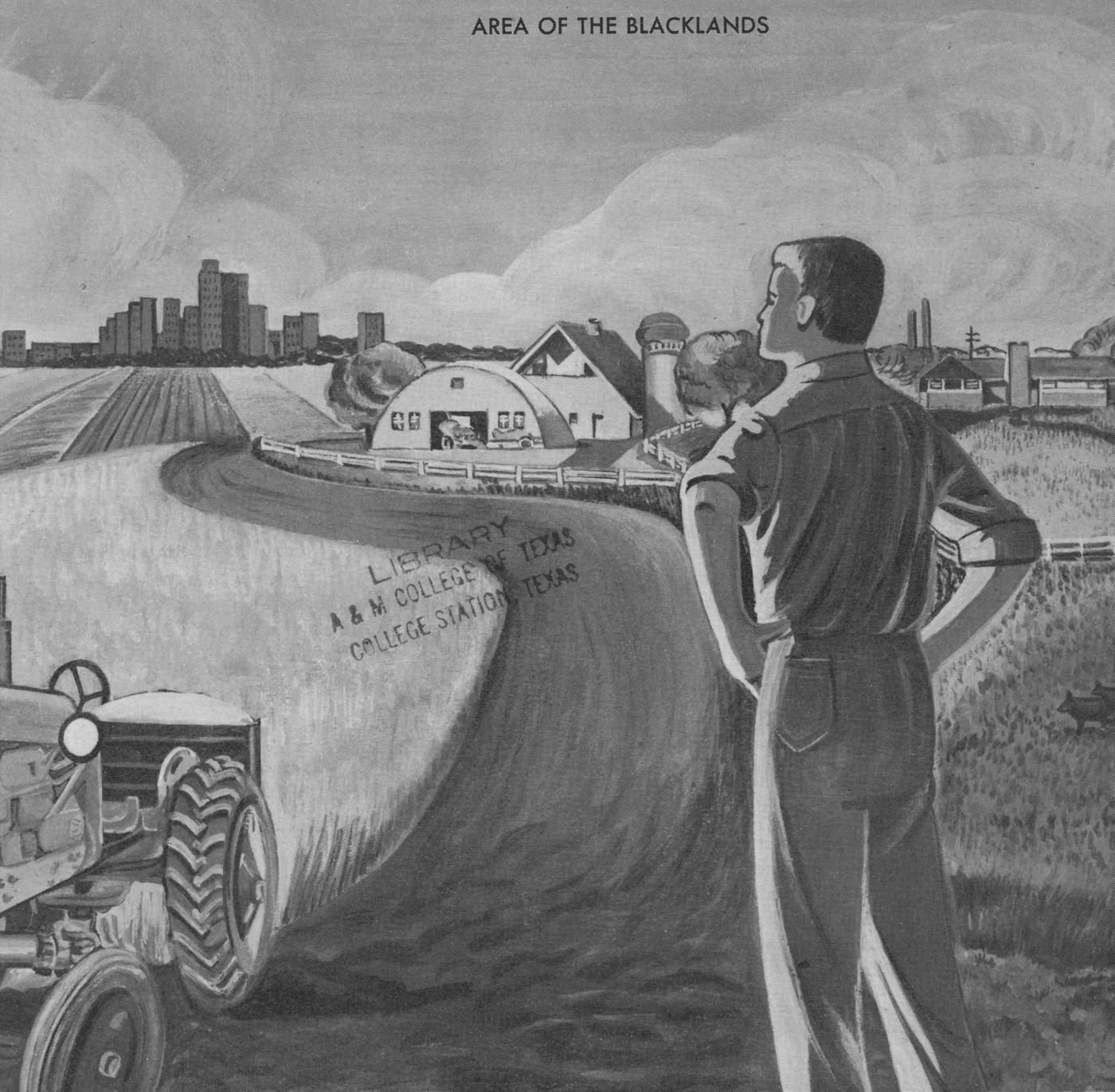


Attitudes of Youth

TOWARD OCCUPATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
AND SOCIAL SERVICES IN A SIX-COUNTY
AREA OF THE BLACKLANDS



SUMMARY

This study was conducted in 1957 and 1958 by the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station to determine attitudes of high school seniors toward occupational opportunities and social services in the Blacklands.

Only 137 of 318 rural seniors interviewed indicated that farming or ranching was the major job of their fathers. Of 150 fathers who were not engaged in farming or ranching as a primary or supplementary job, 115 had farmed or ranched at one time. The reasons given most frequently for getting out of farming were "the offer of a better job in town" and "couldn't make a living."

