7	.000
N of Valid Cases	2966		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.86.

TABLE 39
Effect Size: Usual Grades Made in High School by Full-Time School

	Value	Approx. Sig.	
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	.225	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.219	.000
N of Valid Cases		2966	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The cross tabulation for usual grades made in high school by future plans of going to school part-time are shown in Table 40. The categories of “never in high school” and “don’t know/refused” were recoded and collapsed into one category prior to running the chi-square test to avoid more than 20% of cells with an expected count less than 5. The chi-square test results are shown in Table 41 and the results for effect size are summarized in Table 42. There appears to be a significant relationship between future plans for going to school part-time and usual grades made in high school with $\chi^2(7) = 67.620, p = .000$. Cramer’s $\phi = .151$, which indicates a small to medium relationship between usual grades made in high school and future plans of going to

school part-time. The respondents in the sample reporting higher grades seem to be less likely to have future plans for attending school part-time.

TABLE 40
Cross Tabulation: Usual Grades Made in High School by Future Plans (Part-Time School)

	No	Yes	Total
Mostly A's (Avg 90-100)			
Count	410	27	437
Expected Count	374.8	62.2	437.0
Mostly A's and B's (Avg 85-89)			
Count	913	115	1028
Expected Count	881.7	146.3	1028.0
Mostly B's (Avg 80-84)			
Count	337	66	403
Expected Count	345.7	57.3	403.0
Mostly B's and C's (Avg 75-79)			
Count	577	126	703
Expected Count	603.0	100.0	703.0
Mostly C's (Avg 70-74)			
Count	153	45	198
Expected Count	169.8	28.2	198.0
Mostly C's and D's (Avg 65-69)			
Count	110	35	145
Expected Count	124.4	20.6	145.0
Mostly D's and Lower (64 and Below)			
Count	39	5	44
Expected Count	37.7	6.3	44.0
Never in HS / DK / REF			
Count	5	3	8
Expected Count	6.9	1.1	8.0
Total			
Count	2544	422	2966
Expected Count	2544.0	422.0	2966.0

TABLE 41
Chi-Square Test: Usual Grades Made in High School by Future Plans (Part-Time School)

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	67.620 ^a	7	.000
Likelihood Ratio	68.828	7	.000
N of Valid Cases	2966		

a. 1 cell (6.3%) has expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.14.

TABLE 42
Effect Size: Usual Grades Made in High School by Part-Time School

	Value	Approx. Sig.	
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	.151	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.149	.000
N of Valid Cases	2966		

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The frequencies and percentages of the responses for the maximum year of school the respondents would like to complete are summarized in Table 43. When asked “What is the highest grade or year of school or college that you would eventually like to complete?”, a majority of the sample (87.8%) indicated that they would like to attend some form of post-secondary education.

The data for this variable was then recoded to reflect those responding with a response of 8th through 12th grade and a response of some degree of post-secondary education to the question, “What is the highest grade or year of school or college that you would eventually like to complete?” Table 44 shows the frequencies of the recoded responses.

TABLE 43
Frequencies for Maximum Year of School Respondents Expect to Complete

Grade / Year of school	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
8 th Grade	7	.2
9 th Grade	10	.3
10 th Grade	6	.2
11 th Grade	28	.9
12 th Grade (HS Diploma)	170	5.6
1 st Yr College/Jr College	58	1.9
2 nd Yr College/Jr College	239	7.9
3 rd Yr of 4 Yr College	33	1.1
4 th Yr of 4 Yr College or BS deg	1205	39.9
5 th Yr of College	34	1.1
1 st Yr Grad/Prof School	21	.7
2 nd Yr Grad/Prof School Mast deg	605	20.1
3 rd Yr Grad/Prof School	84	2.8
More than 3 Yrs Grad/Prof Doc deg	300	9.9
1 st Yr Junior/Comm College	2	.1
2 nd Yr Junior/Comm College	18	.6
1 st Yr Voc/Bus/Trade School	6	.2
2 nd Yr Voc/Bus/Trade School	18	.6
More than 2 Yrs Voc/Bus/Trade School	25	.8
Don't know/refused	148	4.9
Total	3017	100.0

TABLE 44
Frequencies for Respondents Indicating Desire to Complete 8th – 12th Grade or Some Type of Post-Secondary Education

Grade / Year of school	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
8 th – 12 th Grade	221	7.3
Some Post-Secondary Education	2648	87.8
Don't Know / Refused	148	4.9
Total	3017	100.0

Chi-square tests were conducted to determine any differences between the expectation of completing some form of post-secondary education and gender, age, ethnicity, and usual grades made in high school. The cross tabulation for gender by expected grade completion (recoded) is shown in Table 45 and the chi-square test results are shown in Table 46. There appears to be a significant relationship between respondents expecting to complete some form of post-secondary education and completion of just secondary education and gender; $\chi^2 (2) = 25.419, p = .000$. Effect size was computed using odds ratios of males to females. Odds of males expecting to complete some form of secondary education = $1211 / 140 = 8.65$. Odds of females expecting to complete some form of secondary education = $1437 / 81 = 17.74$. Effect size = odds of females expecting to complete some form of secondary education divided by the odds of males expecting to complete some form of secondary education = $17.74 / 8.65 = 2.05$. Females in this sample appear to be 2.05 times more likely than the males in the sample to have an expectation of completing some form of post-secondary education.

TABLE 45
Cross Tabulation: Gender by Expected Grade Completion (Recoded)

		8 th -12 th Grade Completion	Some Post-Sec Education Completion	Don't Know / Refused	Total
Male	Count	140	1211	69	1420
	Expected Count	104.0	1246.3	69.7	1420.0
Female	Count	81	1437	79	1597
	Expected Count	117.0	1401.7	78.3	1597.0
Total	Count	221	2648	148	3017
	Expected Count	221.0	2648.0	148.0	3017.0

TABLE 46
Chi-Square Test: Gender by Expected Grade Completion (Recoded)

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	25.419 ^a	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	25.542	2	.000
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 69.66.

The cross tabulation for age by expected grade completion (recoded) is shown in Table 47 and the results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 48. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between age and expected grade completion.

TABLE 47
Cross Tabulation: Age by Expected Grade Completion (Recoded)

		8 th -12 th Grade Completion	Some Post-Sec Education Completion	Don't Know / Refused	Total
16	Count	70	662	50	782
	Expected Count	57.3	686.4	38.4	782.0
17	Count	52	673	34	759
	Expected Count	55.6	666.2	37.2	759.0
18	Count	23	432	20	484
	Expected Count	35.5	424.8	23.7	484.0
19	Count	20	316	15	351
	Expected Count	25.7	308.1	17.2	351.0
20	Count	30	301	11	342
	Expected Count	25.1	300.2	16.8	342.0
21	Count	17	264	18	299
	Expected Count	21.9	262.4	14.7	299.0
Total	Count	221	2648	148	3017
	Expected Count	221.0	2648.0	148.0	3017.0

TABLE 48
Chi-Square Test: Age by Expected Grade Completion (Recoded)

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.442 ^a	10	.117
Likelihood Ratio	15.389	10	.119
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 14.67.

TABLE 49
Cross Tabulation: Ethnic Category by Expected Grade Completion (Recoded)

		8 th -12 th Grade Completion	Some Higher Education Completion	Don't Know / Refused	Total
White, Non- Hispanic	Count	129	1562	91	1782
	Expected Count	130.5	1564.0	87.4	1782.0
Black, Non- Hispanic	Count	38	401	20	459
	Expected Count	33.6	402.9	22.5	459.0
Hispanic	Count	40	470	27	537
	Expected Count	39.3	471.3	26.3	537.0
Other, Non- Hispanic	Count	14	215	10	239
	Expected Count	17.5	209.8	11.7	239.0
Total	Count	221	2648	148	3017
	Expected Count	221.0	2648.0	148.0	3017.0

TABLE 50
Chi-Square Test: Ethnic Category by Expected Grade Completion (Recoded)

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.145 ^a	6	.906
Likelihood Ratio	2.196	6	.901
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 11.72.

The cross tabulation for ethnic category by expected grade completion (recoded) is shown in Table 49 and the results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 50. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between ethnic category and expected grade completion.

The cross tabulation for usual grades made in high school by expected grade completion (recoded) is shown in Table 51. The responses for “never in high school” and “don’t know / refused” were removed from the usual grades made in high school variable to avoid having more than 20% of cells with an expected count less than 5. The results of the chi-square test results are shown in Table 52 and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 53. There appears to be a significant relationship between usual grades made in high school and respondents expecting to complete some form of post-secondary education; $\chi^2(12) = 128.076, p = .000$. Cramer’s $\phi = .147$, which indicates a small to medium relationship between usual grades made in high school and expected grade completion.

TABLE 51
 Cross Tabulation: Usual Grades Made in High School by Expected Grade Completion (Recoded)

	8 th -12 th Grade Completion	Some Post-Sec Education Completion	Don't Know / Refused	Total
Mostly A's (Avg 90-100)				
Count	7	416	14	437
Expected Count	31.2	385.1	20.7	437.0
Mostly A's and B's (Avg 85-89)				
Count	56	932	40	1028
Expected Count	73.3	906.0	48.7	1028.0
Mostly B's (Avg 80-84)				
Count	24	355	24	403
Expected Count	28.7	355.2	19.1	403.0
Mostly B's and C's (Avg 75-79)				
Count	60	610	33	703
Expected Count	50.1	619.6	33.3	703.0
Mostly C's (Avg 70-74)				
Count	23	158	17	198
Expected Count	14.1	174.5	9.4	198.0
Mostly C's and D's (Avg 65-69)				
Count	28	112	5	145
Expected Count	10.3	127.8	6.9	145.0
Mostly D's and Lower (64 and Below)				
Count	13	24	7	44
Expected Count	3.1	38.8	2.1	44.0
<hr/>				
Total	211	2607	140	2958
Expected Count	211.0	2607.0	140.0	2958.0

TABLE 52

Chi-Square Test: Usual Grades Made in High School by Expected Grade Completion (Recoded)

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	128.076 ^a	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	108.326	12	.000
N of Valid Cases	2958		

a. 2 cells (9.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.08.

TABLE 53

Effect Size: Usual Grades Made in High School by Expected Grade Completion (Recoded)

	Value	Approx. Sig.	
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	.147	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.204	.000
N of Valid Cases	2958		

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

A summary of the chi-square statistics and a summary of Cramer's ϕ values for the variables from research question 1 are shown in Table 54. The variables for gender, age, ethnicity and usual grades made in high school were run against future plans of attending school full-time and part-time, and against expected grade completion of the respondents. Eight of the tests revealed a significant relationship. There appears to be a significant relationship between gender and future plans of attending school full-time and part-time. There appears to be a significant relationship between age and attending school full-time. There appears to be a significant relationship between ethnic category

and attending school part-time. There appears to be a significant relationship between usual grades made in high school and attending school full-time and part-time. There appears to be a significant relationship between gender and expected grade completion.

TABLE 54
Summary Table of Chi-Square and Cramer's V Results for Variables from Research Question 1

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Gender by Full-Time School			
Continuity Correction	7.469	1	.006 *
Odds Ratio Females / Males	1.02 / 0.83 = 1.22		
Gender by Part-Time School			
Continuity Correction	8.466	1	.004 *
Odds Ratio Males / Females	7.16 / 5.24 = 1.37		
Age by Full-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	513.090	5	.000 *
Cramer's V	.412		.000 *
Age by Part-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	8.417	5	.135
Ethnic Category by Full-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	5.520	3	.137
Ethnic Category by Part-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	15.163	3	.002 *
Cramer's V	.071		.002 *
Usual Grades by Full-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	149.906	7	.000 *
Cramer's V	.225		.000 *
Usual Grades by Part-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	67.620	7	.000 *
Cramer's V	.151		.000 *
Gender by Expected Grade Completion			
Pearson Chi-Square	25.419	2	.000 *
Odds Ratio Females / Males	17.74 / 8.65 = 2.05		
Age by Expected Grade Completion			
Pearson Chi-Square	15.442	10	.117
Ethnic Category by Expected Grade Completion			
Pearson Chi-Square	2.145	6	.906
Usual Grades by Expected Grade Completion			
Pearson Chi-square	128.076	12	.000 *
Cramer's V	.147		.000 *

* Significant at the .05 level

There appears to be a significant relationship between usual grades made in high school and expected grade completion.

Summary of Major Findings for Research Question 1

A majority or 62.4% of the sample indicated that they would like to attend school either full-time (48.1%) or part-time (14.3%). Based on these frequency counts it appears that there is a definite interest for young people in the 16-21 year old age group to attend some form of post-secondary education either full-time or part-time. College enrollment rates of 18-24 year olds in degree-granting institutions have increased from 26% in 1980 to 38% in 2003, and the enrollment rate for females has increased more rapidly than that for males (Fox, Connolly, & Snyder, 2005). Approximately 33% of college students were enrolled part-time in 2003 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003). Although the age group for the U.S. Census Bureau (2003) data are not the same as the age group for this study it appears that these figures lend some credence to the analysis of this data set.

There appears to be a significant relationship between gender and future plans for going to school full-time and part-time. The female segment of the sample was 1.22 times more likely to have future plans for going to school full-time than the males in the sample. The males in the sample were 1.37 times more likely not to have future plans for attending school part-time than the female segment of the sample.

There appears to be a significant relationship between age and going to school full-time, but there does not appear to be a significant relationship between age and

going to school part-time. The 17 year olds in the sample had a higher odds ratio for going to school full-time followed by 16, 18, 19, 20, and 21 year olds.

There does not appear to be a significant relationship between ethnic category and going to school full-time, but there does appear to be a significant relationship between ethnic category and going to school part-time. The response rate for “no” was much higher than the response rate for “yes” for all ethnic categories; therefore, it appears that there is not a strong desire to attend school part-time regardless of ethnic category within this sample.

There appears to be a significant relationship between grades made in high school and future plans for attending school full-time and part-time. Those reporting higher grades made in high school appear to be more likely to have future plans for attending school full-time, but appear to be less likely to have future plans for attending school part-time.

When asked “What is the highest grade or year of school or college that you would eventually like to complete?”, a majority of the sample or 87.8% indicated that they would like to complete some form of post-secondary education. The frequency counts from this question appear to support the results from the previous question addressing the respondents desire to attend school full-time or part-time.

There appears to be a significant relationship between the expectation of completing some form of post-secondary education and gender. Females are 2.05 times more likely than the males in the sample to have an expectation of completing some form of post-secondary education.

There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the expectation of completing some form of post-secondary education and age. There also does not appear to be a significant relationship between the expectation of completing some form of post-secondary education and ethnicity.

There appears to be a significant relationship between the expectation of completing some form of post-secondary education and the usual grades made in high school. The respondents reporting their usual grades made in high school as mostly B's and C's and above had much higher frequency counts for the expectation of completing some form of post-secondary education than those respondents reporting grades of mostly C's and below.

Findings for Research Question 2

What type of post-secondary education are 16-21 year olds in the United States interested in attending?

This research question was addressed with the following question on the questionnaire: FPP5 – “What kind of school or college would you like to attend?”

The frequencies and percentages for the responses to this question are summarized in Table 55. A higher percentage of the sample indicated that they would like to attend a 4-year college or university with 39.7 percent giving this response. An additional 10.6% of the sample indicated that they would like to attend a junior or community college. A smaller percentage, 5.4%, indicated that they would like to attend graduate or professional school; and 5.2% of the sample indicated that they would like to attend vocational, business, or trade school.

TABLE 55
Frequencies for Kind of School or College to Attend

Kind of school	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
High School	7	.2
Voc/Bus/Trade	157	5.2
2- Year Junior/Community College	320	10.6
4-Year College / University	1197	39.7
Grad/professional School	164	5.4
Question not Asked	65	2.2
Don't Know / Refused	29	1.0
Missing	1078	35.7

Chi-square tests were conducted to determine any differences between kinds of schools or colleges to attend and gender, age, ethnicity, and usual grades made in high school. The cross tabulation of the kind of school or college the respondents would like to attend by gender is shown in Table 56. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 57. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between gender and the kind of school or college the respondents would like to attend. Both males and females response rates were higher for 4-year college or university followed by 2-year junior or community college; graduate or professional school; and vocational, business, or trade school.

TABLE 56
Cross Tabulation: Kind of School or College to Attend by Gender

		Male	Female	Total
High School	Count	3	4	7
	Expected Count	3.0	4.0	7.0
Vocational, Business or Trade School	Count	81	76	157
	Expected Count	68.0	89.0	157.0
2-Year Junior or Comm. College	Count	122	198	320
	Expected Count	138.6	181.4	320.0
4-Year College or University	Count	519	678	1197
	Expected Count	518.6	678.4	1197.0
Graduate or Prof. School	Count	74	90	164
	Expected Count	71.0	93.0	164.0
Question not Asked	Count	25	40	65
	Expected Count	28.2	36.8	65.0
Don't Know / Refused	Count	16	13	29
	Expected Count	12.6	16.4	29.0
Total	Count	840	1099	1939
	Expected Count	840.0	1099.0	1939.0

TABLE 57
Chi-Square Test: Kind of School or College to Attend by Gender

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.395 (a)	6	.109
Likelihood Ratio	10.377	6	.110
N of Valid Cases	1939		

a. 2 cells (14.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.03.

The cross tabulation of the kind of school or college the respondents would like to attend by ethnic category is shown in Table 58. The responses for “high school” were removed; SPSS then treated them as missing values. This was done to avoid more than 20% of cells with an expected count less than 5. The results of the chi-square test are

shown in Table 59 and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 60. There appears to be a significant relationship between the kind of school the respondents would like to attend and the four ethnic categories with $\chi^2 (15) = 53.449, p=.000$. Cramer's $\phi = .096$, which indicates a small relationship between the kind of school or college expected to complete and ethnic category. All ethnic categories gave the highest response rate for 4-year college or university followed by 2-year junior or community college.

TABLE 58
Cross Tabulation: Kind of School or College to Attend by Ethnic Category

	White, Non- Hispanic	Black, Non- Hispanic	Hispanic	Other, Non- Hispanic	Total
Vocational, Business or Trade School					
Count	93	28	26	10	157
Expected Count	91.1	24.8	28.3	12.8	157.0
2-Year Junior or Comm. College					
Count	176	36	88	20	320
Expected Count	185.7	50.5	57.8	26.1	320.0
4-Year College or University					
Count	717	199	175	106	1197
Expected Count	694.5	188.9	216.1	97.5	1197.0
Graduate or Professional School					
Count	93	24	34	13	164
Expected Count	95.2	25.9	29.6	13.4	164.0
Question not Asked					
Count	30	18	12	5	65
Expected Count	37.7	10.3	11.7	5.3	65.0
Don't Know / Refused					
Count	14	1	12	2	29
Expected Count	16.8	4.6	5.2	2.4	29.0
Total					
Count	1123	306	347	156	1932
Expected Count	1123.0	306.0	347.0	156.0	1932.0

TABLE 59
Chi-Square Test: Kind of School or College to Attend by Ethnic Category

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	53.449 ^a	15	.000
Likelihood Ratio	50.250	15	.000
N of Valid Cases	1932		

a. 2 cells (8.3%) have expected counts less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.34.

TABLE 60
Effect Size: Kind of School or College to Attend by Ethnic Category

	Value	Approx. Sig.	
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	.096	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.164	.000
N of Valid Cases		1932	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The cross tabulation of the kind of school or college the respondents would like to attend by age is shown in Table 61. The responses for “high school” were removed to avoid having more than 20% of cells with an expected count less than 5. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 62 and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 63. There appears to be a significant relationship between the kind of school the respondents would like to attend and age with $\chi^2(25) = 224.297, p = .000$. Cramer's $\phi = .152$, which indicates a small to medium relationship between the kind of school or college expected to complete and age. The respondents in all age groups had the highest response rates for 4-year college or university followed by 2-year junior or community college.

TABLE 61
Cross Tabulation: Kind of School or College to Attend by Age

	16	17	18	19	20	21	Total
Voc, Bus or Trade School							
Count	30	30	40	22	16	19	157
Expected Count	52.0	51.1	23.2	11.4	10.0	9.3	157.0
2-Year Junior or Comm. College							
Count	77	96	63	34	21	29	320
Expected Count	106.0	104.1	47.2	23.3	20.5	19.0	320.0
4-Year College or University							
Count	455	456	148	54	46	38	1197
Expected Count	396.3	389.5	176.6	87.0	76.5	71.0	1197.0
Grad or Prof. School							
Count	47	27	24	17	30	19	164
Expected Count	54.3	53.4	24.2	11.9	10.5	9.7	164.0
Question not Asked							
Count	23	10	7	10	9	6	65
Expected Count	21.5	21.2	9.6	4.7	4.2	3.9	65.0
Don't Know / Refused							
Count	8	10	4	3	2	2	2
Expected Count	9.6	9.4	4.3	2.1	1.9	1.7	29.0
Total							
Count	640	629	286	140	124	113	1932
Expected Count	640.0	629.0	286.0	140.0	124.0	113.0	1932.0

TABLE 62
Chi-Square Test: Kind of School or College to Attend by Age

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	224.297 ^a	25	.000
Likelihood Ratio	212.294	25	.000
N of Valid Cases	1932		

a. 7 cells (19.4%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.70.

TABLE 63
Effect Size: Kind of School or College to Attend by Age

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by			
Nominal	Cramer's V	.152	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.323	.000
N of Valid Cases		1932	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The cross tabulation of the kind of school or college the respondents would like to attend by usual grades made in high school is shown in Table 64. The responses for “high school”, “question not asked”, and “don’t know / refused” were removed from the kind of school or college to attend variable; and “never in high school” and “don’t know / refused” responses were removed from the usual grades received in high school variable. This was done to avoid having more than 20% of cells with an expected count less than 5. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 65 and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 66. There appears to be a significant relationship between the kind of school the respondents would like to attend and usual grades made in high school with $\chi^2(18) = 220.863, p = .000$. Cramer's $\phi = .202$, which indicates a small to medium relationship between the kind of school or college expected to complete and usual grades made in high school. Respondents reporting grades of mostly A's, mostly A's and B's, mostly B's, and mostly B's and C's had very high responses for 4-year college or university as the kind of school or college that they would like to attend. Those respondents with higher grades seem to have a stronger desire to attend a 4-year college or university than those respondents with lower grades.

