

AN EVALUATION OF PROJECT APPROACH
DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION CLASSES

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this investigation was to determine what units were being covered in a project-approach distributive education class, and to determine to what extent actual project methods were being employed by the teachers of these classes.

The procedure consisted of the following steps: (a) review of related literature to determine the need for such an investigation, (b) requests for addresses and names of coordinators were sent to all State Supervisors of Distributive Education in the United States, (c) one questionnaire was sent to a coordinator in each state for the purpose of evaluating the questionnaire prior to the time of mailing it to the entire population, (d) a questionnaire was then sent to each of the 218 distributive education coordinators in schools where there were project-approach programs in operation.

The investigation was limited to only the high school segment of distributive education and only programs that were in operation during the 1964-65 school year.

The main findings of the investigation were: (a) Twenty-two of the twenty-seven units listed in the questionnaire were taught in 80 per cent of the classes or more, and (b) The method of teaching most frequently employed was lecture--discussion--student reading which was termed "strictly academic" on the questionnaire.

Two of the major conclusions were that of the subjects not presented to the classes, some were covered in other classes or they were not a part of a distributive occupation and that coordinators are not using the project-approach method in teaching to its fullest extent.

From the results of this study, the following recommendations were made: (a) That a nation-wide meeting be called with the purpose of formally introducing and evaluating the developments of each state concerning the project-approach programs, and (b) That a basic uniform course outline be recognized so that these above-mentioned projects might be better utilized.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A main objective of education is to meet the needs of youth. Schools have the responsibility of providing the tools for young people to cope with problems of the future. "The need to develop a saleable skill by which to earn a living is common to all youth, even those whose economic circumstances might permit them to continue throughout life without earning. All persons need to feel economically competent in order to be well-adjusted human beings." (14)

With more rigid requirements for college entrance, greater competition, and increasing costs of higher education, the writer believes that it is the duty of the high school to provide such a saleable skill for the youth of today.

Large chain stores are urging young people to begin careers in retailing. The petroleum industry is spending millions of dollars trying to recruit qualified young people for careers in petroleum distribution. The large department stores have training programs and are recruiting talent for their organizations. On the local level, shoe stores, clothing stores, hardware stores, drugstores, and service stations have the same problem. They need good young people to train for fulltime employment. More stores are seeking to expand and grow with additional outlets; this is the pattern of distribution today. Finances and production facilities are available, but well-prepared, responsible employees and managers are needed badly. (22)

The outlook for distribution has never been brighter. For the first time, this segment of our economy is receiving favorable attention from high government circles. The Department of Commerce, the Small Business Administration, and the Department of Labor see in distribution a source of help in meeting some of our important economic problems including the maintenance of healthy economic growth, the stubborn unemployment problem, and the continuation of a favorable balance of trade. (22)

Some of the greatest demands for these skills are found in the distribution of goods and services, because distributive occupations include "53 per cent of all U.S. occupations." (10) "Distributive education--a vocational program of instruction in marketing, merchandising, and management" (18)--can, and does, provide such a saleable skill in the high school.

It is the belief of the investigator that project-approach training, a preparatory course for distributive education, is a definite necessity for the total high school distributive education program. It is the purpose of this investigation to find what units are being taught and to examine the various approaches used in presenting these units to the students. The motivation behind this study lies in the fact that although there are nine cooperative distributive education programs in the state of Montana, there is only one in which students attend a project-approach class.

Statement of Problem

One major reason for the sparsity of distributive education project-approach programs is lack of funds. With the passing of the Vocational Education Act of 1963, many programs have been created.

A report entitled "The Federal Government and Education," issued in June, 1963, by the House Committee on Education and Labor, states that distributive education is "handicapped by the legislative limitation which restricts training to persons over 16 years old who are already employed in distributive work."

The culmination of these statements is found in the Vocational Education Act of 1963 which includes a provision that "any amounts allotted (or appropriated) under such titles, Act, or Acts

for distributive occupations may be used for vocational education for any person over 14 years of age who has entered upon, or is preparing to enter upon, such an occupation, and such education need not be provided in part-time or evening schools."

These statements of position and policy indicate that much greater emphasis should, and will, be given to the preparation of youth and adults for careers in merchandising and marketing. (1)

The purpose of this investigation is to collect data from existing project-approach distributive education programs for evaluation of course content and teaching methods.