Each student was asked: "If you were ready to begin your life's work, which of the following would you prefer: (1) to own and operate your own farm, (2) to have an average job in town or (3) other?" Girls were asked which of these alternatives they would prefer that their future husbands select. An average job in town was the preference of 154 students (48.4 percent). Ownership and operation of a farm was selected by 106 (33.3 percent). Other alternatives were selected by 41 and 17 indicated they did not know which alternative they preferred. Only 10.7 percent of the students interviewed for an earlier study made in Cherokee county, an East Texas county, selected the ownership and operation of a farm.

Only 40 students had earned \$150 or more doing farm work the year prior to the study. Nonfarm work possessed greater economic significance, since 100 students earned \$150 or more doing this type of work. Of the 78 farm boys included in the study, 64 helped to operate the home farm, but only 24 received pay for the work. This failure of farm operators to develop a standard rate or pay system for family members represents a cultural lag. Farm youngsters with modern transportation facilities have more opportunities to earn money in nonfarm jobs and thus do not develop very favorable attitudes toward farming.

Various studies of young people in rural and urban areas of Texas indicate a trend toward cul-

tural uniformity. The cultural standards and aspirations of farm boys and girls now differ little from those of urban boys and girls. Thus, economic values of farm youth will become more dominant in their total value systems.

Each student was asked which job he would like to do most, assuming he had the necessary training and qualifications. The first choice of girls was secretarial work, while the first choice of the boys was engineering. Only 12 boys gave farming as their first choice.

Students who preferred to work as adults in home county numbered 152 as contrasted with those who preferred work elsewhere. Thirty-four were undecided. However, when asked if most of the classmates planned to remain in the county as adults, only 70 of the 318 answered yes. As long as moving to a big city carries a distinctive mark of high status, farm fathers in the area probably will not exert much effort toward interesting their sons in farming or rural residence. Any move to slow down or reverse the trends now underway in the Blacklands first should concern itself with the adult population. Community members need to evaluate their attitudes toward personal situations and the community. Restoration of high morale should be the special concern of business people, local ministers and other service people whose personal success or failure depends largely on the local community.

Primary dissatisfactions of the students centered around the lack of social and recreational facilities. Frequent references also were made to the poor appearance of the business section of small towns. Business activity in many towns has suffered from migration and competition of metropolitan centers. The desire to cut operating costs, including taxes, frequently resulted in physical deterioration which in turn caused further migration. Maintenance of these small rural residence centers for communities who work in urban centers will require vigorous leadership.

Attitudes of Youth

TOWARD OCCUPATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND SOCIAL SERVICES IN A SIX-COUNTY AREA OF THE BLACKLANDS

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TO DETERMINE THE ATTITUDES of senior students toward occupational opportunities and social services, 318 senior students were interviewed in six counties located on the Blacklands or the Blackland Prairies area. This area was selected as a sample of the better farming areas of the State. The six counties selected for study were Collin, Hunt, Johnson, McLennan, Milam and Navarro. Each county studied was located within a 50-mile radius of a major urban center, Figure 1.

The 318 senior students interviewed were attending schools classified as rural according to census terminology. The schools were located in the open country or in towns with less than 2,500 people. There were 160 rural farm seniors and 158 rural nonfarm seniors. Girls interviewed numbered 163, while the boys numbered 155.

The term attitude as used in this study means a readiness for action of a particular type toward a given situation. As such, an attitude determines a characteristic or consistent mode of behavior in relation to particular stimuli. Atti-

tudes were determined through projective-type questions and the "probing" technique. Patterns of past activity were used to determine the relative strength of particular attitudes. Each individual's conception of his fellow students' attitudes also was studied. Situational analysis of this type is based on the assumption that people, whether individuals or groups, tend to pattern their behavior in accordance with their definition of the situation. Under ordinary circumstances, the individual uses such definitions as his guide or road map in making decisions concerning his behavior. For example, in a community where circumstances are fairly routine for the area, it could be predicted reliably that practically all the citizens approaching a red traffic light in an automobile would stop at the light. This study represents an attempt to find those norms or "definitions" of specific situations which senior students accepted and were using both as guideposts for their appraisal of their present circumstances and as significant determinants in future decisions.