TABLE 64

Cross Tabulation: Kind of School or College to Attend by Usual Grades Made in High School

	Mostly A's (90- 100 Avg)	Mostly A's & B's (85- 89 Avg)	Mostly B's (80- 84 Avg)	Mostly B's & C's (75- 74 Avg)	Mostly C's (70- 74 Avg)	Mostly C's & D's (65- 69 Avg)	Mostly D's & Lower (64 & Below)	Total
Voc, Bus or Trade School								
Count	4	35	27	55	20	10	1	152
Exp Count	26.4	54.9	20.9	35.5	8.3	6.3	1.4	152.0
2-Year Junior or Comm College								
Count	14	83	42	109	35	28	6	317
Exp Count	54.4	113.0	43.0	73.0	17.1	12.9	2.8	317.0
4-Year College or University								
Count	254	475	163	210	40	31	5	1180
Exp Count	202.6	420.7	160.0	271.8	63.6	48.2	10.5	1180.0
Grad / Prof School								
Count	45	60	17	28	5	5	1	161
Exp Count	27.6	57.4	21.8	37.1	6.6	1.4	.2	161.0
Total								
Count	317	653	249	402	100	74	13	1808
Exp Count	317.0	653.0	249.0	402.0	100.0	74.0	13.0	1808.0

TABLE 65

Chi-Square Test: Kind of School or College to Attend by Usual Grades Made in High School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	220.863 ^a	18	.000
Likelihood Ratio	228.349	18	.000
N of Valid Cases	1808		

a. 3 cells (10.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.09.

TABLE 66
Effect Size: Kind of School or College to Attend by Usual Grades Made in High School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by			
Nominal	Cramer's V	.202	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.330	.000
N of Valid Cases		1808	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

A summary of the chi-square tests and the Cramer's V results from research question 2 are shown in Table 67. The variables of gender, ethnic category, age, and usual grades made in high school were run against the kind of school or college the respondents indicated they would like to attend. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between gender and the kind of school or college to attend. There appears to be a significant relationship between ethnic category and the kind of school or college to attend. There appears to be a significant relationship between age and the kind of school or college to attend, and there appears to be a significant relationship between usual grades made in high school and the kind of school or college to attend.

TABLE 67
Summary Table of Chi-Square and Cramer's V Results for Variables from Research Question 2

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Gender by Kind of School or College			
Pearson Chi-Square	10.395	6	.109
Ethnic Category by Kind of School or College			
Pearson Chi-Square	53.449	15	.000*
Cramer's V	.096		.000*
Age by Kind of School or College			
Pearson Chi-Square	224.297	25	.000*
Cramer's V	.152		.000*
Usual Grades by Kind of School or College			
Pearson Chi-Square	220.863	18	.000*
Cramer's V	.202		.000*

*Significant at the .05 level

Summary of Major Findings for Research Question 2

A large percentage or 39.7% of the sample indicated that they would like to attend a 4-year college or university followed by junior or community college at 10.6%; graduate or professional school at 5.4%; and vocational, business or trade school at 5.2%. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between gender and the kind of school or college to attend. There appears to be a significant relationship between ethnic category and the kind of school or college to attend. All ethnic categories had a higher response rate for 4-year college or university followed by 2-year junior or community college. There appears to be a significant relationship between age and the kind of school or college to attend. Respondents in all age groups had the highest response rates for 4-year college or university followed by a 2-year junior or community college. There appears to be a significant relationship between usual grades made in high school and the kind of school or college to attend. Respondents reporting

higher grades made in high school seem to have a stronger desire to attend a 4-year college or university than those respondents with lower grades followed by 2-year junior or community college.

Historically, the purpose of vocational education has been to prepare students for entry-level jobs in occupations requiring less than a baccalaureate degree; but over the last 15 years this purpose has shifted toward broader preparation that develops the academic, vocational, and technical skills of students in vocational education programs (Levesque, Lauen, Teitelbaum, Alt, & Librera, 2000).

Findings for Research Question 3

Do selected individuals such as parents, siblings, extended family members, close friends, teachers, or school guidance counselors influence the post-secondary schooling decisions made by 16-21 year olds in the United States?

This research question was addressed with the following question on the questionnaire:

MOT – “I am going to read you a list of people you may or may not be associated with. As I read each one, I would like you to tell me how strongly they influence the decisions you make. Please use a scale where positive three means they influence your decisions very much and negative three means they don’t influence your decisions at all, remember you can use any number between negative three and positive three.”

- A. Your mom
- B. Your dad
- C. Your extended family (cousins, uncles, aunts, grandparents...etc.)
- D. Your close friends
- E. Your teachers
- F. Your guidance and/or career counselor at school
- G. Your brothers and sisters

The frequencies and percentages of the responses for the mother's influence on decisions made by the sample are shown in Table 68 and the frequencies and percentages of the responses for the father's influence on decisions made by the sample are shown in Table 69. Parents appear to have a strong influence on decisions made by the respondents with 49.2% of the sample responding that their mother influences their decisions very much and 42.1% indicating that their father influences their decisions very much.

TABLE 68
Frequencies for Strength of Mother's Influence on Decisions Made by Sample

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Don't Influence at All	240	8.0
(-2)	63	2.1
(-1)	65	2.2
(0)	133	4.4
(1)	341	11.3
(2)	638	21.1
(3) Influence Decisions Very Much	1485	49.2
Don't Know / Refused	1	.0
Missing	51	1.7
Total	3017	100.0

TABLE 69
Frequencies for Strength of Father's Influence on Decisions Made by Sample

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Don't Influence at All	310	10.3
(-2)	76	2.5
(-1)	77	2.6
(0)	150	5.0
(1)	340	11.3
(2)	571	18.9
(3) Influence Decisions Very Much	1270	42.1
Don't Know / Refused	7	.2
Missing	216	7.2
Total	3017	100.0

The frequencies and percentages of the responses for the sibling's influence on decisions made by the sample are shown in Table 70.

TABLE 70
Frequencies for Strength of Sibling's Influence on Decisions Made by Sample

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Don't Influence at All	304	10.1
(-2)	113	3.7
(-1)	102	3.4
(0)	235	7.8
(1)	553	18.3
(2)	713	23.6
(3) Influence Decisions Very Much	791	26.2
Don't Know / Refused	7	.2
Missing	199	6.6
Total	3017	100.0

The frequencies and percentages of the responses for extended family's influence on decisions made by the sample are shown in Table 71.

TABLE 71
Frequencies for Strength of Extended Family's Influence on Decisions Made by Sample

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Don't Influence at All	376	12.5
(-2)	184	6.1
(-1)	214	7.1
(0)	385	12.8
(1)	686	22.7
(2)	555	18.4
(3) Influence Decisions Very Much	562	18.6
Don't Know / Refused	5	.2
Missing	50	1.7
Total	3017	100.0

The frequencies and percentages of the responses for close friend's influence on decisions made by the sample are shown in Table 72.

TABLE 72
Frequencies for Strength of Close Friend's Influence on Decisions Made by Sample

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Don't Influence at All	231	7.7
(-2)	90	3.0
(-1)	112	3.7
(0)	237	7.9
(1)	686	22.7
(2)	826	27.4
(3) Influence Decisions Very Much	814	27.0
Don't Know / Refused	2	.1
Missing	19	.6
Total	3017	100.0

The frequencies and percentages of the responses for teacher's influence on decisions made by the sample are shown in Table 73.

TABLE 73

Frequencies for Strength of Teacher's Influence on Decisions Made by Sample

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Don't Influence at All	384	12.7
(-2)	180	6.0
(-1)	227	7.5
(0)	415	13.8
(1)	663	22.0
(2)	450	14.9
(3) Influence Decisions Very Much	418	13.9
Don't Know / Refused	15	.5
Missing	265	8.8
Total	3017	100.0

The frequencies and percentages of the responses for guidance counselor's influence on decisions made by the sample are shown in Table 74.

TABLE 74

Frequencies for Strength of Guidance Counselor's Influence on Decisions Made by Sample

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Don't Influence at All	462	15.3
(-2)	204	6.8
(-1)	201	6.7
(0)	373	12.4
(1)	544	18.0
(2)	357	11.8
(3) Influence Decisions Very Much	371	12.3
Don't Know / Refused	23	.8
Missing	482	16.0
Total	3017	100.0

The bar graph in Figure 3 depicts the frequency counts for the responses of “influence decisions very much” to the question:

MOT – “I am going to read you a list of people you may or may not be associated with. As I read each one, I would like you to tell me how strongly they influence the decisions you make. Please use a scale where positive three means they influence your decisions very much and negative three means they don’t influence your decisions at all, remember you can use any number between negative three and positive three.”

- A. Your mom
- B. Your dad
- C. Your extended family (cousins, uncles, aunts, grandparents...etc.)
- D. Your close friends
- E. Your teachers
- F. Your guidance and/or career counselor at school
- G. Your brothers and sisters

The chart shows that mothers appear to have a strong influence on decisions the respondents make followed by fathers. Close friends and siblings appear to have similar strengths with respect to influencing decisions made by this sample followed by extended family members with a lesser strength on the samples decision making, and it appears that teachers and guidance counselors have the least strength of influence with respect to this group making decisions in general.

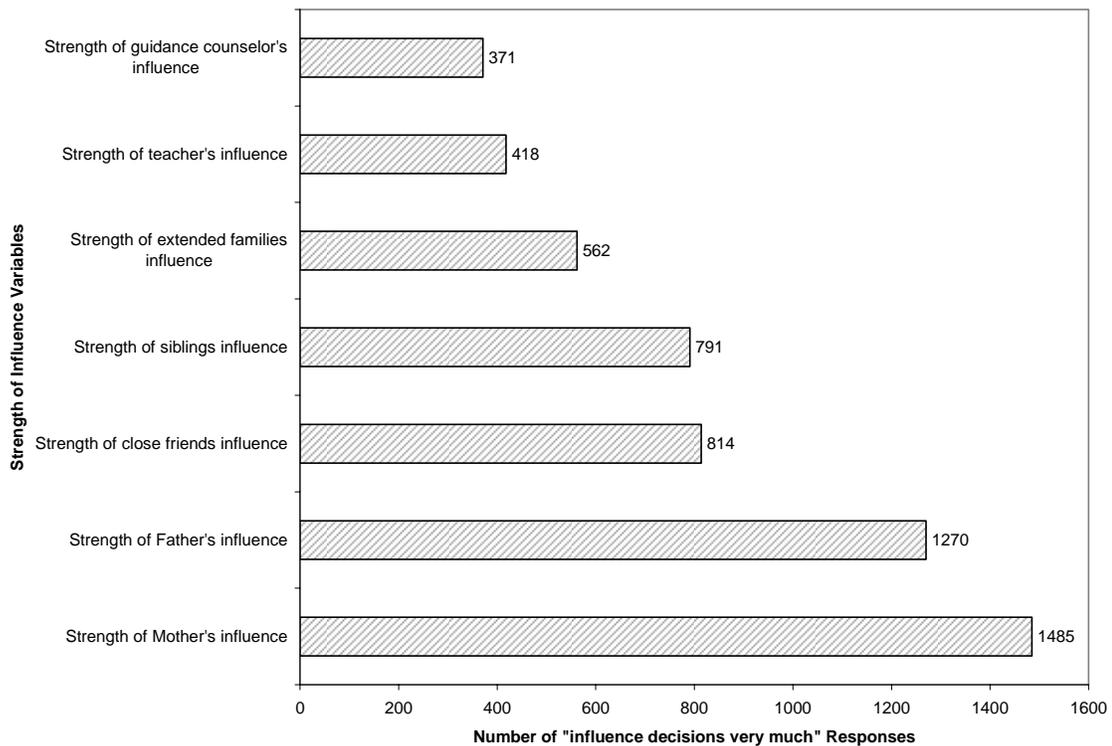


Figure 3. Frequencies of “Influence Decisions Very Much” Responses for Strength of Influence Variables

Influencers of the Decision for Full-Time or Part-Time Post-Secondary Education

To determine if the strength of influence from this same group of people has a significant effect on the decision to attend school, chi-square tests were conducted between the strength of the influence of mothers, fathers, siblings, extended family, close friends, teachers or guidance counselors on the decision to go school full-time or part-time.

The cross tabulation for the strength of the mother’s influence on decisions by full-time school is shown in Table 75. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 76 and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 77. There appears to be a

significant relationship between the strength of the mother's influence on decisions by full-time school with $\chi^2 = 22.269 (7)$, $p=.002$. Cramer's $\phi = .087$, which indicates a small relationship between the strength of the mother's influence on decisions by full-time school. A closer examination of the frequency counts, however, reveals that the number of "no" responses is higher than the number of "yes" responses but the numbers are very close, almost an even split. This seems to indicate that just as many respondents appear to be influenced by their mother to attend school full-time as there were respondents not appearing to be influenced by their mother to attend school full-time.

TABLE 75
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Mother's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

		No	Yes	Total
(-3) Don't Influence Your Decisions at All	Count	153	87	240
	Expected Count	124.3	115.7	240.0
(-2)	Count	33	30	63
	Expected Count	32.6	30.4	63.0
(-1)	Count	37	28	65
	Expected Count	33.7	31.3	65.0
(0)	Count	64	69	133
	Expected Count	68.9	64.1	133.0
(1)	Count	182	159	341
	Expected Count	176.6	164.4	341.0
(2)	Count	300	338	638
	Expected Count	330.4	307.6	638.0
(3) Influence Your Decisions Very Much	Count	766	719	1485
	Expected Count	769.0	716.0	1485.0
Don't Know Refused	Count	1	0	1
	Expected Count	.5	.5	1.0
Total	Count	1536	1430	2966
	Expected Count	1536.0	1430.0	2966.0

TABLE 76
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Mother's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	22.269 ^a	7	.002
Likelihood Ratio	22.869	7	.002
N of Valid Cases	2966		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .48.

TABLE 77
Effect Size: Strength of Mother's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by			
Nominal	Cramer's V	.087	.002
	Contingency Coefficient	.086	.002
N of Valid Cases		2966	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The cross tabulation for the strength of the mother's influence on decisions by part-time school is shown in Table 78. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 79 and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 80. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of the mother's influence on decisions by part-time school with $\chi^2 = 19.679 (7), p=.006$. Cramer's $\phi = .081$, which indicates a small relationship between the strength of the mother's influence on decisions by part-time school. A closer examination of the frequency counts reveals that the number of "no" responses is much higher than the number of "yes" responses which seems to indicate that the decision to attend school part-time does not appear to be influenced by the respondents' mothers.

TABLE 78
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Mother's Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

		No	Yes	Total
(-3) Don't Influence Your Decisions at All	Count	198	42	240
	Expected Count	205.4	34.6	240.0
(-2)	Count	50	13	63
	Expected Count	53.9	9.1	63.0
(-1)	Count	51	14	65
	Expected Count	55.6	9.4	65.0
(0)	Count	117	16	133
	Expected Count	113.9	19.1	133.0
(1)	Count	280	61	341
	Expected Count	291.9	49.1	341.0
(2)	Count	560	78	638
	Expected Count	546.2	91.8	638.0
(3) Influence Your Decisions Very Much	Count	1283	202	1485
	Expected Count	1271.2	213.8	1485.0
Don't Know Refused	Count	0	1	1
	Expected Count	.9	.1	1.0
Total	Count	2539	427	2966
	Expected Count	2539.0	427.0	2966.0

TABLE 79
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Mother's Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.679 ^a	7	.006
Likelihood Ratio	16.966	7	.018
N of Valid Cases	2966		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.

The cross tabulation for the strength of the father's influence on decisions by full-time school is shown in Table 81 and the results of the chi-square test are shown in

Table 82. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the strength of the father's influence on the decision to attend school full-time.

TABLE 80

Effect Size: Strength of Mother's Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by			
Nominal	Cramer's V	.081	.006
	Contingency Coefficient	.081	.006
N of Valid Cases		2966	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

TABLE 81

Cross Tabulation: Strength of Father's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

		No	Yes	Total
(-3) Don't Influence Your Decisions at All	Count	187	123	310
	Expected Count	160.0	150.0	310.0
(-2)	Count	38	38	76
	Expected Count	39.2	36.8	76.0
(-1)	Count	40	37	77
	Expected Count	39.8	37.2	77.0
(0)	Count	79	71	150
	Expected Count	77.4	72.6	150.0
(1)	Count	170	170	340
	Expected Count	175.5	164.5	340.0
(2)	Count	272	299	571
	Expected Count	294.8	276.2	571.0
(3) Influence Your Decisions Very Much	Count	656	614	1270
	Expected Count	655.6	614.4	1270.0
Don't Know Refused	Count	4	3	7
	Expected Count	3.6	3.4	7.0
Total	Count	1446	1355	2801
	Expected Count	1446.0	1355.0	2801.0

TABLE 82
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Father's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.623 ^a	7	.058
Likelihood Ratio	13.705	7	.057
N of Valid Cases	2801		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.39.

The cross tabulation for the strength of the father's influence on decisions by part-time school is shown in Table 83; the results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 84 and the results of effect size are shown in Table 85. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of the father's influence on decisions by part-time school with $\chi^2 = 31.388 (7)$, $p=.000$. Cramer's $\phi = .106$, which indicates a small relationship between the strength of the father's influence on decisions by part-time school. A closer examination of the frequency counts reveals that the number of "no" responses is much higher than the number of "yes" responses, which seems to indicate that the decision to attend school part-time does not appear to be influenced by the respondents' fathers.

TABLE 83

Cross Tabulation: Strength of Father's Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Don't Influence Your Decisions at All	Count		258	52	310
	Expected Count		265.3	44.7	310.0
(-2)	Count		59	17	76
	Expected Count		65.0	11.0	76.0
(-1)	Count		61	16	77
	Expected Count		65.9	11.1	77.0
(0)	Count		125	25	150
	Expected Count		128.4	21.6	150.0
(1)	Count		277	63	340
	Expected Count		291.0	49.0	340.0
(2)	Count		509	62	571
	Expected Count		488.6	82.4	571.0
(3) Influence Your Decisions Very much	Count		1105	165	1270
	Expected Count		1086.8	183.2	1270.0
Don't Know Refused	Count		3	4	7
	Expected Count		6.0	1.0	7.0
Total	Count		2397	404	2801
	Expected Count		2397.0	404.0	2801.0

TABLE 84

Chi-Square Test: Strength of Father's Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	31.388 ^a	7	.000
Likelihood Ratio	27.308	7	.000
N of Valid Cases	2801		

a. 1 cell (6.3%) has expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.01.

TABLE 85
Effect Size: Strength of Father's Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	.106	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.105	.000
N of Valid Cases		2801	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The cross tabulation for the strength of the sibling's influence on decisions by full-time school is shown in Table 86. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 87 and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 88. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of the sibling's influence on decisions by full-time school with $\chi^2 = 18.686 (7), p=.009$. Cramer's $\phi = .081$, which indicates a small relationship between the strength of the sibling's influence on decisions by full-time school. A closer examination of the frequency counts, however, reveals that the number of "no" responses is higher than the number of "yes" responses; but the numbers are close, which seems to indicate that almost as many respondents appear to be influenced by their siblings to attend school full-time as there were respondents not appearing to be influenced by their siblings to attend school full-time.

TABLE 86

Cross Tabulation: Strength of Sibling's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Don't Influence Your Decisions at All	Count		184	120	304
	Expected Count		158.8	145.2	304.0
(-2)	Count		51	62	113
	Expected Count		59.0	54.0	113.0
(-1)	Count		50	52	102
	Expected Count		53.3	48.7	102.0
(0)	Count		112	123	235
	Expected Count		122.8	112.2	235.0
(1)	Count		295	258	553
	Expected Count		288.9	264.1	553.0
(2)	Count		348	365	713
	Expected Count		372.4	340.6	713.0
(3) Influence Your Decisions Very Much	Count		427	364	791
	Expected Count		413.2	377.8	791.0
Don't Know Refused	Count		5	2	7
	Expected Count		3.7	3.3	7.0
Total	Count		1472	1346	2818
	Expected Count		1472.0	1346.0	2818.0

TABLE 87

Chi-Square Test: Strength of Sibling's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.686 ^a	7	.009
Likelihood Ratio	18.800	7	.009
N of Valid Cases	2818		

a.2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.34.

TABLE 88
Effect Size: Strength of Sibling's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	.081	.009
	Contingency Coefficient	.081	.009
N of Valid Cases		2818	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

TABLE 89
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Sibling's Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Don't Influence Your Decisions at All	Count		247	57	304
	Expected Count		259.4	44.6	304.0
(-2)	Count		88	25	113
	Expected Count		96.4	16.6	113.0
(-1)	Count		90	12	102
	Expected Count		87.1	14.9	102.0
(0)	Count		210	25	235
	Expected Count		200.6	34.4	235.0
(1)	Count		471	82	553
	Expected Count		472.0	81.0	553.0
(2)	Count		614	99	713
	Expected Count		608.5	104.5	713.0
(3) Influence Your Decisions Very Much	Count		679	112	791
	Expected Count		675.1	115.9	791.0
Don't Know Refused	Count		6	1	7
	Expected Count		6.0	1.0	7.0
Total	Count		2405	413	2818
	Expected Count		2405.0	413.0	2818.0

The cross tabulation for the strength of the sibling's influence on decisions by part-time school is shown in Table 89 and the results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 90. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the strength of the sibling's influence on the decision to attend school part-time.

TABLE 90
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Sibling's Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.335 ^a	7	.064
Likelihood Ratio	12.812	7	.077
N of Valid Cases	2818		

a.1 cell (6.3%) has expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.03.

The cross tabulation for the strength of the extended family's influence on decisions by full-time school is shown in Table 91. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 92 and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 93. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of the extended family's influence on decisions by full-time school with $\chi^2 = 16.985 (7)$, $p=.017$. Cramer's $\phi = .076$, which indicates a small relationship between the strength of the extended family's influence on decisions by full-time school. A closer examination of the frequency counts, however, reveals that while the number of "yes" responses is higher than the number of "no" responses, the numbers are very close, almost an even split. This seems to indicate that almost as many respondents appear to be influenced by extended family

members to attend school full-time as there were respondents not appearing to be influenced by extended family members to attend school full-time.

TABLE 91
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Extended Family Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

		No	Yes	Total
(-3) Don't Influence Your Decisions at All	Count	218	158	376
	Expected Count	194.4	181.6	376.0
(-2)	Count	86	95	184
	Expected Count	95.1	88.9	184.0
(-1)	Count	110	104	214
	Expected Count	110.6	103.4	214.0
(0)	Count	194	191	385
	Expected Count	199.1	185.9	385.0
(1)	Count	351	335	686
	Expected Count	354.7	331.3	686.0
(2)	Count	257	298	555
	Expected Count	286.9	268.1	555.0
(3) Influence Your Decisions Very much	Count	312	335	562
	Expected Count	290.6	271.4	562.0
Don't Know	Count	3	2	5
	Expected Count	2.6	2.4	5.0
Refused	Count			
	Expected Count			
Total	Count	1534	1433	2967
	Expected Count	1534.0	1433.0	2967.0

TABLE 92
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Extended Family Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.985 ^a	7	.017
Likelihood Ratio	17.024	7	.017
N of Valid Cases	2967		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.41.