Procedure

The following procedures were used by the investigator during the course of his investigation:

1. A review of the literature in the field was made to determine the need for such an evaluation.
2. A request for addresses and names of coordinators was sent to all State Supervisors of Distributive Education in the United States.
3. One questionnaire was sent to a coordinator in each state for the purpose of evaluating the questionnaire prior to the time of mailing it to the entire population.
4. A questionnaire was sent to 218 distributive education coordinators in schools where pre-employment programs are in operation.
5. Validity of the questionnaire was checked by two experts--G. Dean Palmer, staff of Montana State University, and Lyle V. Brenna, State Supervisor of Distributive Education, Idaho.

Limitations

This investigation was limited by the following:

1. It was the feeling of the investigator that theoretical programs or those just in planning stages are too idealistic for

use in this paper, so the survey was confined to programs presently in operation.

2. The investigation was limited only to that part of the distributive education program concerning high school students since the project-approach method is used in the high school division of distributive education.

Definition of Terms

In order to insure clarity for the reader, the following terms are defined by the writer:

1. distributive education--a vocational program of instruction in marketing, merchandising, and management offered on three levels: high school, post-secondary, and adult.
2. distributive education teacher-coordinator--the person who teaches the daily vocational class, or classes, and coordinates the school program with the employment learning experiences.
3. project-approach program--a program in distributive education designed specifically for those students interested in a career in distribution and taken prior to the cooperative program.
4. cooperative program--a program in which the student spends part of the school day learning various aspects of distribution in a business laboratory and part of the day in formal classes learning the theory behind the practical application.
5. business laboratory--a business establishment that cooperates with the school in hiring and educating distributive education students on a part-time basis.
6. project-approach--the learning experience includes field trips, individual observation, research, constructing manuals (i.e. actual practice in applying the skills necessary for a career in distribution.)
7. distributive occupations--those occupations which aid in the movement of goods from the primary producer to the ultimate consumer without materially changing the product.

The following definitions were given on the questionnaire:

1. no--the subject is not covered in the course of study.

2. strictly academic--the subject is covered only by lecture, discussion, and student reading.
3. field trip--the class is sent as a group to an appropriate place for a learning experience.
4. individual observation--individual students are required to go to an appropriate place such as a business house to observe a phase of business activity which correlates with their instruction.
5. manual--students are instructed to assemble a manual such as a merchandise manual used in the National DECA contests.
6. research--students are instructed to acquire further information through libraries, etc.
7. practice--the students actually participate in the activity such as making displays or advertising layouts.
8. other explain _____ --if there is a learning activity or teaching method that is not covered in this questionnaire, please explain briefly.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The Need for a Study of Project-Approach D.E. Programs

After a review of the literature, it is the belief of the investigator that each state which offers distributive education project-approach classes is working independently towards course content and teaching approaches. This is substantiated by correspondence with various State Supervisors of Distributive Education and a Program Specialist for Distributive Education from the U.S. Office of Education.

A conference was called at the University of Idaho in August, 1963, to develop a curriculum guide for the project-approach distributive education classes of Idaho. As a result of this conference, a bulletin was developed called Distributive Education Pre-employment Curriculum and Projects, and Mr. Lyle V. Brenna sent the bulletin to several state supervisors. The following quotations, stating appreciation for receiving the bulletin, are from letters these supervisors wrote to Mr. Brenna. "Congratulations on your Distributive Education Pre-employment Curriculum and Projects publication. This is certainly one of the first publications in this area that I have seen, and I'm sure it will help us here within our State with our deliberations." (17) "Thank you very much for your preparatory distributive education curriculum. This will come in very handy as we plan to develop preparatory distributive education." (25) "Thank you very much for the pre-employment curriculum. Interchange of materials between all of the states would help each of us considerably, and we will attempt to reciprocate when we have something which might be of interest

to you." (6) "This is an area which we are toying with, but have done little with as yet, and we certainly appreciate your making this available to us." (4)

Arnold H. Scolnick, speaking in terms of preparatory programs, in an article entitled "Distributive Education--1970" says,

Since distributive education will assume a more important role in the high school by 1970, distributive educators are becoming more concerned than ever before as to what can be done to strengthen their program in order to make it more vital and realistic. Changes are taking place that will give greater significance and status to this curriculum area. Some schools have been experimenting with new ideas to meet these challenges while others are waiting and watching. (29)

The above quotations help to illustrate the need for the expansion of distributive education as well as the need for research such as this investigation.