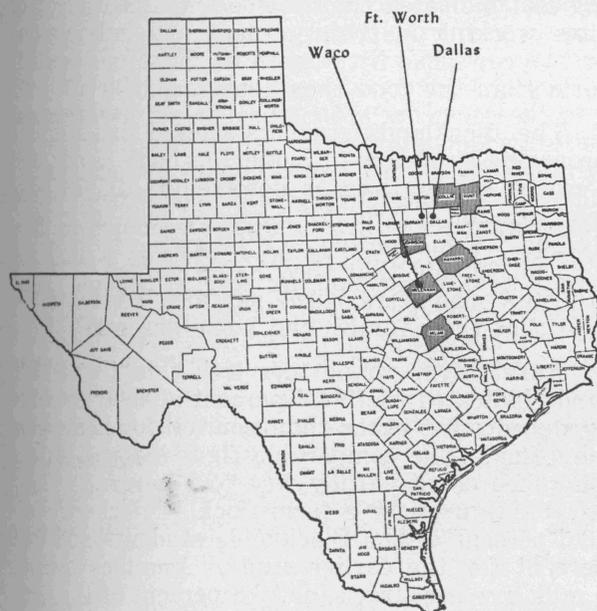


Figure 1. Collin, Hunt, Johnson, McLennan, Milam and Navarro counties, the shaded areas on the above map, were selected for this study. Each of these counties is within 50 miles of one of the major cities shown.

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POPULATION CHANGES IN THE SIX-COUNTY AREA

The total population change in the six-county area during 1940-50 was a 1.01-percent decrease. Two of the counties showed increases in population. Johnson county had a 3.3-percent increase, while McLennan county had a 27.8-percent increase. This large increase for McLennan county can be attributed to Waco. The population in Waco increased 51.3 percent during this period. These trends have continued to the present.

The farm population of the six counties dropped from 139,694 in 1940 to 74,816 in 1950, a decline of 46.4 percent. The comparable change for the State as a whole was a 39.8-percent loss.

The number of farms in the six counties declined from 23,871 in 1945 to 19,608 in 1950, a drop of 17.9 percent. For the State as a whole, the corresponding change was a 13.8 percent decline in the number of farms.

An analysis of changes in the age structure of the population of the six counties revealed that in every county with the exception of McLennan there was a population loss in each age category (5-year intervals) from 5 to 49 years of age. However, every county reported a sizable increase in each age bracket from 55 years to 75 years and over. The percentage increases of those 75 years of age and over by county were Collin, 40.4; Hunt, 48.8; Johnson, 59.7; McLennan, 127.6; Milam, 30.5; and Navarro, 62.1. The greatest population losses in the sample counties occurred in the younger age groups. Particularly heavy losses were sustained at all ages from 15 to 35. For example, the population losses of those 15 to 19 years of age by county were Collin, 35.4 percent; Hunt, 29.8 percent; Johnson, 25.2 percent; Milam, 47.6 percent; and Navarro, 40.1 percent. McLennan, largely because of the influence of Waco, experienced a 2.6-percent increase of those 15 to 19 years old.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Only 137 of the 318 rural seniors indicated that farming or ranching was the major job of their fathers. About 31 additional students reported that farming was a supplementary job for their fathers. All of the farms or ranches with one exception used tractor power. Cattle and hogs were significant enterprises on the Blackland Prairies farms and ranches, but only 10 students reported their fathers had broiler houses.

Some 142 indicated they had lived in their present homes 10 years or more. A greater number (178) indicated that they had lived on a farm 10 years or more.

Of the 150 fathers who were not engaged in farming or ranching, 115 had farmed at one time. Reasons given for getting out of farming varied, but the three most frequent given were "was offered a better job in town," "couldn't make money farming" and "poor health."

Factory employment was the main type of work performed by working mothers. Of 7 mothers who worked outside the home, 10 worked in factories. Jobs ranking next in order of frequency were waitress and seamstress. Only 17.5 percent of the mothers of rural farm students interviewed were working at nonfarm jobs.

The educational attainment of the student parents was low. For example, 194 of the 318 fathers had completed only elementary school. There were 78 fathers who had completed high school training and 14 who had completed 2 years of college. Only nine of the fathers had received a bachelor degree. The educational background of the mothers was better than that of the fathers. For example, 136 of the mothers had completed high school training. The modal age group for fathers and mothers was 40 to 49 years of age, with 166 fathers and 168 mothers falling in this group. Only 29 fathers and 7 mothers were over 60 years old.

LIVE-AT-HOME PROGRAMS

The attitudes of the students were favorable toward farming activities such as gardens and the production of meat, eggs and milk for home consumption. In general, they thought such activities were worthwhile and represented some of the many things that a person engaged in farming should do.

Their attitudes were different from those of senior students interviewed for an earlier study made in East Texas (Bulletin 859, "Attitudes of Youth Toward Occupational Opportunities at Social Services in Cherokee County," May 1957). Students interviewed in the East Texas study associated such activities with a low level of living and indicated that people who spent a lot of time working in their gardens and milking one or two cows had little more to show for their efforts than the food they consumed.

The Blacklands students viewed live-at-home programs as means of achieving more goods and services rather than as deterrents. Of 78 boys who lived on a farm, 72 indicated that their family had a home garden. Of 82 girls who lived on a farm, 69 said that they had a garden. Of 118 students who were rural nonfarm residents, 118 said that their family had home gardens.