TABLE 93
Effect Size: Strength of Extended Family Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by			
Nominal	Cramer's V	.076	.017
	Contingency Coefficient	.075	.017
N of Valid Cases		2967	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

TABLE 94
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Extended Family Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

		No	Yes	Total
(-3)	Don't Influence			
	Your Decisions			
	at All			
	Count	316	60	376
	Expected Count	322.5	53.5	376.0
(-2)	Count	157	27	184
	Expected Count	157.8	26.2	184.0
(-1)	Count	179	35	214
	Expected Count	183.6	30.4	214.0
(0)	Count	341	44	385
	Expected Count	330.2	54.8	385.0
(1)	Count	596	90	686
	Expected Count	588.4	97.6	686.0
(2)	Count	473	82	555
	Expected Count	476.1	78.9	555.0
(3)	Influence Your			
	Decisions Very			
	Much			
	Count	479	83	562
	Expected Count	482.1	79.9	562.0
	Don't Know			
	Refused			
	Count	4	1	5
	Expected Count	4.3	.7	5.0
Total	Count	2545	422	2967
	Expected Count	2545.0	422.0	2967.0

The cross tabulation for the strength of the extended family's influence on decisions by part-time school is shown in Table 94 and the results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 95. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the strength of the extended family's influence on decisions to attend school part-time.

TABLE 95
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Extended Family Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.317 ^a	7	.621
Likelihood Ratio	5.406	7	.611
N of Valid Cases	2967		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .71.

The cross tabulation for the strength of close friend's influence on decisions by full-time school is shown in Table 96. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 97 and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 98. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of close friend's influence on decisions by full-time school with $\chi^2 = 21.381 (7)$, $p=.003$. Cramer's $\phi = .084$, which indicates a small relationship between the strength of a close friend's influence on decisions to attend school full-time. A closer examination of the frequency counts, however, reveals that the number of "no" responses is higher than the number of "yes" responses but the numbers are very close, almost an even split. This seems to indicate that just as many respondents appear to be influenced by their close friends to attend school full-time as

there were respondents not appearing to be influenced by their close friends to attend school full-time.

TABLE 96
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Close Friend's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Don't Influence Your Decisions at All	Count		150	81	231
	Expected Count		119.5	111.5	231.0
(-2)	Count		41	49	90
	Expected Count		46.6	43.4	90.0
(-1)	Count		60	52	112
	Expected Count		57.9	54.1	112.0
(0)	Count		124	113	237
	Expected Count		122.6	114.4	237.0
(1)	Count		343	343	686
	Expected Count		354.9	331.1	686.0
(2)	Count		404	422	826
	Expected Count		427.3	398.7	826.0
(3) Influence Your Decisions Very Much	Count		428	386	814
	Expected Count		421.1	392.9	814.0
Don't Know Refused	Count		1	1	2
	Expected Count		1.0	1.0	2.0
Total	Count		1551	1447	2998
	Expected Count		1551.0	1447.0	2998.0

TABLE 97
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Close Friend's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	21.381 ^a	7	.003
Likelihood Ratio	21.675	7	.003
N of Valid Cases	2998		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .97.

TABLE 98
Effect Size: Strength of Close Friend's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by			
Nominal	Cramer's V	.084	.003
	Contingency Coefficient	.084	.003
N of Valid Cases		2998	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

TABLE 99
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Close Friend's Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Don't Influence Your Decisions at All	Count		189	42	231
	Expected Count		198.0	33.0	231.0
(-2)	Count		76	14	90
	Expected Count		77.2	12.8	90.0
(-1)	Count		92	20	112
	Expected Count		96.0	16.0	112.0
(0)	Count		214	23	237
	Expected Count		203.2	33.8	237.0
(1)	Count		599	87	686
	Expected Count		588.1	97.9	686.0
(2)	Count		703	123	826
	Expected Count		708.1	117.9	826.0
(3) Influence Your Decisions Very Much	Count		696	118	814
	Expected Count		697.8	116.2	814.0
Don't Know Refused	Count		1	1	2
	Expected Count		1.7	.3	2.0
Total	Count		2570	428	2998
	Expected Count		2570.0	428.0	2998.0

The cross tabulation for the strength of close friend's influence on decisions by part-time school is shown in Table 99 and the results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 100. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the strength of close friend's influence on decisions to attend school part-time.

TABLE 100
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Close Friend's Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.018 ^a	7	.100
Likelihood Ratio	11.571	7	.116
N of Valid Cases	2998		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .29.

The cross tabulation for the strength of a teacher's influence on decisions by full-time school is shown in Table 101. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 102 and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 103. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of the teacher's influence on decisions by full-time school with $\chi^2 = 56.647 (7)$, $p=.000$. Cramer's $\phi = .143$, which indicates a small to medium relationship between the strength of the teacher's influence on decisions by full-time school. A closer examination of the frequency counts, however, reveals that the number of "no" responses is higher than the number of "yes" responses, but the numbers are close, which seems to indicate that almost as many respondents appear to be influenced by a teacher to attend school full-time as there were respondents not appearing to be influenced by teachers to attend school full-time.

TABLE 101

Cross Tabulation: Strength of Teacher's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Don't Influence Your Decisions at All	Count		233	151	384
	Expected Count		191.7	192.3	384.0
(-2)	Count		91	89	180
	Expected Count		89.9	90.1	180.0
(-1)	Count		114	113	227
	Expected Count		113.3	113.7	227.0
(0)	Count		198	217	415
	Expected Count		207.2	207.8	415.0
(1)	Count		296	367	663
	Expected Count		331.0	332.0	663.0
(2)	Count		186	264	450
	Expected Count		224.7	225.3	450.0
(3) Influence Your Decisions Very Much	Count		244	174	418
	Expected Count		208.7	209.3	418.0
Don't Know Refused	Count		12	3	15
	Expected Count		7.5	7.5	15.0
Total	Count		1374	1378	2752
	Expected Count		1374.0	1378.0	2752.0

TABLE 102

Chi-Square Test: Strength of Teacher's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	56.647 ^a	7	.000
Likelihood Ratio	57.304	7	.000
N of Valid Cases	2752		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.49.

TABLE 103
Effect Size: Strength of Teacher's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	.143	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.142	.000
N of Valid Cases		2752	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The cross tabulation for the strength of a teacher's influence on decisions by part-time school is shown in Table 104. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 105 and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 106. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of the teacher's influence on decisions by part-time school with $\chi^2 = 19.718 (7), p=.006$. Cramer's $\phi = .085$, which indicates a small relationship between the strength of the teacher's influence on decisions by part-time school. A closer examination of the frequency counts reveals that the number of "no" responses is much higher than the number of "yes" responses which appears to indicate that the decision to attend school part-time does not appear to be influenced by the respondents' teachers.

TABLE 104

Cross Tabulation: Strength of Teacher's Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Don't Influence Your Decisions at All	Count		329	55	384
	Expected Count		332.1	51.9	384.0
(-2)	Count		156	24	180
	Expected Count		155.7	24.3	180.0
(-1)	Count		193	34	227
	Expected Count		196.3	30.7	227.0
(0)	Count		378	37	415
	Expected Count		358.9	56.1	415.0
(1)	Count		588	75	663
	Expected Count		573.4	89.6	663.0
(2)	Count		381	69	450
	Expected Count		389.2	60.8	450.0
(3) Influence Your Decisions Very Much	Count		343	75	418
	Expected Count		361.5	56.5	418.0
Don't Know Refused	Count		12	3	15
	Expected Count		13.0	2.0	15.0
Total	Count		2380	372	2752
	Expected Count		2380.0	372.0	2752.0

TABLE 105

Chi-Square Test: Strength of Teacher's Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.718 ^a	7	.006
Likelihood Ratio	20.063	7	.005
N of Valid Cases	2752		

a. 1 cell (6.3%) has expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.03.

TABLE 106
Effect Size: Strength of Teacher's Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	.085	.006
	Contingency Coefficient	.084	.006
N of Valid Cases		2752	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The cross tabulation for the strength of a guidance counselor's influence on decisions by full-time school is shown in Table 107. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 108 and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 109. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of the guidance counselor's influence on decisions by full-time school with $\chi^2 = 34.200 (7), p=.000$. Cramer's $\phi = .116$, which indicates a small relationship between the strength of the guidance counselor's influence on decisions by full-time school. A closer examination of the frequency counts however reveals that the number of "no" responses is higher than the number of "yes" responses but the numbers are very close, which seems to indicate that just as many respondents appear not to be influenced by their guidance counselor to attend school full-time as there were respondents appearing to be influenced by their guidance counselor to attend school full-time.

TABLE 107

Cross Tabulation: Strength of Guidance Counselor's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

		No	Yes	Total
(-3) Don't Influence Your Decisions at All	Count	245	217	462
	Expected Count	224.0	238.0	462.0
(-2)	Count	88	116	204
	Expected Count	98.9	105.1	204.0
(-1)	Count	81	120	201
	Expected Count	97.4	103.6	201.0
(0)	Count	184	189	373
	Expected Count	180.8	192.2	373.0
(1)	Count	245	299	544
	Expected Count	263.7	280.3	544.0
(2)	Count	155	202	357
	Expected Count	173.1	183.9	357.0
(3) Influence Your Decisions Very Much	Count	217	154	371
	Expected Count	179.9	191.1	371.0
Don't Know	Count	14	9	23
	Expected Count	11.2	11.8	23.0
Refused	Count			
	Expected Count			
Total	Count	1229	1306	2535
	Expected Count	1229.0	1306.0	2535.0

TABLE 108

Chi-Square Test: Strength of Guidance Counselor's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34.200 ^a	7	.000
Likelihood Ratio	34.317	7	.000
N of Valid Cases	2535		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 11.15.

TABLE 109
Effect Size: Strength of Guidance Counselor's Influence on Decisions by Full-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	.116	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.115	.000
N of Valid Cases		2535	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The cross tabulation for the guidance counselor's influence on decisions by part-time school is shown in Table 110 and the results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 111. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the strength of the guidance counselor's influence on decisions to attend school part-time.

A summary of the chi-square statistics and the Cramer's ϕ values for the variables from research question 3 are shown in Table 112. There were seven strength of influence variables tested against attending school full-time and attending school part-time. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of the mother's influence and the decision to attend school full-time and part-time. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of the father's influence and the decision to attend school part-time. There appears to be a significant relationship between siblings and the decision to attend school full-time. There appears to be a significant relationship between extended family and the decision to attend school full-time. There appears to be a significant relationship between close friends and the decision to attend school full-time. There appears to be a significant relationship between teachers and the

decision to attend school full-time and part-time. There appears to be a significant relationship between guidance counselor and the decision to attend school full-time.

TABLE 110
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Guidance Counselor's Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Don't Influence Your Decisions at All	Count		411	51	462
	Expected Count		398.2	63.8	462.0
(-2)	Count		172	32	204
	Expected Count		175.8	28.2	204.0
(-1)	Count		174	27	201
	Expected Count		173.2	27.8	201.0
(0)	Count		329	44	373
	Expected Count		321.5	51.5	373.0
(1)	Count		474	70	544
	Expected Count		468.9	75.1	544.0
(2)	Count		301	56	357
	Expected Count		307.7	49.3	357.0
(3) Influence Your Decisions Very Much	Count		305	66	371
	Expected Count		319.8	51.2	371.0
Don't Know Refused	Count		19	4	23
	Expected Count		19.8	3.2	23.0
Total	Count		2185	350	2535
	Expected Count		2185.0	350.0	2535.0

TABLE 111
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Guidance Counselor's Influence on Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.527 ^a	7	.117
Likelihood Ratio	11.354	7	.124
N of Valid Cases	2535		

a.1 cell (6.3%) has expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.18.

TABLE 112
 Summary Table of Chi-Square and Cramer's V Results for Variables from Research Question 3

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Mother's Influence by Full-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	22.269	7	.002*
Cramer's V	.087		.002*
Mother's Influence by Part-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	19.679	7	.006*
Cramer's V	.081		.006*
Father's Influence by Full-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	13.623	7	.058
Father's Influence by Part-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	31.388	7	.000*
Cramer's V	.106		.000*
Sibling's Influence by Full-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	18.686	7	.009*
Cramer's V	.081		.009*
Sibling's Influence by Part-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	13.335	7	.064
Extended Family Influence by Full-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	16.985	7	.017*
Cramer's V	.076		.017*
Extended Family Influence by Part-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	5.317	7	.621
Close Friend's Influence by Full-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	21.381	7	.003*
Cramer's V	.084		.003*
Close Friend's Influence by Part-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	12.018	7	.100
Teacher's Influence by Full-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	56.647	7	.000*
Cramer's V	.143		.000*
Teacher's Influence by Part-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	19.718	7	.006*
Cramer's V	.085		.006*
Guidance counselor's influence by full-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	34.200	7	.000*
Cramer's V	.116		.000*
Guidance Counselor's Influence by Part-Time School			
Pearson Chi-Square	11.527	7	.117

* Significant at the .05 level

Summary of Findings for Influencers of the Decision for Full-Time or Part-Time Post-Secondary Education

The frequency tables seem to indicate that the respondents' decisions are affected strongly by their mother's influence with 49.2% of them responding that their mothers influence their decisions "very much". This is followed by father's influence at 42.1%, close friend's influence at 27.0%, sibling's influence at 26.2%, extended family influence at 18.6%, teacher's influence at 13.9%, and guidance counselor's influence at 12.3%.

There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of the mother's influence and the decision to attend school full-time; however, the response rate for the "no" response was slightly higher (766) than the "yes" response rate (719), which would appear to indicate that there were just about as many respondents not influenced very much by their mothers when making a decision to attend school full-time as those who were influenced very much by their mothers to attend school full-time. There was a significant relationship between the strength of the mother's influence and the decision to attend school part-time. There was a much larger "no" response rate (1283) compared to the "yes" response rate (202), which seems to indicate that there is not a strong influence from the respondents, mothers on the decision to attend school part-time.

There does not appear to be a significant relationship between a father's strength of influence and the decision to attend school full-time, but there does appear to be a significant relationship between the strength of a father's influence and the decision to

attend school part-time. However, there was a larger “no” response rate (1105) compared to the “yes” response rate (165) which seems to indicate that there is not a strong influence from the father on the decision to attend school part-time.

There was a significant relationship between the strength of influence from siblings on the decision to attend school full-time; however, there was a higher response rate for the “no” response (427) compared to the “yes” response (364). This appears to indicate that there were just as many respondents not influenced by their siblings to attend school full-time as were influenced by their siblings to attend school full-time. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the strength of the sibling influence and the decision to attend school part-time; however, looking at the response rates there was a higher “no” response rate (679) than the “yes” response rate (112). This would seem to indicate that the respondents’ siblings do not influence the decision to attend school part-time.

There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of influence of extended family members and the decision to attend school full-time; however, the response rate for “yes” was only slightly higher (335) than the response rate for “no” (312), which seems to indicate that about the same number of respondents are influenced by extended family members to make the decision to attend school full-time as the number of respondents not influenced by extended family to make this decision. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between strength of influence of extended family members on the decision to attend school part-time; however, the “no” response rate was much higher (479) than the “yes” response rate (83). This appears to indicate

that more respondents are not influenced by extended family members to make the decision to attend school part-time.

Influencers of the Type of School or College to Attend

Principal axis factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted to assess the underlying structure for the seven strength of influence variables (mother, father, siblings, extended family, close friends, teachers and guidance counselors) and the strength of influence they have on the type of school or college to attend. Factor analysis provides an empirical basis for reducing all of these variables to a few factors by combining variables that are moderately or highly correlated with each other (Gall, Borg and Gall, 1996). To be considered suitable for factor analysis the correlation matrix should show at least some correlations of $r = .3$ or greater, the Bartlett's test of sphericity should be statistically significant at $p < .05$, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value should be $.6$ or above (Pallant, 2005).

The dependent variables, obtained from the question "Type of school or college you would like to attend?", consisted of the following responses: high school; vocational, business or trade school; 2-year junior of community college; 4-year college or university; and graduate or professional school. The responses for high school were removed from the analysis and were not used in the factor analysis since the primary interest in this study was the post-secondary education plans of 16-21 year old youth in the United States.

Vocational, Business, or Trade School

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's test are shown in Table 113 and indicate that factor analysis is suitable for this data set. An examination of Table 114 for eigenvalues greater than one revealed that there were two components with eigenvalues greater than one, indicating that two components should be extracted.

TABLE 113
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Test: Strength of Influence of People Close to You on Decisions by Kind of School or College to Attend (Vocational, Business, or Trade School)

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy			.652
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square		518.396
	df		21
	Sig.		.000

a. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (vocational, business, or trade school) are used in the analysis phase.

TABLE 114
Total Variance Explained^a: Strength of Influence of People Close to You on Decisions by Kind of School or College to Attend (Vocational, Business, or Trade School)

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Guidance Counselor	2.866	40.938	40.938	2.866	40.938	40.938
Teachers	1.720	24.571	65.509	1.720	24.571	65.509
Brothers / Sisters	.939	13.408	78.917			
Ext. Family	.578	8.258	87.175			
Mother	.508	7.251	94.426			
Close Friends	.376	5.365	99.791			
Father	.015	.209	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

a. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (vocational, business, or trade school) are used in the analysis phase.

An examination of the scree plot in Figure 4 verifies that two components should be retained and the extraction was conducted using these two components, which were identified as family influence and school influence. The rotated component matrix is shown in Table 115. The variables of siblings, extended family, mother and close friends loaded on the family influence component. Teachers and guidance counselors loaded on the family influence component. Teachers and guidance counselors loaded on the school influence component, and father failed to load on any component.

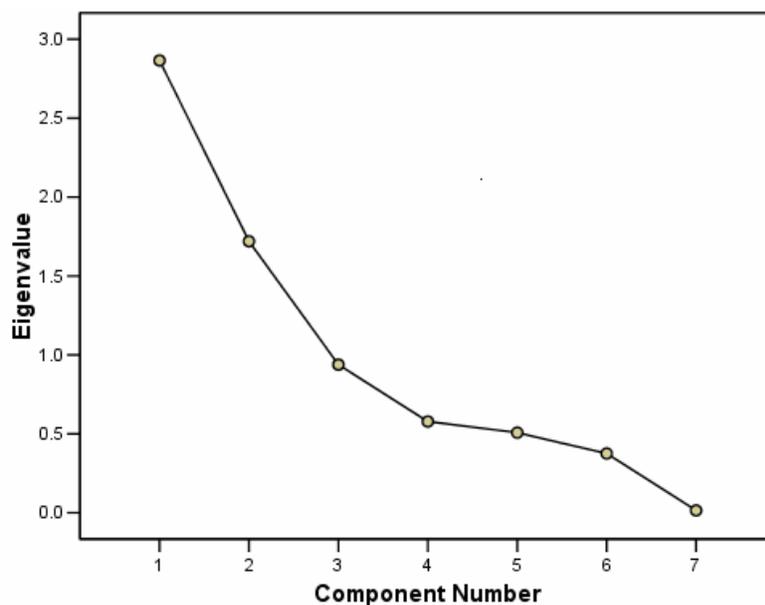


Figure 4. Scree Plot for Strength of Influence of People Close to You by Kind of College to Attend (Vocational, Business, or Trade School)

TABLE 115

Rotated Component Matrix ^{a,b}: Strength of Influence of People Close to You on Decisions by Kind of School or College to Attend (Vocational, Business, or Trade School)

	Component	
	Family Influence	School Influence
Brothers / Sisters	.844	
Extended Family	.793	
Mother	.779	
Close Friends	.732	
Guidance Counselor		.988
Teachers		.987
Father		

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

b. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (vocational, business, or trade school) are used in the analysis phase.

Usually, factor loadings lower than .30 are considered low. Loadings of .40 or greater are typically considered high (Leech, Barrett, & Morgan, 2005). The items with the highest loadings on the family influence component were siblings, extended family, mother, and close friends. The items with the highest loadings on the school influence component were guidance counselor and teachers. One item, the father, failed to load on either component. With respect to the decision to attend vocational, business, or trade school, the family influence component appears to be highly correlated with siblings, extended family, mother, and close friends; and the school influence component appears to be highly correlated with guidance counselor and teachers. With respect to the decision to attend vocational, business, or trade school, the father does not appear to be correlated with either component.

2-Year Junior or Community College

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's test are shown in Table 116 and indicate that factor analysis is suitable for this data set. Examination of Table 117 for eigenvalues greater than one revealed that there were two components with eigenvalues greater than one, and examination of the scree plot in Figure 5 shows a distinct change in the shape of the plot after the 2nd component. Therefore, only the components above this point were retained and the extraction was conducted using these two components, which were identified as family / school influence component and extended family / peer influence component.

TABLE 116
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Test: Strength of Influence of People Close to You on Decisions by Kind of School or College to Attend (2-Year Junior or Community College)

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.802
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1389.442
	df	21
	Sig.	.000

a. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (2-year junior or community college) are used in the analysis phase.

TABLE 117

Total Variance Explained^a: Strength of Influence of People Close to You on Decisions by Kind of School or College to Attend (2-Year Junior or Community College)

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Mother	3.864	55.197	55.197	3.864	55.197	55.197
Teachers	1.145	16.351	71.548	1.145	16.351	71.548
Brothers / Sisters	.837	11.951	83.499			
Father	.626	8.944	92.443			
Ext. Family	.410	5.855	98.298			
Close Friends	.078	1.113	99.411			
Guidance Counselor	.041	.589	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

a. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (2-year junior or community college) are used in the analysis phase.

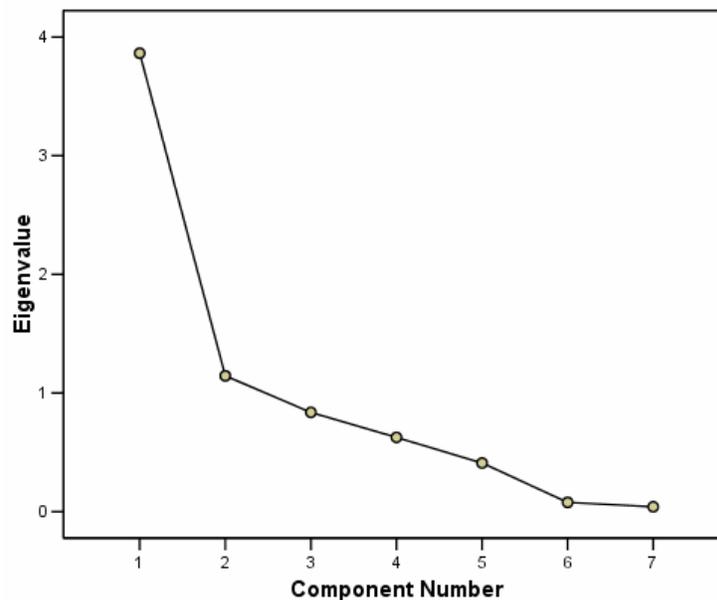


Figure 5. Scree Plot for Strength of Influence of People Close to You by Kind of College to Attend (2-Year Junior or Community College)

The rotated component matrix is shown in Table 118. The variables for mother, teachers, siblings, father, and guidance counselor loaded on the family / school influence component. Extended family and close friends loaded on the extended family / peer influence component.