According to the Summary Report of the Panel of Consultants on Vocational Education, "58 million now at work will still be employed . . . 26 million young workers will start work, 1960-1970." (33) With this expanding need for young people to acquire a saleable skill, distributive education must strive to assume its share of this obligation.

Studies show that a very large percentage of students who take college preparatory courses in high school or junior college do not go on to college. They form a great middle-class group between the relatively small number who actually continue university or college studies and the similarly small group who, at the end of high school, have a reasonably good background for getting a job. (9)

The question arises, "How well prepared are students who have taken college preparatory courses in high school for vocational placement?" Perhaps distributive education can answer this question by providing such

a saleable skill for these young workers. This does not mean that students should follow only a business course in high school but rather, when possible, students should take distributive education in addition to college preparatory courses.

The development of vocational competencies in the business subjects is most desirable due to the fact that some college students must support themselves in part or in full while attending college.

A strong preparation in business developed in high school is valuable for the student who may attend college a semester, a year or so, but who does not complete the college program. Over 50 per cent of the students nationally who enter four-year colleges today withdraw for any one of several reasons within the first two years. The student who has developed a vocational competency in business while in high school is in a more favorable position to secure employment if he finds that he must withdraw from college before graduation. (24)

"The Social and Economic evolution is obvious, a broader program of vocational and technical education is imminent, the guidelines are drawn. Distributive education is ready for further innovations and challenges in vocational education." (27)

A report of the National Distribution Council, an advisory group to the Secretary of Commerce, entitled, "The Importance of Education in Distribution," makes the following statement: "Several characteristics of the current marketing situation in the United States indicate the special need for increasing and strengthening education in distribution." (1)

The Role of the Project-Approach Distributive Education Program

Speaking in terms of preparatory distributive education, John H. Beaumont says, "This instruction is designed for youth who wish to

prepare for distributive occupations. The student acquires skills, knowledge, and functional information prior to gaining employment in the occupation." (1) When a student is placed in a job during his twelfth year of school, he should have some understanding of business and as much experience in it as possible. A project-approach class is one way of providing the student with this experience. A typical class might offer advertising, business communications, careers in distribution, economics of distribution, display, human relations, personality development, merchandising, receiving and marking, securing a job, salesmanship, and management.

Additionally, this program helps the student evaluate his own feelings about continuing his education in the distribution of goods and services. Should the student decide not to continue with distributive education, he has still gained valuable information and some skills vital in securing a job.

Since it is difficult to cover all needed phases of distributive education in one year, the project-approach class is invaluable. In it the basic elements needed to place a student in a learning-earning situation are covered, thus leaving some of the more difficult theories and applications for the senior year.

According to Arnold N. Scolnick, "Pre-employment training should become an integral part of the distributive education program. It would provide the proper foundation in preparing youth for a job, and it would help to keep in school many students who are dissatisfied with the traditional curriculum by giving them practical job training." (29)

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF PROJECT-APPROACH PROGRAMS

A letter of introduction was sent to one person in charge of distributive education in every state asking for names and addresses of all coordinators who taught a project-approach distributive education class. A subsequent letter was sent to those states that did not report within a reasonable length of time. Eighty-four per cent of the states did report; but those that did not were: Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, New Jersey, and Virginia.

Of the entire population, thirty-four per cent reported having no project-method classes--which group includes: Alaska, Arkansas, California, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Utah, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

The following states reported having one or more project-approach classes in operation: Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Vermont, Washington, and West Virginia. The percentage return of each state is given in Table 1.

The questionnaire used in this investigation consisted of seven parts. Part 1 contained an introduction and statement of purpose, and a list of definitions used on the questionnaire was given in Part 2. (The definitions appear in Chapter I of this paper.) Part 3 consisted of the assumptions that some lecture, student reading (i.e. textbook), and class discussion are involved in all subjects covered; and that outside

TABLE 1. STATES REPORTING IN THE SURVEY, NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES SENT, RETURNED, AND PERCENTAGE OF RETURN