Rural farm youngsters living in the Blacklands indicated that 64.4 percent of their families produced meat other than poultry for home consumption. The comparable figures found in the Cherokee county study was 52.5 percent. Comparable figures for a farm flock of chickens were 72.5 percent of the Blacklands students and 58 percent for the earlier study. Families owning a milk cow accounted for 66.8 percent of the families of farm students interviewed in the Blacklands, but only 51.3 percent of the families of farm students interviewed in the East Texas study.

Attitudes are more favorable toward live-at-home programs in this better farming area than they were in Cherokee county. Recent studies of the nation as a whole indicate a rapid decline in the percentage of all food consumed which was produced at home. The information for this study just includes families who had a senior student enrolled in high school. The situation among older farm families or among younger farm families might be different from these findings.

WORK EXPERIENCE OF THE STUDENTS

Only 40 students out of 318 had earned \$150 or more doing farm work the year prior to this study. An additional 35 students had earned less than \$150 doing farm work. Nonfarm work was more significant economically than farm work since 100 students earned \$150 or more doing nonfarm work the year prior to the study. An additional 61 students earned less than \$150 doing nonfarm work.

Nonfarm work was of greater economic importance to farm boys than was farm work. For example, 20 out of 78 farm boys earned \$150 or more doing farm work while 24 earned \$200 or more doing nonfarm work. Farm boys who earned no money doing farm work numbered 41, while those who earned no money doing nonfarm work numbered 15. More than half of the farm boys earned no money the year prior to the study. The experiences of these farm boys was different from those in the Cherokee county study. Every farm boy interviewed in Cherokee county had a part-time job his senior year. Earning during the school year up to the time of interview in April averaged \$474.40 for the rural farm boys.

Failure of farm operators in the six Blacklands counties to develop a standard rate or pay system for family members represents a cultural lag. Economic values loom larger and larger in our culture. Farm youngsters with present day transportation facilities have more opportunities to earn money in nonfarm jobs. Consequently, it will become increasingly apparent to farm children that youngsters who work in town generally get paid and those who work on their fathers' farms do not receive an immediate cash remuneration. Farming as an occupation from which a livelihood is received but not a cash consideration influences the attitudes of the youngsters concerning farming. Of the 78 farm boys interviewed in the Blacklands, 64 indicated that they helped to operate their farms. However, only 38 indicated that they helped their fathers on a regular basis. Of the 64 who helped to operate their farm, only 24 said they received pay for their work.

Further information indicated that improved transportation facilities, mechanization of farming operations, increased opportunities for nonfarm employment and increased emphasis on school attendance substantially changed the re-

lationship between father and son. Most of the boys who worked on their fathers' farm indicated that their work was spasmodic. Their time was taken going back to school to a basketball game, a play or other extracurricular activities. Saturday was the only opportunity they had for driving to Fort Worth or Dallas. On the other hand, some boys whose fathers owned expensive machinery and had heavy seasonal needs for extra labor indicated that their fathers did not like to rely on them very much as a source of labor. Since the economic situation of farmers in the Blacklands is, in general, better than that of farmers in poor land areas of East Texas, they can better afford extra hired labor.

Studies of youngsters in rural and urban areas of the State indicate a trend toward cultural uniformity. The cultural standards and the aspirations of farm boys and girls now differ very little from those of urban boys and girls. Thus, economic values of farm youth will become more dominant in their total value systems. Consequently, work for low or no pay on the farm may result in a more negative attitude toward farming in the future than in the past.

4-H CLUB PROGRAM

Of the 318 students interviewed, 201, or 63.2 percent, had participated in the 4-H Club program. When asked to rate the activities included in the program, 83.0 percent gave a favorable or very favorable rating. Despite their favorable reaction to the program, several students had suggestions for improvements in the program. Almost all suggestions dealt with the inclusion of a greater variety of activities and projects.

VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

Of the 155 rural farm and nonfarm boys, 141 had taken vocational agriculture. When questioned about the program, all except one reacted favorably or very favorably toward the program. Suggestions concerning the program were made by most of the boys. Examples are:

"I would recommend that they give us more farm skill and shop work than they do."

"We learned lots of things like woodwork and how to make farm improvements, but the main thing was leadership and responsibility. Safety on the farm also was pretty important training."

"I liked the shop work and learning how to use tools. They also teach you how to get along with other people besides what you learn about farming."