TABLE 118
Rotated Component Matrix ^{a,b}: Strength of Influence of People Close to You on Decisions by Kind of School or College to Attend (2-Year Junior or Community College)

	Component	
	Family / School Influence	Extended Family / Peer
Mother	.961	
Teachers	.951	
Brothers / Sisters	.932	
Father	.790	
Guidance Counselor	.670	
Extended Family		.780
Close Friends		.759

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

b. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (2-year junior or community college) are used in the analysis phase.

The items with the highest loadings on the family / school influence component were mother, teachers, siblings, father, and guidance counselor. The items with the highest loadings on the extended family / peer influence component were extended family and close friends. With respect to the decision to attend a 2-year junior or community college, the family / school influence component appears to be highly

correlated with mother, teachers, siblings, father, and guidance counselor; and the extended family / peer influence component appears to be highly correlated with extended family and close friends.

4-Year College or University

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's test are shown in Table 119 and indicate that factor analysis is marginally suitable for this data set. Examination of Table 120 for eigenvalues greater than one revealed that there were two components with eigenvalues greater than one, and examination of the scree plot in Figure 6 shows a distinct change in the shape of the plot after the 2nd component. Therefore only the components above this point were retained; and the extraction was conducted using these two components which were identified as the school influence component and the family influence component.

TABLE 119
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Test: Strength of Influence of People Close to You on Decisions by Kind of School or College to Attend (4-Year College or University)

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.471
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	965.929
	df	21
	Sig.	.000

a. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (4-year college or university) are used in the analysis phase.

TABLE 120

Total Variance Explained^a: Strength of Influence of People Close to You on Decisions by Kind of School or College to Attend (4-Year College or University)

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Guidance Counselor	1.846	26.375	26.375	1.846	26.375	26.375
Teacher	1.365	19.494	45.870	1.365	19.494	45.870
Mother	.982	14.022	59.891			
Brothers / Sisters	.932	13.308	73.199			
Father	.883	12.618	85.817			
Ext. Family	.732	10.455	96.272			
Close Friends	.261	3.728	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

a. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (4-year college or university) are used in the analysis phase.

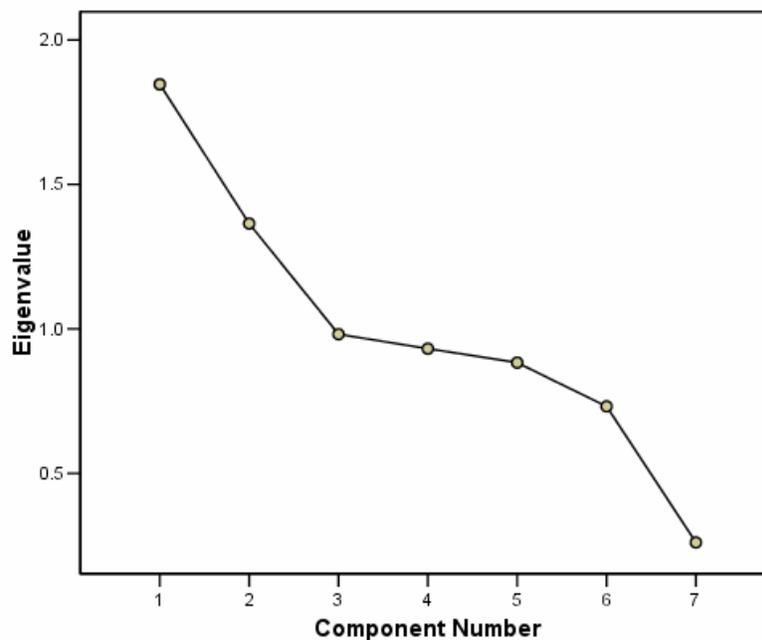


Figure 6. Scree Plot for Strength of Influence of People Close to You by Kind of College to Attend (4-Year College or University)

The rotated component matrix is shown in Table 121. The variables for guidance counselor, teachers, and extended family loaded on the school influence component; and mother, siblings, father and close friends loaded on the family influence component.

TABLE 121
Rotated Component Matrix ^{a,b}: Strength of Influence of People Close to You on Decisions by Kind of School or College to Attend (4-Year College or University)

	Component	
	School Influence	Family Influence
Guidance Counselor	.930	
Teachers	.866	
Extended Family	.390	
Mother		.725
Brothers / Sisters		.590
Father		.510
Close Friends		.469

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

b. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (4-year college or university) are used in the analysis phase.

The items with the highest loadings on the school influence component were guidance counselor, teachers, and extended family. The items with the highest loadings on the family influence component were mother, siblings, father, and close friends. With respect to the decision to attend a 4-year college or university, the school influence component appears to be highly correlated with guidance counselor, teachers, and extended family; and the family influence component appears to be highly correlated with mother, siblings, father, and close friends. It is interesting to note that, with respect

to making the decision to attend a 4-year college or university, it appears that the extended family factor is correlated with the school influence component and close friends appear to be correlated with the family influence component.

Graduate or Professional School

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's test are shown in Table 122 and indicate that factor analysis is suitable for this data set. Examination of Table 123 for eigenvalues greater than one revealed that there were two components with eigenvalues greater than one, and examination of the scree plot in Figure 7 shows a distinct change in the shape of the plot after the 2nd component. Therefore, only the components above this point were retained, and the extraction was conducted using these two components which were identified as the school / family influence component and the family influence component.

TABLE 122

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Test: Strength of Influence of People Close to You on Decisions by Kind of School or College to Attend (Graduate or Professional School)

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy			.707
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square		294.321
	df		21
	Sig.		.000

a. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (graduate or professional school) are used in the analysis phase.

TABLE 123

Total Variance Explained^a: Strength of Influence of People Close to You on Decisions by Kind of School or College to Attend (Graduate or Professional School)

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Brothers / Sisters	3.098	44.255	44.255	3.098	44.255	44.255
Father	1.252	17.879	62.134	1.252	17.879	62.134
Teachers	.824	11.766	73.900			
Guidance Counselor	.657	9.387	83.287			
Ext. Family	.541	7.723	91.010			
Mother	.381	5.448	96.458			
Close Friends	.248	3.542	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

a. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (graduate or professional school) are used in the analysis phase.

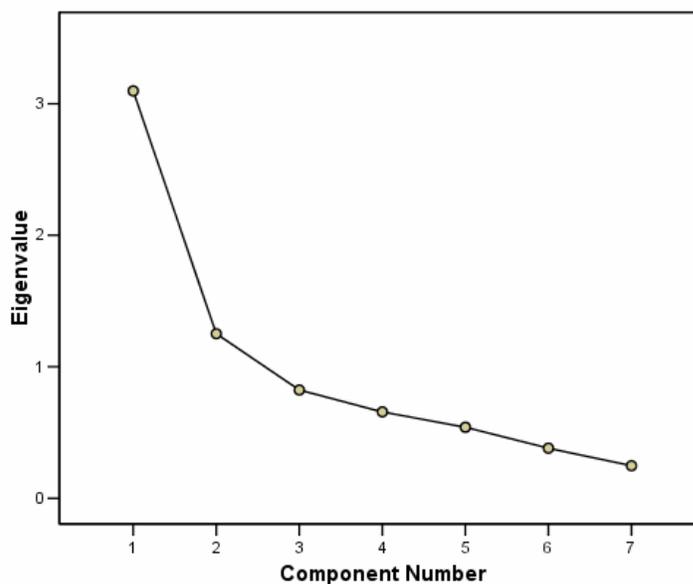


Figure 7. Scree Plot for Strength of Influence of People Close to You by Kind of College to Attend (Graduate or Professional School)

The rotated component matrix is shown in Table 124. The variables for teachers, guidance counselors, extended family, mother, and close friends loaded on the school / family influence component; and father and siblings loaded on the family influence component. The variables for mother and siblings double loaded on the school / family influence component and the family influence component.

TABLE 124
Rotated Component Matrix ^{a,b}: Strength of Influence of People Close to You on Decisions by Kind of School or College to Attend (Graduate or Professional School)

	Component	
	School / Family Influence	Family Influence
Teachers	.822	
Guidance Counselor	.800	
Extended Family	.736	
Mother	.552	.422
Close Friends	.551	
Father		.876
Brothers / Sisters	.439	.780

Extraction Method: principal component analysis

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

b. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (graduate or professional school) are used in the analysis phase.

The items with the highest loadings on the school / family influence component were teachers, guidance counselor, extended family, mother, and close friends. The items with the highest loadings on the family influence component were father and siblings. With respect to the decision to attend graduate or professional school, the school / family influence component appears to be highly correlated with teachers,

guidance counselors, extended family, mother, and close friends; and the family influence component appears to be highly correlated with father and siblings. The factors of mother and sibling double loaded on the school / family component and the family influence component. This appears to indicate that these two factors are correlated with the school / family influence component and the family influence component.

Summary of Findings for Influencers of the Type of School or College to Attend

With respect to the decision to attend vocational, business, or trade school, the factors of siblings, extended family, mother, and close friends appear to be highly correlated with the family influence component; and the factors of guidance counselor and teachers appear to be highly correlated with the school influence component, with respondents' fathers not being correlated with either component.

With respect to the decision to attend a 2-year junior or community college, the factor of mother, teachers, siblings, father, and guidance counselor appear to be highly correlated with the family / school influence component; and the factors of extended family and close friends appear to be highly correlated with the extended family / peer influence component.

With respect to the decision to attend a 4-year college or university, the factors of guidance counselor, teachers, and extended family appear to be highly correlated with the school influence component; and the factors of mother, siblings, father, and close friends appear to be highly correlated with the family influence component.

With respect to the decision to attend graduate or professional school, the factors of teachers, guidance counselor, extended family, mother, and close friends appear to be highly correlated with the school / family influence component; and the factors of father and siblings appear to be highly correlated with the family influence component.

Mothers appear to be correlated with both components.

Summary of Findings for Research Question 3

Parents appear to have a strong influence on decisions made by this sample, followed by close friends and siblings who appear to have an equal amount of influence on decisions made by these respondents. Extended family is next, and teachers and counselors appear not to have as strong an influence as the other variables on decisions made by this group.

With respect to the decision to attend school full-time or part-time, it appears that just as many respondents are influenced by their mothers to make the decision to attend school full-time as those respondents not influenced by their mothers to make the decision to attend school full-time. With respect to the decision to attend school part-time, it appears that the respondents are not significantly influenced by their mothers to make the decision to attend school part-time. It appears that this group is not influenced significantly by their fathers when it comes to the decision to attend school full-time or part-time. There appears to be as many respondents who are influenced by their siblings to make the decision to attend school full-time as those who are not influenced by their siblings to attend school full-time. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the respondent's siblings and the decision to attend school part-time. It appears

that just as many respondents are influenced by extended family to attend school full-time as there were respondents not influenced by extended family to attend school full-time. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between extended family and the decision to attend school part-time. There appears to be as many respondents who are influenced by their close friends to make the decision to attend school full-time as there were who are not influenced by close friends to attend school full-time. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between close friends and the decision to attend school part-time for this group. There appear to be more respondents who are not influenced by their teachers to attend school full-time than those who are not influenced by their teachers to attend school full-time. There appear to be more respondents who are not influenced by their teachers to make the decision to attend school part-time. There appears to be almost as many respondents who are not influenced by their guidance counselor when making a decision to attend school full-time as there are respondents indicating that they are influenced by their guidance counselor when making a decision to attend school part-time.

There appears to be a correlation between the family influence component and the respondents' siblings, extended family, mothers, and close friends, and a correlation between the school influence component and guidance counselors and teachers with respect to the decision to attend vocational, business, or trade school.

There appears to be a correlation between the family / school influence component and mothers, teachers, siblings, father, and guidance counselor, and a correlation between the extended family / peer influence component and extended family

and close friends with respect to the decision to attend a 2-year junior or community college.

There appears to be a correlation between the school influence component and guidance counselor, teachers, and extended family; and there appears to be a correlation between the family influence component and mother, siblings, fathers, and close friends with respect to the decision to attend a 4-year college or university.

There appears to be a correlation between the school / family influence component and teachers, guidance counselor, extended family, mother, and close friends; and there appears to be a correlation between the family influence component and father and siblings with respect to the decision to attend graduate or professional school.

Findings for Research Question 4

When making post-secondary education decisions are options such as: earning money for college, having a good paying job, having job security, having a job that makes you happy, learning a valuable trade or skill, preparing for a future career, training in cutting edge technology, not going to college immediately after high school, making a positive difference in the community, and having a lifestyle that is attractive; important to 16-21 year olds in the United States?

This research question was addressed with the following question on the questionnaire:

OUT – “Now, let’s think about the decisions you are currently making in your life. Suppose one of the options you have helps you to [RANDOMIZE AND READ LIST]. Using a scale where positive three means extremely good and negative three means extremely bad, how do you rate that option?”

- A. Earning money for college
- B. Having a good paying job that allows you to live comfortably
- C. Having job security
- D. Having a job that makes you happy
- E. Learning a valuable trade or skill
- F. Preparing for a future career
- G. Training in cutting edge technology
- H. Not going to college immediately after high school
- I. Making a positive difference in your community
- J. Having a lifestyle that is attractive to you

The frequencies of the responses for the “earning money for college” outcome option, which may be a result of the decisions made by the sample, are shown in Table 125. All outcome options received high response rates for the “extremely good” scale except the option of “not going to college immediately after high school”, which had a response rate of 31.4% on the -3 or “extremely bad” scale.

TABLE 125
Frequencies for Outcome Options Resulting from Decisions Made by Sample (Earning Money for College)

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Extremely Bad	68	2.3
(-2)	25	.8
(-1)	36	1.2
(0)	117	3.9
(1)	255	8.5
(2)	540	17.9
(3) Extremely Good	1975	65.5
Don't Know / Refused	1	.0
Total	3017	100.0

The frequencies of the responses for the “having a good paying job” outcome option, which may be a result of the decisions made by the sample, are shown in Table 126.

TABLE 126
Frequencies for Outcome Options Resulting from Decisions Made by Sample (Having a Good Paying Job that Allows You to Live Comfortably)

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Extremely Bad	35	1.2
(-2)	12	.4
(-1)	26	.9
(0)	63	2.1
(1)	215	7.1
(2)	567	18.8
(3) Extremely Good	2099	69.6
Total	3017	100.0

The frequencies of the responses for the “having job-security” outcome option, which may be a result of the decisions made by the sample, are shown in Table 127.

TABLE 127
Frequencies for Outcome Options Resulting from Decisions Made by Sample (Having Job-Security)

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Extremely Bad	53	1.8
(-2)	19	.6
(-1)	33	1.1
(0)	103	3.4
(1)	270	8.9
(2)	679	22.5
(3) Extremely Good	1859	61.6
Don't Know / Refused	1	.1
Total	3017	100.0

The frequencies of the responses for the “having a job that makes you happy” outcome option, which may be a result of the decisions made by the sample, are shown in Table 128.

TABLE 128
Frequencies for Outcome Options Resulting from Decisions Made by Sample (Having a Job that Makes You Happy)

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Extremely Bad	38	1.3
(-2)	15	.5
(-1)	21	.7
(0)	52	1.7
(1)	155	5.1
(2)	384	12.7
(3) Extremely Good	2351	77.9
Don't Know / Refused	1	.1
Total	3017	100.0

The frequencies of the responses for the “learning a valuable trade or skill” outcome option, which may be a result of the decisions made by the sample, are shown in Table 129.

TABLE 129
Frequencies for Outcome Options Resulting from Decisions Made by Sample (Learning a Valuable Trade or Skill)

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Extremely Bad	38	1.3
(-2)	9	.3
(-1)	27	.9
(0)	84	2.8
(1)	340	11.3
(2)	764	25.3
(3) Extremely Good	1754	58.1
Don't Know / Refused	1	.0
Total	3017	100.0

The frequencies of the responses for the “preparing for a future career” outcome option, which may be a result of the decisions made by the sample, are shown in Table 130.

TABLE 130
Frequencies for Outcome Options Resulting from Decisions Made by Sample (Preparing for a Future Career)

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Extremely Bad	31	1.0
(-2)	21	.7
(-1)	20	.7
(0)	71	2.4
(1)	270	8.9
(2)	713	23.6
(3) Extremely Good	1889	62.6
Don't Know / Refused	2	.1
Total	3017	100.0

The frequencies of the responses for the “training in cutting edge technology” outcome option, which may be a result of the decisions made by the sample, are shown in Table 131.

TABLE 131

Frequencies for Outcome Options Resulting from Decisions Made by Sample (Training in Cutting Edge Technology)

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Extremely Bad	126	4.2
(-2)	58	1.9
(-1)	63	2.1
(0)	190	6.3
(1)	512	17.0
(2)	780	25.9
(3) Extremely Good	1287	42.7
Don't Know / Refused	1	.0
Total	3017	100.0

The frequencies of the responses for the “not going to college immediately after high school” outcome option, which may be a result of the decisions made by the sample, are shown in Table 132.

TABLE 132
Frequencies for Outcome Options Resulting from Decisions Made by Sample (Not Going to College Immediately After High School)

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Extremely Bad	948	31.4
(-2)	341	11.3
(-1)	303	10.0
(0)	382	12.7
(1)	427	14.2
(2)	290	9.6
(3) Extremely Good	307	10.2
Don't Know / Refused	19	.6
Total	3017	100.0

The frequencies of the responses for the “making a positive difference in your community” outcome option, which may be a result of the decisions made by the sample, are shown in Table 133.

TABLE 133
Frequencies for Outcome Options Resulting from Decisions Made by Sample (Making a Positive Difference in Your Community)

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Extremely Bad	40	1.3
(-2)	20	.7
(-1)	35	1.2
(0)	100	3.3
(1)	336	11.1
(2)	678	22.5
(3) Extremely Good	1806	59.9
Don't Know / Refused	2	.1
Total	3017	100.0

The frequencies of the responses for the “having a lifestyle that is attractive to you” outcome option, which may be a result of the decisions made by the sample, are shown in Table 134.

TABLE 134
Frequencies for Outcome Options Resulting from Decisions Made by Sample (Having a Lifestyle that is Attractive to You)

Scale	Frequency	Percentage of Sample
(-3) Extremely Bad	55	1.8
(-2)	25	.8
(-1)	40	1.3
(0)	83	2.8
(1)	241	8.0
(2)	628	20.8
(3) Extremely Good	1945	64.5
Total	3017	100.0

The bar graph in Figure 8 depicts the frequency counts for the response “extremely good” to the question:

OUT – “Now, let’s think about the decisions you are currently making in your life. Suppose one of the options you have helps you to [RANDOMIZE AND READ LIST]. Using a scale where positive three means extremely good and negative three means extremely bad, how do you rate that option?”

- A. Earning money for college
- B. Having a good paying job that allows you to live comfortably
- C. Having job security
- D. Having a job that makes you happy
- E. Learning a valuable trade or skill
- F. Preparing for a future career
- G. Training in cutting edge technology
- H. Not going to college immediately after high school
- I. Making a positive difference in your community
- J. Having a lifestyle that is attractive to you

Figure 8 shows that when making decisions in their lives, these respondents appear to favor the outcome options of having a job that makes you happy and having a good paying job over the other options on the list. The options of earning money for college and having an attractive lifestyle also had high response rates, followed by: preparing for a future career, having job security, making a positive difference in the community, learning a valuable trade or skill and training in cutting edge technology. The outcome option of not going to college immediately after high school does not appear to be of considerable importance to this group.

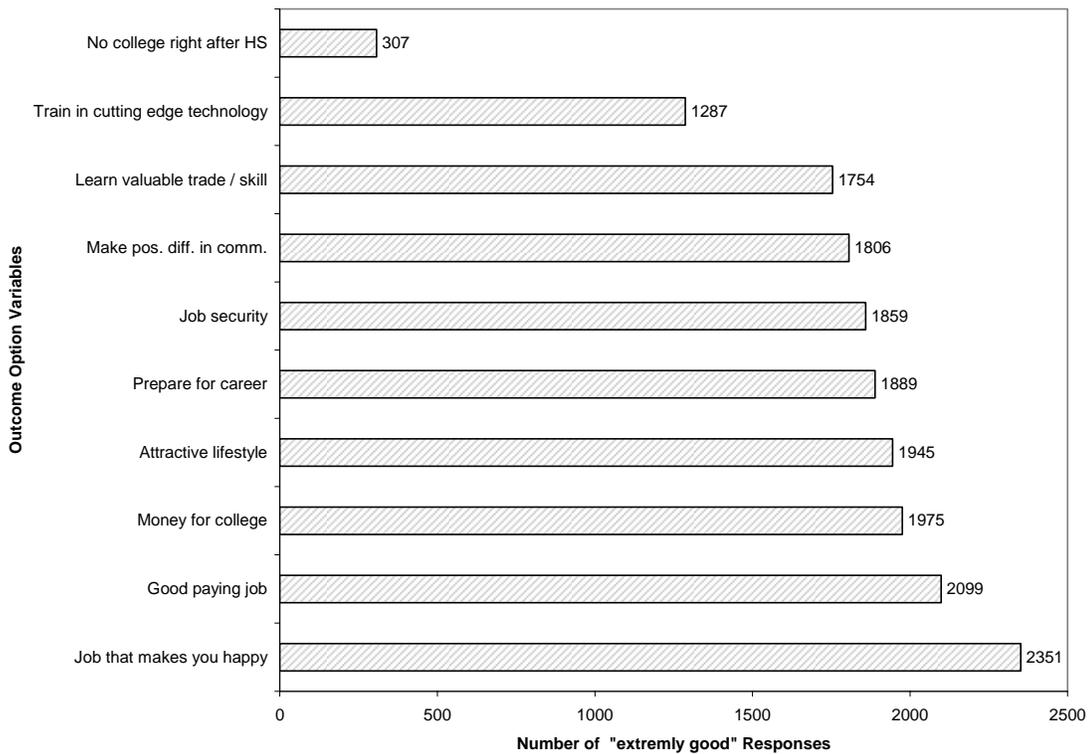


Figure 8. Frequency of Responses of the "Extremely Good" Response for Each Outcome Option Variable

Influence of Outcome Options on the Decision for Full-Time or Part-Time Schooling

To determine if the strength of influence of these outcome options has a significant effect on the decision to attend school, chi-square tests were conducted between the strength of influence options which could result from decisions made about attending school full-time or part-time. The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of money for college, on decisions by full-time school, is shown in Table 135.

TABLE 135
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of Money for College on Decisions by Full-Time School

		No	Yes	Total
(-3)	Extremely Bad			
	Count	52	16	68
	Expected Count	35.3	32.7	68.0
(-2)	Count	17	8	25
	Expected Count	13.0	12.0	25.0
(-1)	Count	21	15	36
	Expected Count	18.7	17.3	36.0
(0)	Count	66	51	117
	Expected Count	60.7	56.3	117.0
(1)	Count	151	104	255
	Expected Count	132.4	122.6	255.0
(2)	Count	270	270	540
	Expected Count	280.3	259.7	540.0
(3)	Extremely Good			
	Count	988	987	1975
	Expected Count	1025.1	949.9	1975.0
	Don't Know / Refused			
	Count	1	0	1
	Expected Count	.5	.5	1.0
Total	Count	1566	1451	3017
	Expected Count	1566.0	1451.0	3017.0

The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 136, and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 137. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of influence of money for college on decisions by full-time school with $\chi^2(7) = 30.546, p=.000$. Cramer's $\phi = .101$, which indicates a small relationship between the strength of influence of money for college on decisions by full-time school. The results of the chi-square test indicate that there is a significant relationship between the strength of influence of money for college and the decision to go to school full-time.