State	Questionnaires Sent	Questionnaires Returned	Percent of Return
1. Alabama	1	0	0.0
2. Alaska	0	-	-
3. Arizona	6	3	50.0
4. Arkansas	0	-	-
5. California	0	-	-
6. Delaware	0	-	-
7. Florida	2	0	0.0
8. Georgia	0	-	-
9. Hawaii	0	-	-
10. Idaho	4	3	75.0
11. Indiana	30	17	56.6
12. Iowa	15	2	13.3
13. Louisiana	3	1	33.3
14. Maine	2	1	50.0
15. Maryland	3	2	66.7
16. Massachusetts	8	2	25.0
17. Minnesota	23	11	47.8
18. Mississippi	0	-	-
19. Missouri	0	-	-
20. Montana	1	1	100.0
21. Nebraska	0	-	-
22. Nevada	0	-	-
23. New Hampshire	1	1	100.0
24. New Mexico	0	-	-
25. New York	37	16	43.3
26. North Carolina	40	24	60.0
27. North Dakota	0	-	-
28. Ohio	1	0	0.0
29. Oklahoma	0	-	-
30. Oregon	1	1	100.0
31. Pennsylvania	10	8	80.0
32. Rhode Island	1	1	100.0
33. South Carolina	8	4	50.0
34. South Dakota	9	2	22.2
35. Tennessee	0	-	-
36. Texas	1	1	100.0
37. Utah	0	-	-
38. Vermont	5	1	20.0
39. Washington	3	3	100.0
40. West Virginia	2	0	0.0
41. Wisconsin	0	-	-
42. Wyoming	0	-	-

speakers, (i.e. bankers, retailers, wholesalers) were invited to lecture whenever appropriate. The first assumption was stated because this would greatly contract the length and complexity of the questionnaire. The second assumption was made because of the variations in the size of cities and, therefore, the resource personnel. It was hypothesized by the investigator that each teacher would know the possibilities in his town as well as the appropriateness and competency of the potential resource people. A simple set of directions were given in Part 4, and in the 5th part was an example illustrating the manner in which to fill out the questionnaire. The major part of the instrument, Part 6, consisted of 27 subject areas which may have been taught in a project-approach class. These subjects included the following: advertising, business communications, business law, buying, careers in distribution, control--turnover, credit and collections, customer services and policies (including wrapping), display, economics of distribution, human relations, insurance, management, market research, merchandise information, merchandising, pricing policies, product--brand--and packaging policies, receiving--marking--and storing, record keeping--accounting, securing a job, selling, store layout, store location, store organization, store systems--money handling, and transportation.

Following each subject, eight choices were given for the teacher to check with regard to what teaching approaches were used and whether or not the subject was covered in the class at all. These choices included: no, strictly academic, field trip, individual observation, manual, research, practice, and other--explain. The choices were listed under three blank spaces for the insertion of subjects covered in the class that were not listed on the questionnaire.

The final part was devoted to a section for comments and the name, school, city, and state of the person who filled out the questionnaire.

The recipients of the questionnaire were to indicate what methods were used in the teaching of the subject, if it were covered, by placing check marks in appropriate spaces.

A questionnaire, accompanied by a letter of explanation, was sent to one teacher in each state. In this letter, the recipients were told that one person in every state received this questionnaire with the intent of having them fill it out and giving an evaluation of the questionnaire with respect to subjects covered, format, and explanations; moreover, they were asked to make any suggestions that they felt would make the instrument more valuable and usable in any aspect. When these preliminary questionnaires were returned to the investigator, the original questionnaire was slightly revised in the light of these findings and then prepared for mailing to the remaining teachers.

The entire population was used in the study, and the remaining 192 teachers were sent questionnaires. Of the 217 questionnaires sent, 105, or 48.38 per cent, were returned in usable form. Due to misinterpretation of the investigator or the state supervisor, seven questionnaires were not used--six that were sent to schools with cooperative distributive education classes only and one to a post-high school.

The states where questionnaires were sent are shown on Table 1 as well as the number of questionnaires sent to each state, the number returned, and the percentage of return.

Report on Units of Study Covered

The recipients of the questionnaire were given the opportunity to indicate whether or not each of the areas of study were covered in the project-approach class. The survey revealed that business law was not covered in 48.6 per cent of the classes. The other most frequently omitted areas were: record keeping, 34.3 per cent; market research, 30.5 per cent; insurance, 28.6 per cent; and transportation, 21.0 per cent. According to the survey, the following units of study were omitted in 10 to 20 per cent of the returns: price, brand, and packaging policies, 15.2 per cent; management, 14.3 per cent; control policies, 13.3 per cent; credit policies, 12.4 per cent; and business communications, 12.4 per cent.