COLLEGE TRAINING

Students in the rural sections of the Blacklands viewed college training as very important, but they did not emphasize it to the same extent

TABLE 1. JOB PREFERENCES OF STUDENTS

Job	First choice rating	Second choice rating	Third choice rating
	Number		
Business	60	54	41
Engineer	48	14	7
Teacher	29	24	7
Medical	19	24	5
Farmer	12	13	27
Undecided	24	59	136
Other jobs	126	130	95
Total	318	318	318

as did students in Cherokee county. They considered it helpful but not absolutely necessary for success in the adult world. Youngsters in other areas of the State viewed it as the primary, and in many instances the only, means for escape from a very poor economic situation. This general attitude is responsible for a smaller proportion than might be expected of the Blackland Prairies area students indicating that they planned to go to college. Only 154 of the 318 students indicated that they definitely planned to attend college; 152 planned not to go and 12 were undecided.

Of the 154 students who planned to go to college, 42 planned to study business administration. Engineering placed second with 30 respondents. The remaining students indicated the following proposed majors: education, 16; medicine, 11; agriculture, 11; miscellaneous, 29; and undecided, 15.

In addition to those planning for college training, 71 students planned to take a shorter period of some type of specialized training. For example, 34 planned to take a business course. Other types of training included mechanical, 12; beauty operator, 10; airline hostess, 2; and miscellaneous, 26.

JOB PREFERENCES

Each student interviewed was asked the following question: "Name in order of your preference three jobs that you think you would like to do as an adult, assuming that you have the necessary training and qualifications." The answers are given in Table 1.

The 12 boys who listed farming as their first choice of jobs were rural farm boys. The job listed most frequently by both rural farm and rural nonfarm girls was business or secretarial work. The job listed most frequently by both rural farm and rural nonfarm boys was engineering.

The majority of the students preferred work in their home county. This preference was expressed by 152 students as compared with 132 who preferred work elsewhere. Thirty-four were undecided as to their preference. The greatest

loyalty to their home county was found among the rural farm boys. Of the 78 farm boys, only 23 preferred to work elsewhere while 47 preferred the home county. Eight were undecided. Among the remaining three groups, rural nonfarm boys, rural farm girls and rural nonfarm girls, work elsewhere had a greater appeal than work in the home county.

The students were asked: "At the present time do you think the chances of your living in your home county are greater than they are if you were living elsewhere?" Only 123 felt that the chances were greater of their living in the home county as compared with 183 who thought about living elsewhere. All four residence groups were in accord in their answers to this question.

To determine what the student thought his fellow students' plans were, the following question was asked: "Do most of the young people in your class plan to remain in this county or do they plan to leave?" Only 70 thought that most of the students planned to remain, while 148 thought that most of the students planned to leave. One hundred students did not know what their fellow students planned to do.

The following comment made by a rural farm male senior reflects the thoughts of a considerable number of the students interviewed:

"If I could find a suitable job, I would rather work around here. But I will probably go somewhere else. In our class the other morning, Mr. asked how many were planning on staying around here and working. Nobody raised his hand. My brother tried to find work here. He finally got a job at 80 cents an hour. He left and went into service."

Another farm boy stated: "I've talked to several people, and they said there's nothing around here. You have to go to a larger town like Dallas or Fort Worth. I'd rather be here if I could possibly find a job, but I don't believe it would be what I want. Most of my class will leave this summer."

A young lady thought the future for her classmates would work out as follows:

"Most of the young people will stay around here awhile because their families live here. They will get jobs in Dallas and Fort Worth and drive back and forth. I don't think they will remain here after they get married. There aren't very many jobs locally, and what jobs there are don't offer as much as elsewhere. Most of my class, after they drive back and forth to Dallas or Fort Worth, will get tired of it, and then they'll move to Dallas or Fort Worth."

A primary deterrent to the youngsters who preferred to live in their home county was

absence of opportunity. Only 47 of the 318 students thought that their county had sufficient business and industry to offer young people satisfactory employment. There were 263 who thought such opportunities were not available.

ATTITUDES TOWARD FARMING

Each student was asked: "If you were ready to begin your life's work, which of the following would you prefer: (1) to own and operate your own farm, (2) to have an average job in town or (3) other?" An average job in town was the preference of 154 students. Ownership and operation of a farm was selected by 106. Various other alternatives were selected by 41 while 7 indicated they did not know which alternative they would prefer. Students selecting ownership and operation of their own farm accounted for 33.3 percent of the students. In contrast, only 10.7 percent of the students interviewed in the Cherokee county study selected ownership and operation of their own farm.

Of the 78 senior boys who lived on farms in the Blacklands, 33 selected ownership and operation of their own farm as compared with 27 who selected the average job in town. The remaining 18 were undecided. By way of contrast, in Cherokee county only 5 out of the 47 rural farm seniors selected ownership and operation of their own farm without qualifications.