A closer examination of the frequency counts, however, reveals that the number of "no" responses and the number of "yes" responses are almost equal, differing only by one response. This appears to indicate that just as many respondents appear to be influenced by getting money for college because of their decision, as there are respondents who are not influenced by getting money for college because of their decisions.

TABLE 136
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of Money for College on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	30.546 ^a	7	.000
Likelihood Ratio	32.029	7	.000
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .48.

TABLE 137
Effect Size: Strength of Influence of Money for College on Decisions by Full-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by			
Nominal	Cramer's V	.101	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.100	.000
N of Valid Cases		3017	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

TABLE 138
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of Money for College on Decisions by Part-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		59	9	68
	Expected Count		58.3	9.7	68.0
(-2)	Count		21	4	25
	Expected Count		21.4	3.6	25.0
(-1)	Count		29	7	36
	Expected Count		30.9	5.1	36.0
(0)	Count		108	9	117
	Expected Count		100.3	16.7	117.0
(1)	Count		216	39	255
	Expected Count		218.7	39.3	255.0
(2)	Count		466	74	540
	Expected Count		463.0	77.0	540.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		1687	288	1975
	Expected Count		1693.5	281.5	1975.0
Don't Know Refused	Count		1	0	1
	Expected Count		.9	.1	1.0
Total	Count		2587	430	3017
	Expected Count		2587.0	430.0	3017.0

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of money for college on decisions by part-time school is shown in Table 138. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 139. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the influence of money for college and the decision to attend school part-time.

TABLE 139
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of Money for College on Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.736 ^a	7	.571
Likelihood Ratio	6.507	7	.482
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 3 cells (18.8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of having a good paying job on decisions by full-time school is shown in Table 140. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 141. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the influence of having a good paying job and the decision to attend school full-time.

TABLE 140
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of a Good Paying Job on Decisions by Full-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		19	16	35
	Expected Count		18.2	16.8	35.0
(-2)	Count		6	6	12
	Expected Count		6.2	5.8	12.0
(-1)	Count		15	11	26
	Expected Count		13.5	12.5	26.0
(0)	Count		39	24	63
	Expected Count		32.7	30.3	63.0
(1)	Count		112	103	215
	Expected Count		111.6	103.4	215.0
(2)	Count		264	303	567
	Expected Count		294.3	272.7	567.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		1111	988	2099
	Expected Count		1089.5	1009.5	2099.0
Total	Count		1566	1451	3017
	Expected Count		1566.0	1451.0	3017.0

TABLE 141
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of a Good Paying Job on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.342 ^a	6	.111
Likelihood Ratio	10.370	6	.110
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.77.

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of having a good paying job on decisions by part-time school is shown in Table 142. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 143. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the influence of having a good paying job and the decision to attend school part-time.

TABLE 142
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of a Good Paying Job on Decisions by Part-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		34	1	35
	Expected Count		30.0	5.0	35.0
(-2)	Count		10	2	12
	Expected Count		10.3	1.7	12.0
(-1)	Count		20	6	26
	Expected Count		22.3	3.7	26.0
(0)	Count		59	4	63
	Expected Count		54.0	9.0	63.0
(1)	Count		178	37	215
	Expected Count		184.4	30.6	215.0
(2)	Count		494	73	567
	Expected Count		486.2	80.8	567.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		1792	307	2099
	Expected Count		1799.8	299.2	2099.0
Total	Count		2587	430	3017
	Expected Count		2587.0	430.0	3017.0

TABLE 143
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of a Good Paying Job on Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.311 ^a	6	.079
Likelihood Ratio	13.300	6	.039
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 3 cells (21.4%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.71.

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of job security on decisions by full-time school is shown in Table 144. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 145, and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 146. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of influence of job security on decisions

by full-time school with $\chi^2(7) = 22.066$, $p = .002$. Cramer's $\phi = .086$, which indicates a small relationship between the strength influence of job security on decisions for full-time school. A closer examination of the frequency counts, however, reveals that the number of "no" responses is higher than the number of "yes" responses, although not by a large margin, which appears to indicate that there are just as many respondents who think that a decision resulting in job security is extremely good as those who feel that this decision is not extremely good.

TABLE 144
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of Job Security on Decisions by Full-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		33	20	53
	Expected Count		27.5	25.5	53.0
(-2)	Count		9	10	19
	Expected Count		9.9	9.1	19.0
(-1)	Count		23	10	33
	Expected Count		17.1	15.9	33.0
(0)	Count		55	48	103
	Expected Count		53.5	49.5	103.0
(1)	Count		117	153	270
	Expected Count		140.1	129.9	270.0
(2)	Count		328	351	679
	Expected Count		352.4	326.6	679.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		1001	858	1859
	Expected Count		964.9	894.1	1859.0
Don't Know / Refused	Count		0	1	1
	Expected Count		.5	.5	1.0
Total	Count		1566	1451	3017
	Expected Count		1566.0	1451.0	3017.0

TABLE 145
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of Job Security on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	22.066 ^a	7	.002
Likelihood Ratio	22.619	7	.002
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .48.

TABLE 146
Effect Size: Strength of Influence of Job Security on Decisions by Full-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	.086	.002
	Contingency Coefficient	.085	.002
N of Valid Cases		3017	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of having job security on decisions by part-time school is shown in Table 147. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 148. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the influence of job security and the decision to attend school part-time.

TABLE 147
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of Job Security on Decisions by Part-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		45	8	53
	Expected Count		45.4	7.6	53.0
(-2)	Count		15	4	19
	Expected Count		16.3	2.7	19.0
(-1)	Count		23	10	33
	Expected Count		28.3	4.7	33.0
(0)	Count		93	10	103
	Expected Count		88.3	14.7	103.0
(1)	Count		237	33	270
	Expected Count		231.5	38.5	270.0
(2)	Count		576	103	679
	Expected Count		582.2	96.8	679.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		1597	262	1859
	Expected Count		1597.0	265.0	1859.0
Don't Know / Refused	Count		1	0	1
	Expected Count		.9	.1	1.0
Total	Count		2587	430	3017
	Expected Count		2587.0	430.0	3017.0

TABLE 148
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of Job Security on Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.028 ^a	7	.137
Likelihood Ratio	9.905	7	.194
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 4 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of having a job that makes you happy on decisions by full-time school is shown in Table 149. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 150. There does not appear to be a significant

relationship between the influence of having a job that makes you happy and the decision to attend school full-time.

TABLE 149
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of a Job that Makes You Happy on Decisions by Full-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		26	12	38
	Expected Count		19.7	18.3	38.0
(-2)	Count		6	9	15
	Expected Count		7.8	7.2	15.0
(-1)	Count		9	12	21
	Expected Count		10.9	10.1	21.0
(0)	Count		26	26	52
	Expected Count		27.0	25.0	52.0
(1)	Count		80	75	155
	Expected Count		80.5	74.5	155.0
(2)	Count		198	186	384
	Expected Count		199.3	184.7	384.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		1221	1130	2351
	Expected Count		1220.3	1130.7	2351.0
Don't Know / Refused	Count		0	1	1
	Expected Count		.5	.5	1.0
Total	Count		1566	1451	3017
	Expected Count		1566.0	1451.0	3017.0

TABLE 150
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of a Job that Makes You Happy on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.872 ^a	7	.442
Likelihood Ratio	7.377	7	.391
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .48.

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of having a job that makes you happy on decisions by part-time school is shown in Table 151. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 152. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the influence of having a job that makes you happy and the decision to attend school part-time.

TABLE 151
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of a Job that Makes You Happy on Decisions by Part-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		33	5	38
	Expected Count		32.6	5.4	38.0
(-2)	Count		13	2	15
	Expected Count		12.9	2.1	15.0
(-1)	Count		17	4	21
	Expected Count		18.0	3.0	21.0
(0)	Count		47	5	52
	Expected Count		44.6	7.4	52.0
(1)	Count		127	28	155
	Expected Count		132.9	22.1	155.0
(2)	Count		317	67	384
	Expected Count		329.3	54.7	384.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		2032	319	2351
	Expected Count		2015.9	335.1	2351.0
Don't Know / Refused	Count		1	0	1
	Expected Count		.9	.1	1.0
Total	Count		2587	430	3017
	Expected Count		2587.0	430.0	3017.0

TABLE 152

Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of a Job that Makes You Happy on Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.475 ^a	7	.381
Likelihood Ratio	7.398	7	.389
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 4 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of learning a valuable skill or trade on decisions by full-time school is shown in Table 153. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 154, and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 155. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of influence of learning a valuable skill or trade on decisions by full-time school with $\chi^2(7) = 15.200$, $p = .034$. Cramer's $\phi = .071$, which indicates a small relationship between the strength of influence variable of job security on decisions of full-time school. A closer examination of the frequency counts, however, reveals that the number of "no" responses is higher than the number of "yes" responses, although not by a large margin, which appears to indicate that there are just as many respondents who think that a decision resulting in learning a valuable skill or trade is extremely good as those who feel that this decision is not extremely good.

TABLE 153

Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of Learning Valuable Skill or Trade on Decisions by Full-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		27	11	38
	Expected Count		19.7	18.3	38.0
(-2)	Count		6	3	9
	Expected Count		4.7	4.3	9.0
(-1)	Count		11	16	27
	Expected Count		14.0	13.0	27.0
(0)	Count		41	43	84
	Expected Count		43.6	40.4	84.0
(1)	Count		162	178	340
	Expected Count		176.5	163.5	340.0
(2)	Count		379	385	764
	Expected Count		396.6	367.4	764.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		940	814	1754
	Expected Count		910.4	843.6	1754.0
Don't Know	Count		0	1	1
	Expected Count		.5	.5	1.0
Total	Count		1566	1451	3017
	Expected Count		1566.0	1451.0	3017.0

TABLE 154

Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of Learning Valuable Skill or Trade on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.200 ^a	7	.034
Likelihood Ratio	15.811	7	.027
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 4 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .48.

TABLE 155
Effect Size: Strength of Influence of Learning Valuable Skill or Trade on Decisions by Full-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	.071	.034
	Contingency Coefficient	.071	.034
N of Valid Cases		3017	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis

TABLE 156
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of Learning Valuable Skill or Trade on Decisions by Part-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		32	6	38
	Expected Count		32.6	5.4	38.0
(-2)	Count		8	1	9
	Expected Count		7.7	1.3	9.0
(-1)	Count		23	4	27
	Expected Count		23.2	3.8	27.0
(0)	Count		72	12	84
	Expected Count		72.0	12.0	84.0
(1)	Count		301	39	340
	Expected Count		291.5	48.5	340.0
(2)	Count		645	119	764
	Expected Count		655.1	108.9	764.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		1505	249	1754
	Expected Count		1504.0	250.0	1754.0
Don't Know Refused	Count		1	0	1
	Expected Count		.9	.1	1.0
Total	Count		2587	430	3017
	Expected Count		2587.0	430.0	3017.0

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of learning a valuable skill or trade on decisions by part-time school is shown in Table 156. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 157. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the influence of learning a valuable skill or trade and the decision to attend school part-time.

TABLE 157
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of Learning Valuable Skill or Trade on Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.572 ^a	7	.828
Likelihood Ratio	3.819	7	.800
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 4 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of preparing for a career on decisions by full-time school is shown in Table 158. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 159. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the influence of preparing for a career and the decision to attend school full-time.

TABLE 158

Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of Preparing for a Career on Decisions by Full-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		22	9	31
	Expected Count		16.1	14.9	31.0
(-2)	Count		8	13	21
	Expected Count		10.9	10.1	21.0
(-1)	Count		11	9	20
	Expected Count		10.4	9.6	20.0
(0)	Count		44	27	71
	Expected Count		36.9	34.1	71.0
(1)	Count		142	128	270
	Expected Count		140.1	129.9	270.0
(2)	Count		358	355	713
	Expected Count		370.1	342.9	713.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		979	910	1889
	Expected Count		980.5	908.5	1889.0
Don't Know	Count		2	0	2
	Expected Count		1.0	1.0	2.0
Total	Count		1566	1451	3017
	Expected Count		1566.0	1451.0	3017.0

TABLE 159

Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of Preparing for a Career on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.805 ^a	7	.107
Likelihood Ratio	12.784	7	.078
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .96.

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence variable of preparing for a career on decisions by part-time school is shown in Table 160. The responses for “don’t know / refused” were removed to avoid having more than 20% of cells with an expected count less than 5. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 161. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the strength of influence of preparing for a career and the decision to attend school part-time school.

TABLE 160
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of Preparing for a Career on Decisions by Part-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		28	3	31
	Expected Count		26.6	4.4	31.0
(-2)	Count		19	2	21
	Expected Count		18.0	3.0	21.0
(-1)	Count		17	3	20
	Expected Count		17.2	2.8	20.0
(0)	Count		64	7	71
	Expected Count		60.9	10.1	71.0
(1)	Count		236	34	270
	Expected Count		231.7	38.3	270.0
(2)	Count		608	105	713
	Expected Count		611.8	101.2	713.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		1615	274	1889
	Expected Count		1620.8	268.2	1889.0
Total	Count		2587	428	3015
	Expected Count		2587.0	428.0	3015.0

TABLE 161
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of Preparing for a Career on Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.886 ^a	6	.823
Likelihood Ratio	3.110	6	.795
N of Valid Cases	3015		

a. 3 cells (21.4%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.84.

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of training in cutting edge technology by full-time school is shown in Table 162. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 163, and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 164. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of influence of training in cutting edge technology and the decision to attend school full-time with $\chi^2(7) = 18.397$, $p = .010$. Cramer's $\phi = .078$, which indicates a small relationship between the strength influence of training in cutting edge technology and the decision to attend school full-time. A closer examination of the frequency counts, however, reveals that the number of "no" responses is higher than the number of "yes" responses, although not by a large margin, which appears to indicate that there are just as many respondents who think that a decision resulting in training in cutting edge technology is extremely good as those who feel that this decision is not extremely good.

TABLE 162

Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of Training in Cutting Edge Technology on Decisions by Full-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		82	44	126
	Expected Count		65.4	60.6	126.0
(-2)	Count		32	26	58
	Expected Count		30.1	27.9	58.0
(-1)	Count		40	23	63
	Expected Count		32.7	30.3	63.0
(0)	Count		92	98	190
	Expected Count		98.6	91.4	190.0
(1)	Count		267	245	512
	Expected Count		265.8	246.2	512.0
(2)	Count		377	403	780
	Expected Count		404.9	375.1	780.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		675	612	1287
	Expected Count		668.0	619.0	1287.0
Don't Know	Count		1	0	1
	Expected Count		.5	.5	1.0
Total	Count		1566	1451	3017
	Expected Count		1566.0	1451.0	3017.0

TABLE 163

Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of Training in Cutting Edge Technology on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.397 ^a	7	.010
Likelihood Ratio	18.996	7	.008
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .48.

TABLE 164

Effect Size: Strength of Influence of Training in Cutting Edge Technology on Decisions by Full-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	.078	.010
	Contingency Coefficient	.078	.010
N of Valid Cases		3017	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of training in cutting edge technology by part-time school is shown in Table 165. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 166, and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 167. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of influence of training in cutting edge technology on decisions by part-time school with $\chi^2(7) = 16.728, p=.019$. Cramer's $\phi = .074$, which indicates a small relationship between the strength influence of training in cutting edge technology and the decision to attend school part-time. A closer examination of the frequency counts, however, reveals that the number of "no" responses is much higher than the number of "yes" responses. This seems to indicate that more respondents appear not to be influenced by training in cutting edge technology than respondents who are influenced by training in cutting edge technology because of decisions they make.

TABLE 165

Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of Training in Cutting Edge Technology on Decisions by Part-Time School

		No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count	100	26	126
	Expected Count	108.0	18.0	126.0
(-2)	Count	47	11	58
	Expected Count	49.7	8.3	58.0
(-1)	Count	49	14	63
	Expected Count	54.0	9.0	63.0
(0)	Count	171	19	190
	Expected Count	162.9	27.1	190.0
(1)	Count	438	74	512
	Expected Count	439.0	73.0	512.0
(2)	Count	655	125	780
	Expected Count	668.8	111.2	780.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count	1126	161	1287
	Expected Count	1103.6	183.4	1287.0
Don't Know	Count	1	0	1
	Expected Count	.9	.1	1.0
Total	Count	2587	430	3017
	Expected Count	2587.0	430.0	3017.0

TABLE 166

Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of Training in Cutting Edge Technology on Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.728 ^a	7	.019
Likelihood Ratio	16.290	7	.023
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.

TABLE 167

Effect Size: Strength of Influence of Training in Cutting Edge Technology on Decisions by Part-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Cramer's V	.074	.019
	Contingency Coefficient	.074	.019
N of Valid Cases		3017	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of not going to college immediately after high school by full-time school is shown in Table 168. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 169, and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 170. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of influence of not going to college immediately after high school on decisions by full-time school with $\chi^2(7) = 82.342, p = .000$. Cramer's $\phi = .165$, which indicates a small to medium relationship between the strength influence variable of not going to college immediately after high school and the decision to attend school full-time. A closer examination of the frequency counts, however, reveals that the frequency counts for the "extremely bad" response choice are higher than the "extremely good" response choice. This appears to indicate that not going to college immediately after high school is not a favorable action. The number of "yes" responses is higher than the number of "no" responses, although not by a large amount. This seems to indicate that just as many respondents have indicated that not going to college immediately after high school is not

an “extremely bad” option as those respondents indicating that not going to college immediately after high school is an “extremely bad” option.

TABLE 168

Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of Not Going to College Immediately After High School on Decisions by Full-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		433	515	948
	Expected Count		492.1	455.9	948.0
(-2)	Count		140	201	341
	Expected Count		177.0	164.0	341.0
(-1)	Count		144	159	303
	Expected Count		157.3	145.7	303.0
(0)	Count		210	172	382
	Expected Count		198.3	183.7	382.0
(1)	Count		244	183	427
	Expected Count		221.6	205.4	427.0
(2)	Count		177	113	290
	Expected Count		150.5	139.5	290.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		201	106	307
	Expected Count		159.4	147.6	307.0
Don't Know	Count		17	2	19
	Expected Count		9.9	9.1	19.0
Total	Count		1566	1451	3017
	Expected Count		1566.0	1451.0	3017.0

TABLE 169

Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of Not Going to College Immediately After High School on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	82.342 ^a	7	.000
Likelihood Ratio	84.641	7	.000
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.14.

TABLE 170
Effect Size: Strength of Influence of Not Going to College Immediately After High School on Decisions by Full-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by			
Nominal	Cramer's V	.165	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.163	.000
N of Valid Cases		3017	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of not going to college immediately after high school by part-time school is shown in Table 171. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 172, and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 173. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of influence of not going to college immediately after high school on decisions by part-time school with $\chi^2(7) = 33.718, p=.000$. Cramer's $\phi = .106$, which indicates a small relationship between the strength of influence of not going to college immediately after high school and the decision to attend school part-time. A closer examination of the frequency counts, however, reveals that the frequency counts for the "extremely bad" response choice are much higher than the "extremely good" response choice and the "no" response rate is much higher than the "yes" response rate. This appears to indicate that the respondents think not going to college immediately after high school is not a favorable option.

TABLE 171

Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of Not Going to College Immediately After High School on Decisions by Part-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		837	111	948
	Expected Count		812.9	135.1	948.0
(-2)	Count		306	35	341
	Expected Count		292.4	48.6	341.0
(-1)	Count		247	56	303
	Expected Count		259.8	43.2	303.0
(0)	Count		333	49	382
	Expected Count		327.6	54.4	382.0
(1)	Count		368	59	427
	Expected Count		366.1	60.9	427.0
(2)	Count		226	64	290
	Expected Count		248.7	41.3	290.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		252	55	307
	Expected Count		263.2	43.8	307.0
Don't Know	Count		18	1	19
	Expected Count		16.3	2.7	19.0
Total	Count		2587	430	3017
	Expected Count		2587.0	430.0	3017.0

TABLE 172

Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of Not Going to College Immediately After High School on Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	33.718 ^a	7	.000
Likelihood Ratio	32.492	7	.000
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 1 cell (6.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.71.

TABLE 173

Effect Size: Strength of Influence of Not Going to College Immediately After High School on Decisions by Part-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by			
Nominal	Cramer's V	.106	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.105	.000
N of Valid Cases		3017	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis

TABLE 174

Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of Making a Difference in the Community on Decisions by Full-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		26	14	40
	Expected Count		20.8	19.2	40.0
(-2)	Count		12	8	20
	Expected Count		10.4	9.6	20.0
(-1)	Count		22	13	35
	Expected Count		18.2	16.8	35.0
(0)	Count		59	41	100
	Expected Count		51.9	48.1	100.0
(1)	Count		173	163	336
	Expected Count		174.4	161.6	336.0
(2)	Count		338	340	678
	Expected Count		351.9	326.1	678.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		936	870	1806
	Expected Count		937.4	868.6	1806.0
Don't Know Refused	Count		0	2	2
	Expected Count		1.0	1.0	2.0
Total	Count		1566	1451	3017
	Expected Count		1566.0	1451.0	3017.0

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of making a difference in the community on decisions by full-time school is shown in Table 174. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 175. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the strength of influence of making a difference in the community and the decision to attend school full-time.

TABLE 175
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of Making a Difference in the Community on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.301 ^a	7	.172
Likelihood Ratio	11.164	7	.132
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .96.

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of making a difference in the community on decisions by part-time school is shown in Table 176. The responses for “don’t know / refused” were removed to avoid having more than 20% of cells with an expected count less than 5. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 177. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the strength of influence of making a difference in the community and the decision to attend school part-time.

TABLE 176

Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of Making a Difference in the Community on Decisions by Part-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		36	4	40
	Expected Count		34.3	5.7	40.0
(-2)	Count		15	5	20
	Expected Count		17.1	2.9	20.0
(-1)	Count		29	6	35
	Expected Count		30.0	5.0	35.0
(0)	Count		84	16	100
	Expected Count		85.7	14.3	100.0
(1)	Count		292	44	336
	Expected Count		288.1	47.9	336.0
(2)	Count		575	103	678
	Expected Count		581.3	96.7	678.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		1554	252	1806
	Expected Count		1548.4	257.6	1806.0
Total	Count		2587	430	3017
	Expected Count		2587.0	430.0	3017.0

TABLE 177

Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of Making a Difference in the Community on Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.959 ^a	6	.682
Likelihood Ratio	3.711	6	.716
N of Valid Cases	3015		

a. 2 cells (14.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.85.