The following units were covered in 90 per cent or more of the programs surveyed: buying, 90.5 per cent; pricing policies, 91.4 per cent; store location and store systems, 91.4 per cent; economics of distribution, merchandise information, and store layout, 92.4 per cent; store organization, 93.3 per cent; display, 94.3 per cent; customer services, human relations, and receiving and marking, 95.2 per cent; merchandising, 97.1 per cent; advertising and careers in distribution, 98.1 per cent. The two units of study covered in every program were securing a job and selling.

The questionnaire invited teachers to list any subjects covered in the class that were not listed. The following units of study were mentioned more than once: business math--4; psychology--personality development--3; show-card lettering--3; textiles--3; security of distributive occupations--2; distributive education orientation--2; fashion--2; and grooming--2. Table 2 gives rank-order of subjects covered.

TABLE 2. RANK-ORDER OF UNITS COVERED

Unit	Percentage of Classes Covering
1. Securing a Job	100.0
2. Selling	100.0
3. Advertising	98.1
4. Careers in Distribution	98.1
5. Merchandising	97.1
6. Customer Services	95.2
7. Human Relations	95.2
8. Receiving, Marking, and Storing	95.2
9. Display	94.3
10. Store Organization	93.3
11. Economics of Distribution	92.4
12. Merchandise Information	92.4
13. Store Layout	92.4
14. Pricing Policies	91.4
15. Store Location	91.4
16. Store Systems	91.4
17. Buying	90.5
18. Business Communications	87.6
19. Credit and Collections	87.6
20. Control--Turnover	86.7
21. Management	85.7
22. Product, Brand, Packag- ing Policies	84.8
23. Transportation	79.1
24. Insurance	77.4
25. Market Research	69.5
26. Record Keeping	65.7
27. Business Law	51.4

Approaches Used in Teaching Various Units of Study

Advertising was covered in 98.1 per cent of all the classes.

Those who indicated that the subject was covered in a strictly academic manner made up 8.6 per cent of the total. Actual practice was employed in 76.2 per cent of the classes; field trips were taken in 30.5 per cent; and research was done by 26.7 per cent. Individual observation and assembling of manuals were used in 25.7 per cent and 23.8 per cent, respectively.

Business Communications was covered in 87.6 per cent of the cases.

Actual practice was the primary teaching approach, being used in 47.7 per cent of the classes. Of the questionnaires received, 23.8 per cent reported this subject as being covered in a strictly academic manner. Research was the project method most often used in 18.1 per cent of the classes, and individual observation was a method used in 11.4 per cent. All other teaching methods were employed in less than 10 per cent of the classes.

Business Law was the subject on the questionnaire most frequently omitted from the course of study (48.6 per cent of the 105 returns.) Of the 54 teachers that did cover the subject, 38 used the academic approach. The project method was used in less than 6 per cent of the cases.

The subject of Buying was a unit that was covered in 90.5 per cent of the classes. The academic approach was used exclusively by 37.1 per cent of the teachers. The project methods used, about equally, were: research, 24.8 per cent; individual observation, 23.8 per cent; and practice, 22.8 per cent. The returns showed that 17.1 per cent of the classes used the field trip and 13.3 per cent, a manual.

Careers in Distribution was covered in all but two of the classes, and the use of research was preferred by teachers as the teaching method in 54.3 per cent of those classes. Individual observation was done by the students in 34.3 per cent of the classes, and field trips were taken by 24.8 per cent. Manuals were assembled in 19.1 per cent of the cases. Actual practice, consisting of role playing, panel discussions, and case studies, was used as the teaching method in 15.2 per cent of the classes.

Control--Turnover was covered in 86.7 per cent of the classes; the predominant teaching method used was a strictly academic approach, 45.7 per cent. Practice was done in 25.7 per cent of the classes, and 12.4 per cent used research as a learning experience. Other methods were all employed but comprised less than 10 per cent of the class time.

Credit and Collection was taught in 87.6 per cent of the reported classes and was primarily approached as a strictly academic area 49.5 per cent of the time. Research and practice each comprised 16.2 per cent of class time in this area. Between 10 and 12 per cent of the questionnaires revealed that field trips, individual observation, and manuals were used.