The following comments contain a number of ideas which seemed significant in determining attitudes of those students selecting an average job in town:

"It's hard to make a living unless you are a big operator."

"There are just too many ways to make a failure on the farm."

"I would like to farm if I could get set up without farming as a sharecropper. You never get out of debt as a sharecropper. I would like to get a job and save money to buy a farm."

"Farmers are treated as low class people when they are really the foundation of the whole thing."

"I don't like farming. You can make a living and eat, I guess, but that's about all. I might end up farming, but not if I can help it."

"I'd like to farm if I could get set to do it. You aren't going to make any money anyway, so you might as well do what you want to do. The more you make the more it takes to live; I want to be my own boss, do what I want, work when I want to and quit when I get ready."

"Farming on a small basis is not profitable. To farm you need to have around

500 acres or more. Smaller farms in this area are going out. The larger landowners buy them out."

"If I had a farm already paid for and didn't have to start out paying for the land and equipment, I'd farm. If I had to pay for it, I'd rather have a job in town."

"I like farming, but it's pretty risky. When you work on a job, you have a steady income. When you are farming, you just hope you can make a crop. If you don't, you're just up the creek. In my whole class there won't be over two people ending up on a farm. That's two country girls who are planning to marry farmers."

"I like farming and would like to farm, but you can't make anything. A few farmers are doing pretty good, but it takes a lot of land. Most of them I know have jobs in town, or their wives have a job in town. I will probably go to Fort Worth and try to get a job after graduation."

In view of these attitudes toward farming, the question arises: "What are some of the background characteristics of a boy who does have definite plans to farm?" John A.'s father owns 165 acres and rents 345 acres. The year prior to the interview his father had 325 acres in row crops, 100 acres in permanent pasture and 75 acres in improved pasture. He had 28 head of cattle.

Both his father and mother received their bachelor degree in college. They had a family garden and produced their meat, milk and eggs for home consumption.

John A. joined the 4-H Club but dropped out because, "We didn't have any adult leaders to work with us." He participated in vocational agriculture and FFA because, "It prepares you to stand on your own feet, go out alone in life whether you farm or whatever you do." In other words, he valued the leadership training more highly than the subject matter taught.

John A. stated: "In the summer I work for my Dad. He makes me keep account of the hours I work and pays me 50 cents an hour. This is the usual pay for farm labor around here. I'm also renting 122 acres on halves, trying to make American Farmer. I will get my Lone Star Farmer degree this summer. I've always liked farming or anything that is outdoors. It's hard to get set up in farming now, but I will have a chance at home. I will work with Dad until I can get started on my own. I don't care much for row crops, and I prefer beef cattle to dairy cattle. Most of the rest of the young people will move away because jobs are better away from here."

John A. continued: "I would like to have had more math and science in school. Since I'm going

to major in agriculture, I don't particularly need more math, but I definitely need more science. We need other courses, but don't have enough students. I don't really like to see consolidation and prefer a smaller school, but this one could be larger—say 250 to 300 students. Then they could have more courses.”

ATTITUDES TOWARD SELECTED FARM ENTERPRISES

An attempt was made to determine the students' attitudes toward particular farm enterprises. For example, they were asked to rate dairy farming in the county in terms of its success or failure. The majority of the students had little or no knowledge concerning dairy farms. There were 161 students who were undecided as to whether dairy farms were a success or a failure. An additional 16 students did not know anything about dairy farms. Ten students thought dairy farms in the county were very successful and 111 thought they were successful. Only 20 students thought dairy farms were losing money and none of these thought they were losing a lot of money. Despite the favorable attitude toward the operation of dairy farms in the county, 229 said they would not like to go into the business. Twenty-eight students had an interest in

getting into the dairy business and 69 were undecided.

Broiler houses were virtually unknown in the Blacklands. Of the 318 students, 255 did not know anything about the broiler business. Fifty students thought the people with broiler houses were making a lot of money while 50 students thought they were making a little money; 2 students thought they were losing a lot of money and 6 students thought they were losing a little money.

To determine other factors which might influence the attitude of farm boys toward farming, the farm boys were asked to rate a series of statements about farming. The first read:

“Most farmers in this county who want to better their situation have adequate credit available for their use.”

Of the 78 rural farm boys, 13 strongly agreed with this statement and gave it a rating of 5 points. Fifty-three boys gave the statement a 4-point rating which indicated they agreed with it. Only 5 students disagreed with the statement and no student strongly disagreed. Thus, credit facilities in the county were viewed favorably by the farm boys.