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of having a lifestyle that is attractive to you by full-time school is shown in Table 178. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 179, and the results of the effect size are shown in Table 180. There appears to be a significant relationship between the strength of influence of having a lifestyle that is attractive to you on decisions by full-time school with $\chi^2(6) = 19.462$, $p = .003$. Cramer's $\phi = .080$, which indicates a small relationship between the strength of influence of having a lifestyle that is attractive and the decision to attend school full-time. A closer examination of the frequency counts, however, reveals that the number of

TABLE 178
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of Having a Lifestyle that is Attractive to You on Decisions by Full-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		39	16	55
	Expected Count		28.5	26.5	55.0
(-2)	Count		14	11	25
	Expected Count		13.0	12.0	25.0
(-1)	Count		17	23	40
	Expected Count		20.8	19.2	40.0
(0)	Count		48	35	83
	Expected Count		43.1	39.9	83.0
(1)	Count		129	112	241
	Expected Count		125.1	115.9	241.0
(2)	Count		291	337	628
	Expected Count		326.0	302.0	628.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		1028	917	1945
	Expected Count		1009.6	935.4	1945.0
Total	Count		1566	1451	3017
	Expected Count		1566.0	1451.0	3017.0

“no” responses is higher than the number of “yes” responses, although not by a large margin. This appears to indicate that there are just as many respondents who think that a decision resulting in having a lifestyle that is attractive is extremely good as those who feel that this decision is not extremely good.

TABLE 179
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of Having a Lifestyle that is Attractive to You on Decisions by Full-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.462 ^a	6	.003
Likelihood Ratio	19.755	6	.003
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 12.02.

TABLE 180
Effect Size: Strength of Influence of Having a Lifestyle that is Attractive to You on Decisions by Full-Time School

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by			
Nominal	Cramer's V	.080	.003
	Contingency Coefficient	.080	.003
N of Valid Cases		3017	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis

The cross tabulation for the strength of influence of having a lifestyle that is attractive to you on decisions by part-time school is shown in Table 181. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 182. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between the strength influence of having a lifestyle that is attractive and the decision to attend school part-time.

TABLE 181
Cross Tabulation: Strength of Influence of Having a Lifestyle that is Attractive to You on Decisions by Part-Time School

			No	Yes	Total
(-3) Extremely Bad	Count		43	12	55
	Expected Count		47.2	7.8	55.0
(-2)	Count		20	5	25
	Expected Count		21.4	3.6	25.0
(-1)	Count		32	8	40
	Expected Count		34.3	5.7	40.0
(0)	Count		71	12	83
	Expected Count		71.2	11.8	83.0
(1)	Count		200	41	241
	Expected Count		206.7	34.3	241.0
(2)	Count		535	93	628
	Expected Count		538.5	89.5	628.0
(3) Extremely Good	Count		1686	259	1945
	Expected Count		1667.8	277.2	1945.0
Total	Count		2587	430	3017
	Expected Count		2587.0	430.0	3017.0

TABLE 182
Chi-Square Test: Strength of Influence of Having a Lifestyle that is Attractive to You on
Decisions by Part-Time School

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.392 ^a	6	.286
Likelihood Ratio	6.879	6	.332
N of Valid Cases	3017		

a. 1 cell (7.1%) has expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.56.

A summary of the chi-square statistics and the Cramer's ϕ values for the variables from research question 4 are shown in Table 183. There were ten strength of influence variables tested against attending school full-time and attending school part-time. Only eight of the tests revealed a significant relationship. The strength of influence variables of earning money for college, having job security, learning a valuable skill or trade, training in cutting edge technology, not going to college immediately after high school, and having an attractive lifestyle showed a significant relationship when run against going to school full-time. The strength of influence variables of training in cutting edge technology and not going to college immediately after high school appear to indicate a significant relationship when run against going to school part-time.

TABLE 183
Summary Table of Chi-Square and Cramer's V Results for Variables from Research Question 4

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Strength of influence of money for college by full-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	30.546	7	.000*
Cramer's V	.101		.000*
Strength of influence of money for college by part-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	5.736	7	.571
Strength of influence of good paying job by full-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	10.342	6	.111
Strength of influence of good paying job by part-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	11.311	6	.079
Strength of influence of job security by full-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	22.066	7	.002*
Cramer's V	.086		.002*
Strength of influence of job security by part-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	11.028	7	.137
Strength of influence of job that makes you happy by full-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	6.872	7	.442
Strength of influence of job that makes you happy by part-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	7.475	7	.381
Strength of influence of learning valuable skill or trade by full-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	15.200	7	.034*
Cramer's V	.071		.034*
Strength of influence of learning valuable skill or trade by part-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	3.572	7	.828
Strength of influence of preparing for a career by full-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	11.805	7	.107
Strength of influence of preparing for a career by part-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	2.886	6	.823
Strength of influence of training in cutting edge technology by full-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	18.397	7	.010*
Cramer's V	0.78		.010*
Strength of influence of training in cutting edge technology by part-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	16.728	7	.019*
Cramer's V	.074		.019*
Strength of influence of not going to college immediately after HS by full-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	82.342	7	.000*
Cramer's V	.165		.000*
Strength of influence of not going to college immediately after HS by part-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	33.718	7	.000*
Cramer's V	.106		.000*
Strength of influence of making difference in community by full-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	10.301	7	.172

TABLE 183 (Continued)

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig (2-sided)
Strength of influence of making difference in community by part-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	3.959	6	.682
Strength of influence of having attractive lifestyle by full-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	19.462	6	.003*
Cramer's V	.080		.003*
Strength of influence of having attractive lifestyle by part-time school			
Pearson Chi-Square	7.392	6	.286

* Significant at the .05 level

*Summary of Findings for Influence of Outcome Options on the Decision to Attend School
Full-Time or Part-Time*

There were ten outcome options examined against the decision to attend school full-time and part-time. Those outcome options were earning money for college, having a good paying job that allows you to live comfortably, having job security, having a job that makes you happy, learning a valuable trade or skill, preparing for a future career, training in cutting edge technology, not going to college immediately after high school, making a positive difference in your community, and having a lifestyle that is attractive to you. While many of the chi-square tests appeared to indicate a significant relationship between these comparisons, examination of the frequency counts for the “yes” and “no” response rates on the “extremely good” questionnaire choice revealed that there does not appear to be a significant influence on the decision to attend school either full-time or part-time from any of these outcome options. In most cases, there were just as many respondents who seem not to be influenced by these options as respondents who seem to

be influenced by these options when making a decision to attend school either full-time or part-time. In some cases there were more respondents who seem not to be influenced by these options than respondents who do seem to be influenced by these options. There does not appear to be a significant influence of the ten outcome options on the decision to attend school either full-time or part-time.

Influence of Outcome Options on the Type of School or College to Attend

Factor analysis was used to examine any observed correlation among the strength of influence variables (earning money for college, having a good paying job, having job security, having a job that makes you happy, learning a valuable skill or trade, preparing for a future career, training in cutting edge technology, not going to college immediately after high school, making a positive difference in the community, and having a lifestyle that is attractive to you) and the type of school or college to attend. To reiterate, factor analysis provides an empirical basis for reducing all of these variables to a few factors by combining variables that are moderately or highly correlated with each other (Gall, Borg and Gall, 1996). Once again, to be considered suitable for factor analysis the correlation matrix should show at least some correlations of $r = .3$ or greater, the Bartlett's test of sphericity should be statistically significant at $p < .05$, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value should be $.6$ or above (Pallant, 2005).

The dependent variable, obtained from the question "Type of school or college you would like to attend?", consisted of the following responses: high school; vocational, business, or trade school; 2-year junior or community college; 4-year college or university; and graduate or professional school. The responses for high school were

not used in the factor analysis since the primary interest in this study was the post-secondary education plans of 16-21 year old youth in the United States.

Vocational, Business, or Trade School

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's test are shown in Table 184 and indicate that factor analysis is suitable for this data set. Examination of Table 185 for eigenvalues greater than one revealed that there were three components with eigenvalues greater than one. Examining the scree plot in Figure 9 shows a distinct change in the shape of the plot at the 2nd component; however, three components were extracted based on the results of the total variance explained matrix. These components were identified as job-satisfaction / preparing for a future, self-satisfaction / preparing for a future, and preparing for a future. Many of the factors appeared to cross over between clear component distinctions; therefore, the first two components were grouped as dual categories.

TABLE 184
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Test: Factors Influencing Kind of School of College to Attend (Vocational, Business, or Trade School)

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		
		.793
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	271.101
	df	45
	Sig.	.000

a. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (vocational, business, or trade school) are used in the analysis phase.

TABLE 185

Total Variance Explained^a: Factors Influencing Kind of School or College to Attend (Vocational, Business, or Trade School)

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cum %	Total	% of Variance	Cum %
Attractive Lifestyle	3.127	31.273	31.273	3.127	31.273	31.273
Prepare for Career	1.261	12.613	43.885	1.261	12.613	43.885
Money for College	1.040	10.395	54.280	1.040	10.395	54.280
Train in Cutting Edge Tech	.982	9.823	64.103			
Job that Makes You Happy	.795	7.951	72.054			
Learn Valuable Trade / Skill	.660	6.597	78.650			
Make Pos. Diff. in Comm.	.614	6.137	84.787			
Job Security	.556	5.555	90.342			
Good Paying Job	.500	4.999	95.341			
No College Right Out of HS	.466	4.659	100.00			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

a. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (vocational, business, or trade school) are used in the analysis phase.

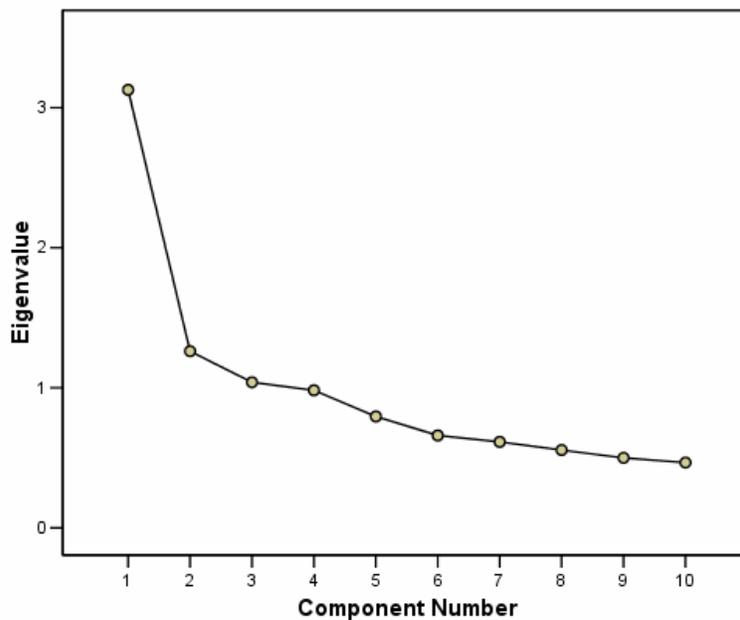


Figure 9. Scree Plot for Factors Influencing Kind of School or College to Attend (Vocational, Business or Trade School)

The rotated component matrix is shown in Table 186. The variables of earning money for college, training in cutting edge technology, making a positive difference in the community, having a good paying job, job security, having a job that makes you happy, and learning a valuable trade or skill loaded on the job-satisfaction / preparing for a future component; having an attractive lifestyle, having a job that makes you happy, and learning a valuable trade or skill loaded on the self-satisfaction / preparing for a future component; and training in cutting edge technology, preparing for a career and not going to college immediately after high school loaded on the preparing for a future component. The variables of having a job that makes you happy and learning a valuable trade or skill double loaded on the job-satisfaction / preparing for a future component and the self-satisfaction / preparing for a future component, and the variables training in cutting edge technology double loaded on the job-satisfaction / preparing for a future component and the preparing for a future component. The factors categorized into the “prepare for the future component” (earning money for college, training in cutting edge technology, learning a valuable trade or skill, and preparing for a career) loaded across all three components which prompted the dual component labels. It is possible that the respondents in this sample view vocational, business, or trade school as a viable means to prepare for a future. It also appears that they may have a strong sense that this post-secondary education option will lead to job-satisfaction based on the strong loadings for a majority of these factors.

TABLE 186
 Rotated Component Matrix ^{a,b}: Factors Influencing Kind of School or College to Attend
 (Vocational, Business, or Trade School)

	Component		
	Job-satisfaction/ Prepare for Future	Self-Satisfaction/ Prepare for Future	Prepare for a Future
Money for College	.796		
Train in Cutting Edge Tech.	.677		-.377
Make Pos. Diff. in Comm.	.634		
Good Paying Job	.588		
Job Security	.587		
Having an Attractive Lifestyle		.843	
Having Job that Makes You Happy	.327	.663	
Learn Valuable Trade / Skill	.440	.559	
Prepare for a Career			.826
No College Right Out of HS			.590

Extraction Method: principal component analysis

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

b. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (vocational, business, or trade school) are used in the analysis phase.

The items with the highest loadings on the job-satisfaction / preparing for a future component were earning money for college, training in cutting edge technology and making a positive difference in the community. Having a good paying job and having job security also loaded high on this component. Training in cutting edge technology double loaded on the prepare for a future component. The items with the highest loadings on the self-satisfaction / preparing for a future component were having an attractive lifestyle, having a job that makes you happy, and learning a valuable trade or skill. Preparing for a career and not going to college right after high school loaded on the prepare for a future component. It should be noted that having a job that makes you

happy and learning a valuable trade or skill double loaded on the job-satisfaction / prepare for a future component and the self-satisfaction / prepare for a future component.

2-Year Junior or Community College

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's test are shown in Table 187 and indicate that factor analysis is suitable for this data set. Examination of Table 188 for eigenvalues greater than one revealed that there were three components with eigenvalues greater than one. Examination of the scree plot in Figure 10 revealed a distinct change in the shape of the plot at the 3rd component therefore three factors were extracted. These components were identified as job-satisfaction, self-satisfaction, and preparing for a future.

TABLE 187

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Test: Factors Influencing Kind of School or College to Attend (2-Year Junior or Community College)

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy			.728
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square		1218.854
	df		45
	Sig.		.000

a. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (2-year junior or community college) are used in the analysis phase.

TABLE 188

Total Variance Explained^a: Factors Influencing Kind of School or College to Attend (2-Year Junior or Community College)

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cum %	Total	% of Variance	Cum %
No College Right Out of HS	3.316	33.162	33.162	3.316	33.162	33.162
Job that Makes You Happy	1.913	19.131	52.293	1.913	19.131	55.293
Prepare for Career	1.001	10.012	62.306	1.001	10.012	62.306
Money for College	.919	9.187	71.492			
Job Security	.772	7.717	79.209			
Good Paying Job	.646	6.463	85.672			
Make Pos. Diff. in Comm.	.521	5.207	90.879			
Learn Valuable Trade / Skill	.427	4.271	95.150			
Attractive Lifestyle	.406	4.057	99.207			
Train in Cutting Edge Tech	.079	.793	100.00			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

a. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (2-year junior or community college) are used in the analysis phase.

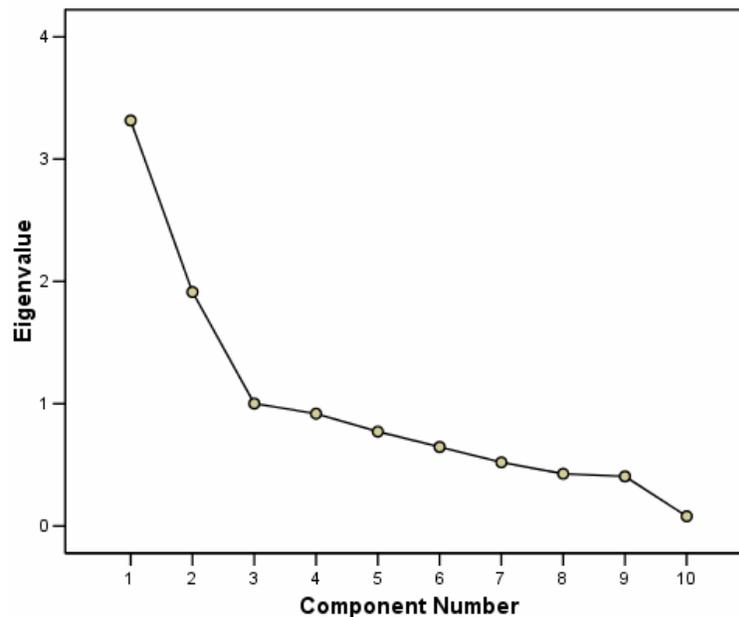


Figure 10. Scree Plot for Factors Influencing Kind of School or College to Attend (2-Year Junior or Community College)

The rotated component matrix is shown in Table 189. The variables of earning money for college, having a good paying job, having job security, having an attractive lifestyle, making a positive difference in the community, training in cutting edge technology, and learning a valuable trade or skill loaded on the job-satisfaction component; not going to college immediately after high school and having a job that makes you happy loaded on the self-satisfaction component; and making a positive difference in the community, training in cutting edge technology, preparing for a career

TABLE 189
Rotated Component Matrix ^{a,b}: Factors Influencing Kind of School or College to Attend (2-Year Junior or Community College)

	Component		
	Job-satisfaction	Self-Satisfaction	Prepare for Future
Money for College	.786		
Good Paying Job	.777		
Job Security	.774		
Attractive Lifestyle	.677		
Make Pos. Diff. in Comm.	.560		.450
Train in Cutting Edge Tech	.439		.375
Not Go to College Directly Out of HS		.979	
Having Job that Makes You Happy		.974	
Prepare for a Career			.811
Learn Valuable Trade / Skill	.451		.529

Extraction Method: principal component analysis

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

a. Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

b. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (2-year junior or community college) are used in the analysis phase.

and learning a valuable trade or skill loaded on the preparing for a future component. The variables of making a positive difference in the community, training in cutting edge technology, and learning a valuable trade or skill double loaded on the job-satisfaction component and the self-satisfaction component. The double loadings indicate that these factors are correlated with both components.

The items with the highest loadings on the job-satisfaction component were earning money for college, having a good paying job, having job security, making a positive difference in the community, training in cutting edge technology, and learning a valuable trade or skill. The highest loading factors on the self-satisfaction component were not going to college immediately after high school and having a job that makes you happy; and the highest loading factors on the prepare for a future component were making a positive difference in the community, training in cutting edge technology, preparing for a future career, and learning a valuable trade or skill, which double loaded on the job-satisfaction component. Examining the factor loadings on each component reveals that the highest loadings are for not going to college directly out of high school and having a job that makes you happy, this can both be categorized as self-satisfaction factors. Some other factors with high loadings were earning money for college, having a good paying job, and having job security, which all loaded on the job-satisfaction component. There appears to be a correlation between making a decision to attend a 2-year junior or community college and factors relating to self-satisfaction and job-satisfaction. Choosing a 2-year junior or community college could be viewed as a post-secondary education option which would allow the student to work part-time while

attending a local, less expensive, and less rigorous alternative to a 4-year college or university. This post-education option may be viewed as a stepping stone for plans to attend a 4-year college or university later in their life when they have had an opportunity to establish themselves with employment options and completion of core university course requirements.

4-Year College or University

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's test are shown in Table 190 and indicate that factor analysis is suitable for this data set. Examination of Table 191 for eigenvalues greater than one revealed that there were three components with eigenvalues greater than one. Examination of the scree plot in Figure 11 shows a distinct change in the shape of the plot at the 3rd component; therefore, three factors were extracted. These components were identified as job-satisfaction, self-satisfaction, and preparing for a future.

TABLE 190

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Test: Factors Influencing Kind of School or College to Attend (4-Year College or University)

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.734
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2438.424
	df	45
	Sig.	.000

a. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (4-year college or university) are used in the analysis phase.

TABLE 191
Total Variance Explained^a: Factors Influencing Kind of School or College to Attend (4-Year College or University)

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cum %	Total	% of Variance	Cum %
Learn Valuable Trade / Skill	2.894	28.942	28.942	2.894	28.942	28.942
Make Pos. Diff. in Comm.	1.628	16.280	45.222	1.628	16.280	45.222
No College Right Out of HS	1.116	11.164	56.386	1.116	11.164	56.386
Job that Makes You Happy	.942	9.423	65.809			
Attractive Lifestyle	.811	8.112	73.922			
Good Paying Job	.693	6.933	80.854			
Prepare for Career	.608	6.085	86.939			
Money for College	.565	5.649	92.588			
Train in Cutting Edge Tech	.420	4.201	96.789			
Job Security	.321	3.211	100.00			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

a. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (4-year college or university) are used in the analysis phase.

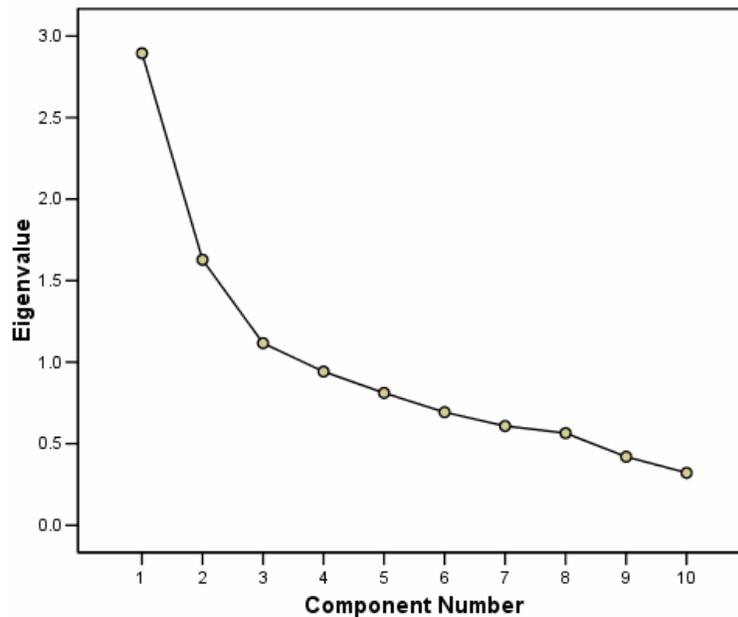


Figure 11. Scree Plot for Factors Influencing Kind of School or College to Attend (4-Year College or University)

The rotated component matrix is shown in Table 192. The variables of having a job that makes you happy, having a good paying job, having an attractive lifestyle, preparing for a career, earning money for college, and training in cutting edge technology loaded on the job-satisfaction component; learning a valuable trade or skill and making a positive difference in the community loaded on the self-satisfaction component; and earning money for college, not going to college immediately out of high school, and training in cutting edge technology loaded on the preparing for a future

TABLE 192

Rotated Component Matrix ^{a,b}: Factors Influencing Kind of School or College to Attend (4-Year College or University)

	Component		
	Job-satisfaction	Self-Satisfaction	Prepare for Future
Job that Makes You Happy	.788		
Good Paying Job	.744		
Attractive Lifestyle	.738		
Prepare for Career	.674		
Money for College	.566		.364
Learn Valuable Trade / Skill		.911	
Make Pos. Diff. in Comm.		.907	
No College Right Out of HS			.795
Train in Cutting Edge Tech	.345		.555
Job Security			

Extraction Method: principal component analysis

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

a. Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

b. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (4-year college or university) are used in the analysis phase.

component. The variables of earning money for college and training in cutting edge technology double loaded on the job-satisfaction component and the preparing for a future component. The having job security variable failed to load on any component.