Customer Service was taught by actual practice in 44.8 per cent of the cases. Individual observation was used as a teaching method in 32.4 per cent of the classes, and 23.8 per cent of them covered this in a strictly academic manner. Field trips were utilized in 15.2 per cent of the cases and research 14.3 per cent of the time in this unit which was taught in over 95 per cent of the classes. Only 9.5 per cent of the instructors used manuals as a learning experience.

A unit on Display was incorporated in 94.3 per cent of all classes. Individual observation was the teaching method used more than any other, and this constituted 51.4 per cent. Field trips were used for learning experiences in 42.9 per cent of all classes. In 22.9 per cent of the classes, research was done by students and in 15.2 per cent, manuals were assembled. Practice was done in 14.3 per cent of the schools, and the number of teachers that covered this area in a strictly academic manner constituted a mere 3.8 per cent of the total.

Economics of Distribution was taught in 92.4 per cent of the classes with 61.0 per cent of them using the strictly academic approach. The only other approach used in more than 10 per cent of the classes was research, which was 19.1 per cent.

Human Relations was covered in more than 95 per cent of all classes with the major method of instruction being strictly academic 44.8 per cent of the time. Practice was used in 30.5 per cent of all classes, and 28.6 per cent used individual observation as a project method. In 14.3 per cent of the classes, research was done by the students, and less than 7.0 per cent of the questionnaires indicated the use of manuals and field trips.

A unit on Insurance was covered in only 71.4 per cent of the classes; and the majority of the time, 53.3 per cent, the academic approach was used. All other approaches were used in less than 10.0 per cent of the programs with the exception of individual observation, which was not used.

Management was studied in 85.7 per cent of the reporting schools; the favored method was strictly academic, 47.6 per cent, and practice was

used 16.2 per cent of the time. Field trips, individual observation, and research methods were employed equally in 13.3 per cent of the programs. Manuals were constructed in 8, or 7.6 per cent, of all classes.

Market Research was omitted in 30.5 per cent of the returns.

Where utilized, the main approach was academic, 25.7 per cent, and research was an understandable second with 23.8 per cent. The survey revealed that practice was the method used in 21.0 per cent of the classes. Field trips, manuals, and individual observation were used, but only in less than 8 per cent of the cases.

Merchandise Information was covered in 92.4 per cent of all classes; and manuals were constructed in about half, or 49.5 per cent, of the cases. Only 9.5 per cent of the classes received this unit in a strictly academic fashion. The use of the other teaching methods were as follows: research, 39.1 per cent; practice, 37.1 per cent; individual observation, 26.7 per cent; and field trips, 21.0 per cent.

Merchandising, one of the subjects most often taught, was presented in 97.1 per cent of all classes. Practice was stressed in 34.3 per cent of the cases, and the other categories were all used between 20 and 30 per cent of the time.

A unit on Pricing Policies was stressed in 91.4 per cent of all classes. Of the instructors reporting, 43.8 per cent used the academic method only. Individual observation and practice were used in 25.7 per cent and 24.8 per cent of the classes, respectively. Research was assigned in 12.4 per cent of the cases, and the other methods were used in less than 10 per cent of the programs.

Product, Brand, and Packaging Policies were reported as being taught in 84.7 per cent of the cases. According to the survey, 34.3 per cent of the classes used the academic approach. Of the other approaches used, individual observation was the most popular, 26.7 per cent, followed in order by: research, 19.1 per cent; practice, 14.3 per cent; field trips, 11.4 per cent; and manuals, only 9.5 per cent.

Receiving, Marking, and Storing of goods was covered in 95.3 per cent of the classes. Practice was used in 37.1 per cent of the classes, and the material was presented in an academic manner in 31.4 per cent of the programs. Individual observations and field trips were used about equally, 26.7 per cent and 24.8 per cent, respectively. Manuals were assembled in 10.5 per cent of the classes, and student research was assigned in 8.6 per cent of them.

It was learned from the survey that Record Keeping was not covered in 34.3 per cent of the classes; however, of the classes presenting this material, 30.5 per cent used practice as the primary teaching method. The strictly academic approach was used in 26.7 per cent of the classes. The other methods were all used in less than 10.5 per cent of the classes.

Securing a Job is one of the two subjects taught in all cases reporting, and practice was the favored method used by instructors as testified by 73.3 per cent of the questionnaires. Individual observation and research were used 24.8 per cent, and 23.8 per cent respectively. Returns indicated that the strictly academic manner was employed in only 18.1 per cent of the programs. Field trips were made in 12.4 per cent of all cases, and research was pursued in 9.5 per cent of the classes.