TABLE 2. SOCIAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Facility	Rating score ¹					Total score
	1	2	3	4	5	
	----- Number of facilities -----					
Job opportunities	21	170	33	148	20	382
Recreational opportunities and programs	39	102	18	240	10	409
Availability of farm land for purchase	25	102	123	156	10	416
Opportunities for special training or skills	17	126	66	212	5	426
Availability of farm land for rent	18	98	78	244	15	453
Availability of doctors	16	52	18	372	85	543
Adequate housing	5	56	72	352	65	550
Specialized help for farmers	3	54	96	312	90	555
Educational facilities and program in high school	4	62	48	368	75	557
Soil quality	2	28	105	344	105	584
Availability of hospitals and medical service	2	46	27	404	115	594
Credit facilities	1	20	81	420	75	597
Educational facilities and program (elementary and junior high)	2	26	57	420	95	600
College facilities and program	3	32	36	396	140	607
Church program and facilities	1	16	3	412	225	657

¹Scoring: Very inadequate, 1 point; inadequate, 2 points; undecided, 3 points; adequate, 4 points; and very adequate, 5 points.

Another statement was:

"Young men in this county who desire to get into farming can't find land for sale."

Opinions were about evenly divided among the farm boys on this statement. There were 35 boys who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, but there were 32 who disagreed.

The following statement also was presented:

"Farmers in this county who expect to get ahead financially have to spend half their time doing work off the farm to supplement their income."

Thirteen students strongly agreed with this statement while 36 agreed. Only 23 disagreed and no student strongly disagreed. The students' reaction to this statement and additional comments made during the interviews revealed that a majority of the students thought off-farm work gradually was becoming a necessity for Blackland farmers.

SOCIAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Each student was asked to rate 15 social services or facilities, using a 5-point scale. A score of 1 indicated that the student felt the service was very inadequate. A score of 2 indicated that the service was inadequate. Correspondingly scores of 4 and 5 were for adequate and very adequate. Table 2 gives the scores each social service or facility received. Items receiving the highest score in terms of adequacy were church program and facilities, college facilities and program and educational facilities and program in elementary and junior high school. Items receiving the lowest score or those deemed very inadequate were job opportunities, recreational opportunities and program, availability of farm land for purchase and opportunities for special training or skills.

HIGH SCHOOL FACILITIES

Although high school facilities were rated either adequate or very adequate by 33.6 percent of all the seniors, practically all made suggestions for improvement of the school program. Most of these comments emphasized the need for additional mathematics, science or foreign language courses. The need for vocational guidance also was emphasized. Comments made by students were:

"I wish the school didn't have to depend on state support so we could get subjects we want. We couldn't get solid geometry or trigonometry this year because you have to have a minimum of 10 students. If teachers were a little harder when you were freshmen or sophomores, you would get more out of subjects like math. Math should be a 4-year course like English. Earlier you don't realize the importance of

it until you start thinking about what you are going to do."

"We don't have enough math, science or foreign language. I wanted all of these things, but couldn't get them."

"I need more math, solid geometry or trigonometry. If I go to college, I will need them and foreign languages. At least 10 out of 30 in my class will go to college."

"I think we will have to consolidate with another school. We like our high school here in the community, but I wish I had gone to a larger high school where I could have taken the courses I need. In a school like this it's hard to get good teachers and the facilities you would like to have. I'd like to have chemistry, and I wished that I could have had a better biology teacher. If I get messed up my first year in college, it will be because of science. Otherwise the courses here are all right, I guess."

"The teachers don't help us determine vocations or get a job. We are left pretty much on our own."

"No one talks to young people about jobs. You just decide for yourself."

"Nothing is done to help students decide on a vocation or what they should do. The students have no preference of jobs because they don't know what jobs there are. Most of the boys who don't go to college just take a job and wait on the Army."

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The following comment of a senior girl is fairly typical of all statements made concerning the adequacy of recreational facilities:

"There's not much to do here — a few school parties. Our parents don't like for us to go to Fort Worth or Dallas, so most of the time we are sitting around a drive-in cafe. That's a joke. If some of them knew how much better off we'd be in a show in Dallas than at one of these drive-ins. I sure wish we had a youth center. The churches don't do as much as they could. The _____ church has fellowship and games. I belong to the _____ church, and we don't have anything, but I go over to the _____ parties sometimes. All the churches could have more recreation at night."

Some of the students felt more strongly about the situation. A farm girl stated:

"The community won't let kids have recreation as they should. The local boys' club is already having trouble. They are trying to close it. Some boys went over one Sunday afternoon, and some of the citizens went over there and put them out."

The ratings and comments of the students revealed an interesting phenomenon. Church program and facilities received the highest rating of any service or facility. Recreational facilities received next to the lowest rating, scoring just slightly higher than job opportunities. Yet in their comments they indicated that the churches should provide recreational opportunities. When questioned about the rating of the church program and facilities, they indicated that the rating was of the formal worship service conducted by the churches and thus did not reflect their discontent concerning social activities.