The items with the highest loadings on the job-satisfaction component were having a job that makes you happy, having a good paying job, having an attractive lifestyle, preparing for a future career, earning money for college, and training in cutting edge technology, which double loaded on the preparing for a future component. The highest loading factors for the self-satisfaction component were learning a valuable trade or skill, and making a positive difference in the community. The highest loading factors on the preparing for a future component were not going to college immediately out of high school, training in cutting edge technology, which double loaded on the job-satisfaction component, and earning money for college, which double loaded on the job-satisfaction component. There appears to be a correlation between the decision to attend a 4-year college or university and the job-satisfaction component with the factors of having a job that makes you happy, and having a good paying job with the highest factor loadings. There also appears to be a correlation between the decision to attend a 4-year college or university and the self-satisfaction component with the making a positive difference in the community factor having a high loading. It should be noted that the learn a valuable trade or skill factor had a high loading and aligned itself with the making a difference in the community factor, which is categorized as a self-satisfaction type factor. It could be argued that component two should be labeled as the prepare for the future component and component three labeled the self-satisfaction component, since

factors from both categories loaded on these two components. In either case, there were factors from all three categories with high loadings, which indicates that these factors may be related in some manner and appear to indicate some level of importance to the respondents based on the high loadings.

Graduate or Professional School

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's test are shown in Table 193 and indicate that factor analysis is suitable for this data set. Examination of Table 194 for eigenvalues greater than one revealed that there were three components with eigenvalues greater than one. Examination of the scree plot in Figure 12 revealed a distinct change in the shape of the plot at the 2nd component; however, three factors were extracted based on the results of the total variance explained matrix. These components were identified as preparing for the future, job-satisfaction, and self-satisfaction.

TABLE 193
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Test: Factors Influencing Kind of School or College to Attend (Graduate or Professional School)

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.828
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	478.983
	df	45
	Sig.	.000

a. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend? = graduate or professional school are used in the analysis phase.

TABLE 194

Total Variance Explained^a: Factors Influencing Kind of School or College to Attend (Graduate or Professional School)

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cum %	Total	% of Variance	Cum %
Job that Makes You Happy	3.869	38.690	38.690	3.869	38.690	38.690
Prepare for Career	1.142	11.424	50.114	1.142	11.424	50.114
Learn Valuable Trade / Skill	1.123	11.230	61.344	1.123	11.230	61.344
Attractive Lifestyle	.925	9.254	70.597			
Job Security	.673	6.727	77.324			
Money for College	.616	6.165	83.488			
Train in Cutting Edge Tech	.547	5.468	88.956			
Good Paying Job	.472	4.718	93.674			
No College Right Out After HS	.333	3.329	97.003			
Make Pos. Diff. in Comm.	.300	2.997	100.00			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

a. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (graduate or professional school) are used in the analysis phase.

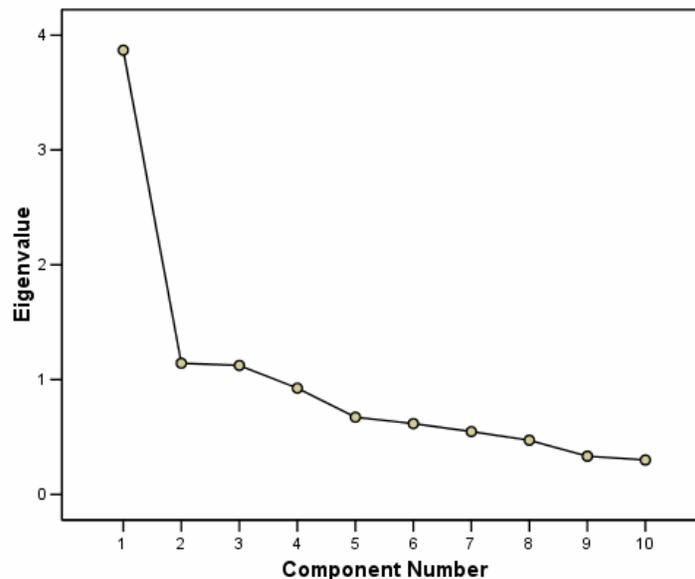


Figure 12. Scree Plot for Factors Influencing Kind of School or College to Attend (Graduate or Professional School)

The rotated component matrix is shown in Table 195. The variables of preparing for a career, learning a valuable trade or skill, earning money for college, having job security, having an attractive lifestyle, and making a positive difference in the community loaded on the preparing for the future component; preparing for a career, having a job that makes you happy, having an attractive lifestyle, having a good paying job, and making a positive difference in the community loaded on the job-satisfaction component; and having job security, not going to college immediately after high school, and training in cutting edge technology loaded on the self-satisfaction component. The

TABLE 195

Rotated Component Matrix ^{a,b}: Factors Influencing Kind of School or College to Attend (Graduate or Professional School)

	Component		
	Prepare for a Future	Job-satisfaction	Self-Satisfaction
Prepare for a Career	.802	.307	
Learn Valuable Trade / Skill	.794		
Money for College	.734		
Job Security	.670		-.416
Having Job that Makes You Happy		.871	
Having an Attractive Lifestyle	.426	.680	
Good Paying Job		.672	
Make Pos Diff in Community	.417	.522	
No College Right Out of HS			.687
Training in Cutting Edge Technology			.667

Extraction Method: principal component analysis

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

b. Only cases for which FPP5 Kind of school/college to attend (graduate or professional school).

variables of preparing for a career, having an attractive lifestyle, and making a positive difference in the community double loaded on the prepare for a future component and the job-satisfaction component. The variable for job security double loaded on the prepare for a future component and the self-satisfaction component.

The items with the highest loadings on the preparing for a future component were preparing for a future career which double loaded on the job-satisfaction component, learning a valuable trade or skill, earning money for college, having job security which double loaded on the self-satisfaction component, having an attractive lifestyle which double loaded on the job-satisfaction component, and making a difference in the community which double loaded on the job-satisfaction component. The highest loading factors on the self-satisfaction component were not going to college immediately after high school, training in cutting edge technology, and having job security which double loaded on the preparing for the future component. There appears to be a correlation between attending graduate or professional school and the preparing for the future factors of preparing for a career, learning a valuable trade or skill, and earning money for college. There also appears to be a correlation with job-satisfaction factors, with having a job that makes you happy and having a good paying job receiving high loadings. It does not appear to make sense that attending graduate or professional school would lead to earning money for college since once a graduate or professional degree is completed there would not be a need to earn money for college. This is possibly the result of the questionnaire design and may just be an indication that money for college is an

important factor for this sample, but it is probably not correlated with attending graduate or professional school.

Summary of Findings from the Influence of Outcome Options on the Type of School or College to Attend

The decision to attend vocational, business, or trade school appears to be correlated with factors associated with preparing for the future and with factors associated with job-satisfaction. This post-secondary education option could possibly be viewed as the first step in attaining higher level degrees for those individuals who are not prepared academically or financially to attend a 2-year junior or community college or a 4-year college or university.

The decision to attend a 2-year junior or community college appears to be correlated with factors associated with self-satisfaction and job-satisfaction. This post-secondary education option might be viewed as a means to work towards attending a 4-year college or university for those who are not academically or financially prepared.

The decision to attend a 4-year college or university appears to be correlated with factors associated with job-satisfaction and self-satisfaction, with these two components receiving the highest factor loadings. It could be postulated that the attainment of a 4-year college degree will lead to more job selection and higher paying jobs, and having job-satisfaction could lead to increased self-satisfaction.

The decision to attend graduate or professional school appears to be correlated with factors associated primarily with preparing for the future and job-satisfaction. The factors of preparing for a future career and learning a valuable trade or skill received

high loadings on the prepare for a future component, and having a job that makes you happy and having a good paying job received high loadings on the job-satisfaction component.

Summary of Major Findings for Research Question 4

The respondents in this survey were asked to rate the ten outcome options of (earn money for college, have a good paying job that allows you to live comfortably, have job security, have a job that makes you happy, learn a valuable trade or skill, prepare for a future career, train in cutting edge technology, not go to college immediately after high school, make a positive difference in your community, and have a lifestyle that is attractive to you) on a seven point scale of (-3) for “extremely bad” to (+ 3) for “extremely good”. The options receiving the highest frequencies for “extremely good” in descending order were having a job that makes you happy, having a good paying job, earn money for college, having an attractive lifestyle, prepare for a future career, having job security, make a positive difference in the community, learn a valuable skill, and train in cutting edge technology. Not go to college immediately after high school received the highest number of responses of “extremely bad”. The response rates for the “extremely good” choice appear to indicate that these respondents place some degree of importance on the nine options previously mentioned and it would also appear that this group feels that not going to college immediately after high school is not such a good option.

The ten outcome options were compared against the two future plan variables of going to school full-time and going to school-part time using the chi-square test to

determine the strength of influence these options may have on the decision to go to school full-time and part-time. While several of these tests were significant, it was determined, based on the actual frequency counts, that some of these options only influence half of the sample to attend school either full-time or part-time.

Factor analysis was used to examine any observed correlation among the strength of influence variables (earning money for college, having a good paying job, having job security, having a job that makes you happy, learning a valuable skill or trade, preparing for a future career, training in cutting edge technology, not going to college immediately after high school, making a positive difference in the community, and having a lifestyle that is attractive to you). The decision to attend vocational, business, or trade school appears to be correlated with factors associated with preparing for a future and with factors associated with job-satisfaction. The decision to attend a 2-year junior or community college appears to be correlated with factors associated with self-satisfaction and job-satisfaction. The decision to attend a 4-year college or university appears to be correlated with factors associated with job-satisfaction and self-satisfaction. The decision to attend graduate or professional school appears to be correlated with factors associated with preparing for a future and with factors associated with job-satisfaction.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main interest for this study was a desire to learn the importance of post-secondary education to 16-21 year olds in the United States, during the period October 15 to November 25, 2003. There was an additional curiosity to learn what motivates 16-21 year old high school and college age youth to make their post-secondary education decisions. Knowing the answers to these questions would be beneficial in determining the best way to advertise and market to these individuals and to the people who influence them. This would be a tremendous benefit to post-secondary institutions and would enable them to create new programs and enhance existing programs, and could aid in enticing the 16-21 year old population to apply.

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the importance of post-secondary education in the future plans of 16-21 year old youth in the United States, during the period October 15 to November 25, 2003, by analyzing their responses to questions asked about what they think they may be doing in the near future. The literature review in Chapter II suggests that undergraduate enrollment at post-secondary education institutions is growing, and it is anticipated that it will continue to grow (Hoogstra, 2000; Snyder & Tan, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004). This indicates that there is a continuing interest in post-secondary education for this age group.

A secondary purpose of the study was to determine if selected individuals in their lives such as parents, siblings, extended family members, friends, teachers, or school

guidance counselors influence the decisions made about post-secondary education by 16-21 year old youth in the United States, during the period October 15 to November 25, 2003. The literature indicates that high school students are influenced most by their parents, followed by teachers and then guidance counselors (Barre, 1970; Lee & Ekstrom, 1987). A large number of high school age students are also highly influenced by their peers (Rathunde, Carroll & Huang, 2000).

In addition, selected outcome options such as earning money for college, having a good paying job, having job security, having a job that makes you happy, learning a valuable trade or skill, preparing for a future career, training in cutting edge technology, not going to college immediately after high school, making a positive difference in the community, and having a lifestyle that is attractive to you were analyzed to determine the effect they have on post-secondary education decisions made by 16-21 year old youth from the United States, during the period October 15 to November 25, 2003. The literature suggests that most college students decided to go to college to get a better job, gain a general education, make new friends, and make more money (Leana, 1990).

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. Do 16-21 year olds in the United States have an interest in attending some type of post-secondary education?
2. What type of post-secondary education are 16-21 year olds in the United States interested in attending?
3. Do selected individuals such as parents, siblings, extended family members, friends, teachers, or school guidance counselors influence the post-

secondary schooling decisions made by 16-21 year olds in the United States?

4. When making post-secondary education decisions, are options such as earning money for college, having a good paying job, having job security, having a job that makes you happy, learning a valuable trade or skill, preparing for a future career, training in cutting edge technology, not going to college immediately after high school, making a positive difference in the community, and having a lifestyle that is attractive to you important to 16-21 year olds in the United States?

This chapter provides a summary of the methodology used in this study to answer the research questions, a summary of the findings of this study, and conclusions based on these findings. In addition, there are some recommendations to the field, and some recommendations for future research.

Demographics

There was a relatively even split between genders of this sample with 47.1 percent of the sample being male and 52.9 percent of the sample being female. Half of the sample, 51.1 percent, was in the 16-17 year old age categories with the remainder of the sample in the age categories of 18-21. The smallest percentage of the sample (9.9 percent) was in the 21 year old category. A large majority of the sample, 59.1 percent, was White, Non-Hispanic; followed by Hispanic at 17.8 percent; Black, Non-Hispanic at 15.2 percent; and Other, Non-Hispanic at 7.9 percent. More than half of the sample or 62% reported that their usual grades in high school were B's or above, and 23.3%

percent of the sample reported that their usual grades made in high school were B's or C's. Only 13.1% of the sample reported that their usual grades in high school were C's or below.

The chi-square test for gender by ethnic category indicates that there does not appear to be a significant relationship between males and females within the four ethnic categories for this sample. There was a relatively equal distribution of genders within the ethnic categories. The White, Non-Hispanic category consisted of 49% males and 51% females. The Black, Non-Hispanic category consisted of 42% males and 58% females. The Hispanic category consisted of 46% males and 54% females, and the other Non-Hispanic category consisted of 46% males and 54% females.

There also does not appear to be a significant relationship between males and females within the different age categories within this sample. There was a relatively equal distribution of genders within the various age categories. The 16 year olds consisted of 47% males and 53% females. The 17 year olds consisted of 47% males and 53% females. The 18 year olds consisted of 48% males and 52% females. The 19 year olds consisted of 50% males and 50% females. The 20 year olds consisted of 43% males and 57% females. The 21 year olds consisted of 45% males and 55% females.

There does not appear to be a significant relationship between ethnic category and age for this sample. The 16 year old age category consisted of 57% White, Non-Hispanic; 16% Black, Non-Hispanic; 18% Hispanic; and 9% Other, Non-Hispanic. The 17 year old age category consisted of 61% White, Non-Hispanic; 16% Black, Non-Hispanic; 16% Hispanic; and 7% Other, Non-Hispanic. The 18 year old age category

consisted of 55% White, Non-Hispanic; 16% Black, Non-Hispanic; 20% Hispanic; and 9% Other, Non-Hispanic. The 19 year old age category consisted of 60% White, Non-Hispanic; 14% Black, Non-Hispanic; 17 % Hispanic; and 9% Other, Non-Hispanic. The 20 year old age category consisted of 57% White, Non-Hispanic; 14% Black, Non-Hispanic; 19% Hispanic; and 10% Other, Non-Hispanic. The 21 year old age category consisted of 67% White, Non-Hispanic; 12% Black, Non-Hispanic; 14% Hispanic; and 7% other, Non-Hispanic.

The chi-square test for usual grades made in high school by gender indicates that there appears to be a significant relationship between gender and usual grades made in high school with females in the sample making higher grades than their male counterparts. There also appears to be a significant relationship between usual grades made in high school and age. The respondents in the 16-17 year old age groups made higher grades than the 18-21 year old age groups. In 2003, nearly 31% of 15-17 year olds were enrolled below the modal grade for their age due to late entry into school or to repeating grades after entering school; and 35% of boys enrolled in school were below modal grade, compared with 26% of girls (Shin, 2005). This could have an impact on grades made by high school students.

The chi-square test for usual grades made in high school by ethnic category indicates that there appears to be a significant relationship between the usual grades made in high school and ethnic category. The White, Non-Hispanic ethnic category reported higher grades made in high school which proved to be significantly higher than the usual grades made in high school reported by the other ethnic categories. Decades of

data on national trends in standardized tests in reading, mathematics, and science confirm the existence of achievement gaps for certain ethnic-minority student populations (Bennett, Bridglall, Cauce, Everson, Gordon, et al., 2004).

Research Question 1

Do 16-21 year olds in the United States have an interest in attending some form of post-secondary education? This research question was addressed with two questions from the questionnaire. Question FPP1 asked: “I’d like to ask you about your future. What do you think you might be doing – once you finish high school, once you finish college, or in the next few years?” depending on how they answered the question “What grade or year of school are you in?”. Question FPP8 asked: “What is the highest grade or year of school or college that you would eventually like to complete?”

To answer this research question four demographic variables were analyzed (gender, age, ethnicity and usual grades made in high school) against the dependent variable of future plans of going to school full-time or part-time. The same demographic variables were then analyzed against the maximum year of school the respondents indicated they eventually expected to complete.

A large percentage, 48.1% of the sample, responded “yes” to “Going to school full-time” and 14.3% of the sample responded “yes” to “Going to school part-time” when asked “What do you think you might be doing [once you finish high school], [once you finish college] or [in the next few years]? Therefore, a majority of the sample, or 62.4%, indicated that they would like to go to school full-time or part time. There is a definite interest in post-secondary education for the 16-21 year olds in the United States.

There was a significant relationship between gender and future plans of attending school full-time. The females in this sample were 1.22 times more likely to have plans of attending school full-time than their male counterparts. There was also a significant relationship between gender and future plans of attending school part-time. However, the response rates of “no” were much higher than the response rates of “yes” for both males and females. Males in the sample were 1.37 times more likely not to have plans of going to school part-time than females. There appears to be a much stronger desire to attend school full-time than part time for both males and females in the sample. In the fall of 2003, the proportion of 15-21 year old women enrolled in college was higher than that of 15-21 year men enrolled in college, 55.8% and 44.2% respectively (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003).

The 16-17 year old age category in this sample was much more likely to have plans of attending school full-time than the 18-21 year old categories. The odds ratios of 2.30, 1.84, 0.69, 0.33, 0.26 and 0.25 for 17, 16, 18, 19, 20, and 21 year olds respectively seem to indicate that the 17 and 16 year olds are much more likely to want to go to school full-time than the 18-21 year olds; and the desire to have future plans of going to school full-time seems to decrease with age. There did not appear to be a significant relationship between age and the desire to attend school part-time; however, examining the frequency tables for age and future plans of attending school part-time, there is a much higher response rate in each category for the “no” response than for the “yes” response to this question. For 18-24 year olds in 2003, 12 percent were in the “dropout

pool” which is the population that is no longer enrolled and has not completed high school (Shin, 2005).

There does not appear to be a significant relationship between ethnic category and the desire to attend school full-time, but there does appear to be a significant relationship between ethnic category and the future plans of attending school part-time. However, the response rate for the “no” response was much higher than the response rate for the “yes” response; therefore, it can be concluded that there is not a strong desire to attend school part-time for any of the ethnic categories. Intervening factors, such as financial resources, family obligations, and inadequate college preparedness, may affect some groups disproportionately more than others, resulting in differences in ultimate college completion rates (Shin, 2005).

There was a significant relationship between the usual grades made in high school and future plans of attending school full-time. Those reporting higher grades, mostly A’s and mostly A’s and B’s, indicated the highest number of “yes” responses to the plans of attending school full-time. So it can be concluded that those respondents with the highest grades had the most desire to attend school full-time.

There was also a significant relationship between the usual grades made in high school and future plans of attending school part-time. However, those reporting higher grades, mostly A’s and mostly A’s and B’s, indicated the highest number of “no” responses to future plans of attending school part-time. So it can be concluded that those respondents with the highest grades had the least desire to attend school part-time.

The respondents were asked “what is the highest grade or year of school or college that you would eventually like to complete?”, and 87.7% of the sample indicated that they would like to complete some form of post-secondary education. Females were 2.05 times more likely to have an expectation for some form of post-secondary education than males. There does not appear to be a significant relationship between age and the expectation of completing some form of post-secondary education, and there does not appear to be a significant relationship between ethnic category and completing some form of post-secondary education. There does appear to be a significant relationship between the expectation to complete some form of post-secondary education and the usual grades made in high school. Those respondents reporting their usual grades in high school as mostly B’s and C’s and above had very high response rates for the expectation of attending some form of post-secondary education.

There does appear to be an interest in the 16-21 year old segment of the population in attending some form of post-secondary education. A large percentage appear to have a stronger desire to attend school full-time at a 4-year college or university. Females appear to have a stronger desire to attend post-secondary education than males, and 16-17 year olds expressed a stronger desire to attend post-secondary education than the 18-21 year olds. Students who reported making higher grades in high school appear to have a stronger desire to attend some form of post-secondary education.

Research Question 2

What kinds of schools or colleges are 16-21 year olds in the United States interested in attending? This research question was addressed with the following

question to respondents who had answered question FPP1 with “going to school full-time” or “going to school part-time”: “What kind of school or college would you like to attend?”

To answer this research question chi-square tests were conducted among the four demographic variables of gender, age, ethnicity, and usual grades made in high school compared to the kind of school or college the respondents indicated they would like to attend. Almost 40% of the respondents indicated that they would like to attend a 4-year college or university, and 10.9 % indicated they would like to attend a junior or community college. Only 5.4 % indicated they would like to attend graduate or professional school; and only 5.2% indicated they would like to attend vocational, business, or trade school. In the fall of 2003, 46% of high school graduates 18-24 years old were enrolled in college (Shin, 2005).

There does not appear to be a significant relationship between gender and the type of school or college to attend. There appears to be a significant relationship between the kind of school or college to attend and ethnic category. The White, Non-Hispanic ethnic category appears to have a strong desire to attend a 4-year college or university. The Black, Non-Hispanic; Hispanic; and Other, Non-Hispanic ethnic categories had higher response rates for 4-year college or university and much lower responses for the other school or college to attend response choices. In 2003 the student population consisted of 60% White, Non-Hispanic; 16% Black; 18% Hispanic; and 4% Asian (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003). Respondents in the 16-17 year old age categories had high response rates for 4-year college or university, and it appears that as age

increases the desire to attend school or college decreases. Respondents reporting grades of mostly A's, mostly A's and B's, mostly B's, and mostly B's and C's had higher response rates to attending a 4-year college or university than any other level of post-secondary education. The type of school or college of choice appears to be a 4-year college or university followed by 2-year junior or community college, and then graduate or professional school.

The 16-21 year old segment of the population irrespective of gender, ethnicity, and age has a stronger desire to attend a 4-year college or university; and they prefer to attend school full-time rather than part-time.

Research Question 3

Do selected individuals such as parents, siblings, extended family members, close friends, teachers, or school guidance counselors influence the post-secondary decision made by 16-21 year olds in the United States?

This research question was addressed with the following question on the questionnaire "I am going to read you a list of people you may or may not be associated with. As I read each one, I would like you to tell me how strongly they influence the decisions you make. Please use a scale where positive three means they influence your decisions very much and negative three means they don't influence your decisions at all, remember you can use any number between negative three and positive three."

To answer this research question, chi-square tests were conducted to determine any significant relationship between the strength of influence of selected individuals such as parents, siblings, extended family members, close friends, teachers, and

guidance counselors and the decision to attend school full-time or part-time. Factor analysis was conducted to assess the underlying structure for the strength of influence variables (mother, father, siblings, extended family, close friends, teachers, and guidance counselors) and the influence they may have on the type of school or college to attend.

Influencers of the Decision for Full-Time or Part-Time Post-Secondary Education

The chi-square test for the strength of a mother's influence on the decision to attend school full-time or part-time indicates that there appears to be a significant relationship between those two variables, and Cramer's ϕ indicates a small positive relationship in both instances. However, examining the cross tabulation reveals that the response rate for the question "mother's influencing your decisions very much"; is higher for the "no" response than for the "yes" response. Therefore, while the respondents did indicate that their mothers influence their decisions very much at 49.2%, when it comes to making decisions about attending school full-time or part-time it does not appear that their mothers influence this decision very much. The same can be said about fathers, siblings, extended family, close friends, teachers, and guidance counselors and their influence on the decision to attend school either full-time or part-time.

Influencers of the Type of School or College to Attend

Factor analysis was used to examine any observed correlation among the strength of influence variables (mother, father, siblings, extended family, close friends, teachers, and guidance counselors) and the type of school or college to attend. Factor analysis provides an empirical basis for reducing all of these variables to a few factors by combining variables that are moderately or highly correlated with each other (Gall, Borg

and Gall, 1996). Principal axis factor analysis, with varimax rotation, was conducted to assess the underlying structure of the seven strength of influence variables and how these variables affect the decision to attend the different types of post-secondary education. These variables could be categorized into three constructs or those relating to family influence (mother, father, siblings and extended family), peer influence (close friends), and school influence (teachers and guidance counselors).

Vocational, Business, or Trade School

Two factors were extracted, based on the examination of the total variance explained matrix and the scree plot. After rotation, the first factor accounted for 40.94% of the variance and the second factor accounted for 24.57% of the variance. These two factors account for 65.51% of the variance explained. The highest loading variables on the family influence component were siblings, extended family, and mother. The main items loading on the school influence component were teachers and guidance counselors. It should be noted that the variable of father did not load on any of the two components, and close friends or the peer influence variable loaded on the family influence component. It can be concluded from this analysis that, with respect to making a decision to attend vocational, business, or trade school, the family influence component has more influence than the school influence component. Therefore, the strongest influence for the decision to attend vocational, business, or trade school appears to come from siblings, followed by extended family and then mothers.

2-Year Junior or Community College

Two factors were extracted, based on the examination of the total variance explained matrix and the scree plot. After rotation, the first factor accounted for 55.20% of the variance and the second factor accounted for 16.35% of the variance. These two factors account for 71.55% of the variance explained. The highest loading variables on the family / school influence component were mother, teachers, and siblings. The main items loading on the family / peer influence component were extended family and close friends. It can be concluded from this analysis that, with respect to the decision to attend a 2-year junior or community college, the respondent would be affected equally by the family influence and the school influence components. Therefore, the strongest influence for the decision to attend a 2-year junior or community college appears to come from mothers, teachers and siblings.

4-Year College or University

Two factors were extracted, based on the examination of the total variance explained matrix and the scree plot. After rotation, the first factor accounted for 26.38% of the variance and the second factor accounted for 19.49% of the variance. These two factors account for 45.87% of the variance explained. The highest loading variables on the school influence component were guidance counselors and teachers. The main items loading on the family influence component were mother, siblings, and father. It can be concluded based on this analysis that with respect to making a decision to attend a 4-year college or university, the respondents were influenced more strongly by the school influence component followed by the family influence component. Therefore, the

strongest influence for the decision to attend a 4-year college or university appears to come from guidance counselors and teachers.

Graduate or Professional School

Two factors were extracted, based on the examination of the total variance explained matrix and the scree plot. After rotation, the first factor accounted for 44.26% of the variance and the second factor accounted for 17.88% of the variance. These two factors account for 62.13% of the variance explained. The highest loading variables on the school influence component were teachers and guidance counselors. The main items loading on the family influence component were father and siblings. It should be noted that the variable of mother double loaded on the school influence component and on the family influence component. It can be concluded based on this analysis that with respect to making a decision to attend graduate or professional school, the respondents were influenced more strongly by the school influence component followed by the family influence component. Therefore, the strongest influence for the decision to attend graduate or professional school appears to come from teachers and guidance counselors.

Research Question 4

When making decisions in their lives are options such as earning money for college, having a good paying job, having job security, having a job that makes you happy, learning a valuable skill or trade, preparing for a future career, not going to college after high school, making a positive difference in the community, and having a lifestyle that is attractive important to 16-21 year olds in the United States?

This research question was addressed with the following question on the questionnaire:

OUT – “Now, let’s think about the decisions you are currently making in your life. Suppose one of the options you have helps you to [RANDOMIZE AND READ LIST]. Using a scale where positive three means extremely good and negative three means extremely bad, how do you rate that option?”

- A. Earn money for college
- B. Have a good paying job that allows you to live comfortably
- C. Have job security
- D. Have a job that makes you happy
- E. Learn a valuable trade or skill
- F. Prepare for a future career
- G. Train in cutting edge technology
- H. Not go to college immediately after high school
- I. Make a positive difference in your community
- J. Have a lifestyle that is attractive to you

The literature reviewed in Chapter II revealed that those who decide to pursue post-secondary education do so in an effort to get a better job, gain a general education, make new friends, and make more money (Leana, 1990). Some indicated a desire to have lots of money and also indicate that those with more education will earn more money.

In order to answer this research question, chi-square tests were conducted to determine any significant relationship between strength of influence for selected outcome options (earning money for college, having a good paying job, having job security, having a job that makes you happy, learning a valuable trade or skill, preparing for a future career, training in cutting edge technology, not go to college immediately after high school, making a positive difference in your community, and having an attractive life style) and the decision to attend school full-time or part-time. Factor

analysis was conducted to examine any correlation among the strength of influence variables and the type of school or college to attend.

After reviewing the frequency tables, based on the percentage of the sample responding with “extremely good”, the most important outcome options resulting from decisions made by the sample were having a job that makes you happy (77.9%), having a good paying job that allows you to live comfortably (69.6%), earning money for college (65.5%), having a lifestyle that is attractive to you (64.5%), preparing for a future career (62.6%), having job security (61.6%), making a positive difference in your community (59.9%), learning a valuable trade or skill (58.1%), and training in cutting edge technology (42.7%). The not going to college immediately after high school response received a majority of responses on the negative end of the scale, “extremely bad”. In context of the questionnaire, this would read “Now, let’s think about the decision you are currently making in your life. Suppose one of the options you have helps you to [not go to college immediately after high school]. Using a scale where positive three means extremely good and negative three means extremely bad, how do you rate that option?” There was a 31.4% response rate for the “extremely bad” response to this question.

Influence of Outcome Options on the Decision for Full-Time or Part-Time Schooling

While “earning money for college” received a very high “extremely good” (65.5%) response rate from the overall sample, with respect to influencing the decision to attend school either full-time or part-time, this outcome option had little to no influence on this decision. While there appears to be a significant relationship between

this variable and the decision to go to school full-time, the response rates for “no” were higher than the response rates for “yes”. Therefore, it can be concluded that the option of earning money for college does not affect the decision to go to school full-time or part-time.

While “having job security” received a very high “extremely good” (61.6%) response rate from the overall sample, with respect to influencing the decision to attend school either full-time or part-time, this outcome option had little to no influence on this decision. While there appears to be a significant relationship between this variable and the decision to go to school full-time, the response rates for “no” were higher than the response rates for “yes”. Therefore, it can be concluded that the option of having job security does not affect the decision to go to school full-time or part-time.

While “learning a valuable skill or trade” received a fairly high “extremely good” (58.1%) response rate from the overall sample, with respect to influencing the decision to attend school either full-time or part-time, this outcome option had little to no influence on this decision. While there appears to be a significant relationship between this variable and the decision to go to school full-time, the response rates for “no” were higher than the response rates for “yes”. Therefore, it can be concluded that the option of learning a valuable skill or trade does not have a significant affect on the decision to go to school full-time or part-time.

While “training in cutting edge technology” received a fairly high “extremely good” (42.7%) response rate from the overall sample, with respect to influencing the decision to attend school either full-time or part-time, this outcome option had little to no

influence on this decision. While there appears to be a significant relationship between this variable and the decision to go to school full-time and part-time, the response rates for “no” were higher than the response rates for “yes”. Therefore, it can be concluded that the option of training in cutting edge technology does not have a significant affect on the decision to go to school full-time or part-time.

While “having a lifestyle that is attractive to you” received a high “extremely good” (64.5%) response rate from the overall sample, with respect to influencing the decision to attend school either full-time or part-time, this outcome option had little to no influence on this decision. While there appears to be a significant relationship between this variable and the decision to go to school full-time, the response rates for “no” were higher than the response rates for “yes”. Therefore, it can be concluded that the option of having a lifestyle that is attractive to you does not have a significant affect on the decision to go to school full-time or part-time.

The outcome option of “not going to college immediately after high school” received the highest response rates on the negative end of the scale with 31.4% of the overall sample responding with “extremely bad”. This variable appears to have a significant relationship with the decision to go to school full-time variable, but the highest response rates were on the negative end of the scale which seems to indicate that delaying the decision to go to school full-time would be a bad decision. There also appears to be a significant relationship between this variable and the decision to go to school part-time variable, and once again the highest response rates were for the negative end of the scale. However, the highest response rates for this variable were for

the “no” response or a response of “no” this is “extremely bad”; therefore, it can be concluded that delaying the decision to go to school part-time immediately after high school would be a good one.

The outcome options of “having a good paying job”, “having a job that makes you happy”, preparing for a career”, and “making a difference in the community” do not appear to have a significant affect on the decision to go to school full-time or part-time.

Influence of Outcome Options on the Type of School or College to Attend

Factor analysis was used to examine any observed correlation among the strength of outcome options (earning money for college, having a good paying job, having job security, having a job that makes you happy, learning a valuable trade or skill, preparing for a future career, training in cutting edge technology, not go to college immediately after high school, making a positive difference in your community, and having a lifestyle that is attractive to you) and the type of school of college to attend. Factor analysis provides an empirical basis for reducing all of these variables to a few factors by combining variables that are moderately or highly correlated with each other (Gall, Borg and Gall, 1996).

Principal axis factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted to assess the underlying structure of the ten outcome option variables and how these variables affect the decision to attend the different types of post-secondary education. These variables could be categorized into three constructs or those relating to self-satisfaction (having an attractive lifestyle, making a difference in your community, and not going to college immediately after high school), job-satisfaction (having a good paying job, having job

that makes you happy, and job security), and preparing for a future (earning money for college, learning a valuable trade or skill, preparing for a future career, and training in cutting edge technology).

Vocational, Business, or Trade School

Three factors were extracted, based on the examination of the total variance explained matrix and the scree plot. After rotation, the first factor accounted for 31.27% of the variance, the second factor accounted for 12.61% of the variance, and the third factor accounted for 10.40%. These three factors account for 54.28% of the variance explained. The two highest loading factors on the preparing for the future component were earning money for college and training in cutting edge technology. Two of the job-satisfaction factors also loaded on the preparing for the future component. Some of the factors with the highest loadings regardless of component were preparing for a career, earning money for college, and training in cutting edge technology. Therefore, the strongest influence for the decision to attend vocational, business, or trade school appears to come from the options of earning money for college and training in cutting edge technology; and a secondary influence appears to come from having an attractive lifestyle and having a job that makes you happy.

2-Year Junior or Community College

Three factors were extracted, based on the examination of the total variance explained matrix and the scree plot. After rotation, the first factor accounted for 33.16% of the variance, the second factor accounted for 19.13% of the variance, and the third factor accounted for 10.01%. These three factors account for 62.31% of the variance

explained. The highest loading factor on the preparing for the future component was earning money for college, and the next two highest loading factors were having a good paying job and having job security. These are two of the job-satisfaction factors. Therefore, the strongest influence for the decision to attend a 2-year junior or community college appears to come from the options of earning money for college, having a good paying job, and having job security; and a secondary influence appears to come from not going to college immediately after high school and having a job that makes you happy.

4-Year College or University

Three factors were extracted, based on the examination of the total variance explained matrix and the scree plot. After rotation, the first factor accounted for 28.94% of the variance, the second factor accounted for 16.28% of the variance, and the third factor accounted for 11.16%. These three factors account for 56.39% of the variance explained. The two factors with the highest loadings on the job-satisfaction component were having a job that makes you happy and having a good paying job. Preparing for a career and earning money for college are two of the preparing for a future factors which also loaded on the job-satisfaction component. Therefore, the strongest influence for the decision to attend a 4-year college or university appears to come from the option of having a job that makes you happy, having a good paying job, and having an attractive lifestyle; and a secondary influence appears to come from the options of learning a valuable trade or skill and making a positive difference in the community.

Graduate or Professional School

Three factors were extracted, based on the examination of the total variance explained matrix. After rotation, the first factor accounted for 38.69% of the variance, the second factor accounted for 11.42% of the variance, and the third factor accounted for 11.23%. These three factors account for 61.34% of the variance explained. The three highest loading factors on the preparing for the future component were preparing for a career, learning a valuable trade or skill, and earning money for college. Having a job that makes you happy and having a good paying job, both job-satisfaction factors, loaded on the job-satisfaction component. Therefore, the strongest influence for the decision to attend graduate or professional school appears to come from the options of preparing for a career and learning a valuable trade or skill. A secondary influence appears to come from the options of having a job that makes you happy, having an attractive lifestyle, and having a good paying job.

Conclusions

Youth in the ages of 16-21 do have an interest in attending post-secondary education. A high percentage of the sample indicated that they would like to attend school either full-time or part-time. Females have a stronger desire than their male counterparts to attend school on a full-time basis; however, they do not appear to have as strong an interest in attending school part-time. Those in the age groups 16-17 appear to have a stronger desire to attend school full-time, but as age increases it appears that the desire to attend school full-time decreases. There does not appear to be an interest of the respondents of any age to attend school part-time. There does not appear to be a

significant relationship between ethnic category and plans to attend school full-time.

There was a significant relationship between ethnic category and plans to attend school part-time; however, this relationship was a negative desire or there was no desire or plan to attend school part-time regardless of ethnic category. There was a significant relationship between the usual grades in high school and future plans of attending school full-time or part-time. Those students reporting higher grades had the strongest desire to attend school full-time, and they also had the least desire of having future plans of attending school part-time.

Youth in the ages of 16-21 would prefer to attend a 4-year college or university followed by a 2-year junior or community college. The White, Non-Hispanic segment has a stronger desire to attend a 4-year college or university than the other three ethnic categories. The 16-17 year old age group has a stronger desire to attend a 4-year college or university than any other type of school or college. Those who reported making grades of A's, mostly A's and B's, mostly B's, and mostly B's and C's have a stronger desire to attend a 4-year college or university followed by a 2-year junior or community college, and then graduate or professional school.

Youth in the ages of 16-21 are highly influenced by their mothers, fathers, close friends, siblings, extended family, teachers, and counselors when making decisions. However, when it comes to making decisions about attending school full-time or part-time, they do not appear to be influenced by any of these people. When making a decision about attending a vocational, business or trade school, the family influence component (mother, father, siblings, and extended family) has more influence than the

school influence component (teachers and guidance counselors). When making a decision about attending a 2-year junior or community college, the family influence component (mother, father, siblings, and extended family) and the school influence component (teachers and guidance counselors) appear to influence this decision equally. When making a decision about 4-year college or university the school influence component (teachers and guidance counselors) appears to make the strongest impact. When making a decision about graduate or professional school the school influence component (teachers and guidance counselors) appears to have the strongest impact on this decision.

There does not appear to be any significant influence from the outcome options (earning money for college, having a good paying job, having job security, having a job that make you happy, learning a valuable trade or skill, preparing for a future career, training in cutting edge technology, not going to college immediately after high school, making a positive difference in your community, and having a lifestyle that is attractive to you) and the plans to attend school either full-time or part-time.

When 16-21 year old youth consider the type of school or college to attend they appear to be influenced by three categories of latent variables: job-satisfaction (having a good paying job, having a job that makes you happy, and having job security), self-satisfaction (having an attractive lifestyle, making a difference in the community, and not going to college immediately after high school), and preparing for a future (earning money for college, learning a valuable skill or trade, preparing for a career, and training in cutting edge technology).

When making a decision about vocational, business, or trade school, the two factors with the highest loadings were earning money for college and training in cutting edge technology. This may be viewed as 16-21 year olds having a perception that vocational, business, or trade school is a stepping stone to further education which will help them prepare for their future. When making a decision about 2-year junior or community college, the highest loading factor was again earning money for college and the next highest were having a good paying job and job security. This could be viewed as the perception of the 16-21 year olds that the 2-year junior or community college will get them closer to job-satisfaction than vocation, business, or trade school but it is still a stepping stone to further education. When making a decision about a 4-year college or university, the two highest loading factors were having a job that makes you happy and having a good paying job. It could be concluded from this that 16-21 year olds view a 4-year college degree as a way to obtain job-satisfaction. When making a decision about graduate or professional school, the highest loading factors were preparing for a career, learning a valuable trade or skill, and earning money for college which were all preparing for a future latent variables. This could indicate that graduate or professional school will help them prepare for a future and eventually lead to job-satisfaction.

Recommendations to the Field

Schools can play a key role in guiding early preparation for post-secondary education through fostering academic preparation and achievement, supporting parent involvement, providing college and career planning information, and helping students through the many steps in post-secondary education planning (Wimberly & Noeth,

2005). The educational needs of all students should begin early with an active dialogue with parents, counselors, teachers, and community representatives (National Association for College Admission Counseling, 1999). Colleges and universities believe many students are not ready for post-secondary education and business leaders complain that college and high school graduates do not have the skills they believe they should have for entry-level work (Kusler, 2004). The following recommendations are made based on a review of the literature and the results of the analysis of data based on the research questions.

1. Develop and implement programs for middle school teachers and parents of middle school children which provide information about the various types of post-secondary education, and institute programs which will encourage students to participate in order to enhance their understanding of the importance of post-secondary education and instill in them the knowledge that there are other options besides attending a 4-year college or university.
2. Develop and implement programs for high school teachers and guidance counselors with information on the various kinds of post-secondary education and how the different avenues of post-secondary education could benefit the student who is either ill prepared, intimidated, or just not ready for the rigors of a 4-year college or university. Incorporate these programs with parent / teacher conferences to insure that the parents become involved in the students understanding of options for post-secondary education. It may make more sense

to pursue a technical degree to become self-sufficient first and then later explore career dreams and aspirations (Mupinga & Livesay, 2004).

3. Implement post-secondary education seminars for students, parents, and teachers in middle school in order to establish a foundation of knowledge for post-secondary education of all types to help students and parents understand all options available to them after high school graduation. This will help the students and their parents make informed decisions about the future and how best to prepare for future plans and goals.
4. Implement career seminars in high schools to aid students, parents, teachers, and guidance counselors in understanding the post-secondary requirements for various career field options to aid students in selecting the best curriculum to meet their ultimate career goals. Students and parents must have a clear understanding of the curriculum and they must insure that it is rigorous enough to meet or exceed the standards of their desired post-secondary institution of choice or career option of choice.
5. Develop corporate partnerships between local businesses and high schools to involve the local community in career seminars to give students and their parents first hand knowledge of career opportunities and requirements for employment.
6. Incorporate post-secondary education and career planning information for students in parent / teacher conferences early in the high school program to provide this information as early as possible, planting the seed and emphasizing

the importance of these two concepts for high school students and showing how the two are tied together.

7. Develop post-secondary planning programs for teachers and guidance counselors and insure that they have the proper tools and knowledge for the requirements and benefits of all types of post-secondary education, giving them the ability to pass this knowledge on to their students and the student's parents.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study was conducted with data from the October 2003 Department of Defense Youth Polling Questionnaire which was designed to measure the likelihood of youth ages 16-21 to join the military and to identify the factors that influence their decisions. While it is believed that this data is valid for this study, the study should be replicated with a questionnaire specifically designed with more questions pertaining to post-secondary education. While it may be more difficult to obtain permission to administer this type of questionnaire to this age group, the analysis of such information would be valuable to parents, teachers, and school guidance counselors when preparing these young people to make decisions about their post-secondary education plans. This study could also be replicated with the most recent Youth Polling data and compared to the results of this study to determine if the responses have changed over time with this same age group.

Summary

The 16-21 year old youth in the United States do appear to have an interest in pursuing some form of post-secondary education. Most respondents indicated that they

would like to attend school full-time but some would like to attend school part-time. This age group exhibits a strong desire to attend some form of post-secondary education.

The 16-21 year old youth in the United States appear to show a preference for attending a 4-year college or university; there was some interest in attending a 2-year junior or community college, and graduate or professional school. There did not appear to be much interest in attending vocational, business, or trade school.

The 16-21 year old youth in the United States appear to be influenced strongly by their parents but in a general sense. This group also appears to be influenced strongly by close friends and siblings. There does not appear to be a significant amount of influence from any of the strength of influence variables on the decision to attend some form of post-secondary education.

The 16-21 year old youth in the United States appear to be influenced by several outcome options but the factors that appear to have the most influence on this age group are having a job that makes you happy, having a good paying job, earning money for college, having an attractive lifestyle, preparing for a career, having job security, making a positive difference in the community, and learning a valuable trade or skill. These factors don't appear to have a strong influence on the decision to attend post-secondary education however.

Closing

Some of the findings in this study were surprising. The influence of teachers and guidance counselors did not produce the expected results with respect to having a strong influence on the post-secondary plans of this group. There may not be enough influence

in the school system to train teachers and counselors in the promotion of the different types of post-secondary education. There may be too heavy a concentration on promoting the 4-year college or university. Not all high school students are academically or emotionally mature enough to attend a 4-year institution. The lack of strength of influence from the parents on the decision to attend post-secondary education was also somewhat surprising; however, some of that could be explained by the fact that some of the parents have not attended any level of post-secondary education and are unfamiliar with what they need to tell their children about the benefits and the procedures and requirements to attend any type of post-secondary education. Research has found that higher education is associated with substantial earnings premiums in the job market and, during the next century, higher education will become increasingly important for landing high-paying jobs (Washington Research Council, 1999).

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Weapon Systems Analyst Directorate of Combat Developments, Fort Bliss, Texas	1992-1993
Branch Chief / Advertising Research Analyst United States Army Recruiting Command, Fort Sheridan, Illinois	1988-1992
Commander A Battery, 3 rd Battalion, 6 th Brigade, Fort Bliss, Texas	1985-1986
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