IMPLICATIONS

This study indicates that Blackland students will follow a pattern of behavior sanctioned by the thoughts and actions of their parents. For example, 106 students of the 318 interviewed preferred to own and operate their own farm. However, only a small number of these 106 actually will farm. Practically all of the students held a negative attitude toward tenancy. The major roadblock which students thought would stop those most seriously interested in farming or ranching was the problem of getting established. This pattern follows a trend set by the parents. Only 137 of 318 students indicated that farming or ranching was the major job of their fathers. Of 150 fathers not engaged in farming or ranching, 115 had farmed or ranched previously.

As long as migration to Waco, Dallas or Fort Worth carries a distinctive mark of high status, farm fathers in the Blacklands probably will not exert much effort toward interesting their sons in farming or rural residence.

Unless some radically new development alters trends now underway, fewer and fewer individuals will be employed in agricultural activities in the Blacklands. Since the small towns have largely been oriented toward agricultural activity, there has been little industrial development in their midst. Consequently, rural residence coupled with employment in larger centers seems to be the primary avenue for growth in these small centers.

However, the students were of the opinion that unless the leadership in the communities became more progressive, most of their classmates

would leave their home community. The primary dissatisfaction centered around the lack of social and recreational activities. Frequent reference also was made to the poor condition or appearance of the business section of town. Apparently the business activity in these small towns suffered from both migration and the competition of metropolitan centers. The desire to cut operating costs, including taxes, seemingly resulted in a failure to remodel or modernize business establishments which in turn produced further migration. Vigorous leadership is needed to change this cycle before conditions become too critical for change.

Discussions with adults in the area revealed doubts as to whether the necessary changes could be made.

The attitudes of the seniors undoubtedly will result in a continued heavy out-migration. Such movement does not necessarily mean that rural vitality cannot be developed in the area. The restoration of vitality and high morale should be the special concern of business people, local ministers, school personnel, lawyers and all other service people whose personal success or failure depends largely on that of the local community.

Services deemed to be most inadequate by the students included job opportunities, recreational opportunities, availability of farm land for purchase and opportunities for special training. Miscontentment was expressed by the students toward the absence of recreational activities and facilities than toward the lack of job opportunities. Virtually all the social and recreational activities seemed to center in the schools. With declining enrollments and increasing pressure for larger, more fully equipped school plants, school administrators face a difficult situation. These factors coupled with increasing operation costs and growing demand by the students for more science courses and foreign language make consolidation a constant issue in many of the communities of small towns. The development of some small towns into rural residence centers may come too late for the continued existence of a modern high school system. However, such developments could insure the continued existence of a modern elementary school which does not require the extreme specialization required by a high school.

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State-wide Research



The Texas Agricultural Experiment Station is the public agricultural research agency of the State of Texas, and is one of ten parts of the Texas A&M College System



Location of field research units of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station and cooperating agencies

ORGANIZATION

IN THE MAIN STATION, with headquarters at College Station, are 16 subject matter departments, 2 service departments, 3 regulatory services and administrative staff. Located out in the major agricultural areas of Texas are 21 substations and 9 field laboratories. In addition, there are 14 cooperating stations owned by other agencies. Cooperating agencies include the Texas Forest Service, Game and Fish Commission of Texas, Texas Prison System, U. S. Department of Agriculture, University of Texas, Texas Technological College, Texas College of Arts and Industries and the King Ranch. Some experiments are conducted on farms and ranches and in rural homes.

OPERATION

THE TEXAS STATION is conducting about 400 active research projects, grouped in 25 programs, which include all phases of agriculture in Texas. Among these are:

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|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Conservation and improvement of soil | Beef cattle |
| Conservation and use of water | Dairy cattle |
| Grasses and legumes | Sheep and goats |
| Grain crops | Swine |
| Cotton and other fiber crops | Chickens and turkeys |
| Vegetable crops | Animal diseases and parasites |
| Citrus and other subtropical fruits | Fish and game |
| Fruits and nuts | Farm and ranch engineering |
| Oil seed crops | Farm and ranch business |
| Ornamental plants | Marketing agricultural products |
| Brush and weeds | Rural home economics |
| Insects | Rural agricultural economics |
| | Plant diseases |

Two additional programs are maintenance and upkeep, and central service

Research results are carried to Texas farmers, ranchmen and homemakers by county agents and specialists of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH seeks the WHATS, the WHYS, the WHENs, the WHEREs and the HOWs of hundreds of problems which confront operators of farms and ranches, and the many industries depending on or serving agriculture. Workers of the Main Station and the field units of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station seek diligently to find solutions to these problems.

Today's Research Is Tomorrow's Progress