Selling, the other area incorporated in all of the project-approach classes, stressed the importance of practice in 81.0 per cent of all cases. Individual observation was a strong second with 55.2 per cent of the classes employing this method. Research and field trips were favored by 25.7 per cent and 24.8 per cent of the programs, respectively. Manuals were required in 19.1 per cent of the classes, and the strictly academic approach was employed only by 7.6 per cent of the classes.

A unit of study on Store Layout was used in 92.4 per cent of all classes. Individual observation was used 42.8 per cent of the time as a learning experience, closely followed by practice 41.0 per cent. Instructors used the strictly academic approach in 19.1 per cent of the classes. Field trips were taken in 24.8 per cent of the classes, and research was stressed in 21.0 per cent of them. Manuals were assigned in 13.3 per cent of the classes.

Store Location, taught in 93.4 per cent of the classes, was covered in an academic manner 37.1 per cent of the time. Individual observation was employed in 35.2 per cent of the classes; and three nearly equal approaches were: field trips, 17.1 per cent; practice, 17.1 per cent; and research, 18.1 per cent. Manuals were constructed to emphasize this area in 10.5 per cent of all programs.

In 93.3 per cent of the programs, a unit on Store Organization was taught. The strictly academic teaching method was used in 53.3 per cent of the classes. Practice and individual observation were used 18.1 per cent of the time. Research was done in 14.3 per cent of the classes, and field trips were taken in less than 7.0 per cent of all programs.

A unit on Store Systems was covered in 91.4 per cent of the programs with practice being used the majority of the time at 53.3 per cent. The strictly academic approach was used in 21.0 per cent of all cases; individual observation was done by students in 26.7 per cent of the classes; research was conducted in 11.4 per cent; and field trips and manuals were used in less than 5.0 per cent of all programs represented.

Transportation, an area taught in 79.0 per cent of the programs, was primarily covered in an academic manner, 58.1 per cent of the time. All other teaching approaches were used; however, none of these were utilized more than 8.0 per cent of the time.

Table 3 gives the percentage of methods used in each subject.

TABLE 3. PERCENTAGES OF APPROACHES USED

Unit	Percentages of Approaches Used					
	Strictly Academic	Field Trip	Individual Observation	Manual	Research	Actual Practice
Advertising	8.57	30.48	25.71	23.81	26.67	76.19
Business Communications	23.81	7.62	11.43	9.52	18.10	47.62
Business Law	36.19	1.90	1.90	2.86	4.76	5.71
Buying	37.14	17.14	23.81	13.33	24.76	22.86
Careers in Distribution	26.67	24.76	34.29	19.05	54.29	15.24
Control--Turnover	45.71	1.90	9.52	6.67	12.38	25.71
Credit and Collections	49.52	11.43	11.43	10.48	16.19	16.19
Customer Services	23.81	15.24	32.38	9.52	14.29	44.76
Display	3.81	42.86	51.43	15.24	22.86	14.29
Economics of Distribution	60.95	5.71	6.67	5.71	19.05	7.62
Human Relations	44.76	1.90	28.57	6.67	14.29	30.47
Insurance	53.33	2.86	0.00	4.76	8.57	4.76
Management	47.62	13.33	13.33	7.62	13.33	16.19
Market Research	25.71	3.81	6.67	7.62	23.81	20.95
Merchandise Information	9.52	20.95	26.67	49.52	39.05	37.14
Merchandising	28.57	25.71	29.52	20.00	20.95	34.29
Pricing Policies	43.81	6.67	25.71	7.62	12.38	24.76
Product, Brand, Packaging Policies	34.29	11.43	26.67	9.52	19.05	14.29
Receiving, Marking, and Storing	31.43	24.76	26.67	10.48	8.57	37.14
Record Keeping	26.67	.95	10.48	3.81	2.86	30.48
Securing a Job	18.10	12.38	24.76	9.52	23.81	73.33
Selling	7.62	24.76	55.24	19.05	25.71	80.95
Store Layout	19.05	24.76	42.86	13.33	20.95	40.95
Store Location	37.14	17.14	35.24	10.48	18.10	17.14
Store Organization	53.33	6.67	18.10	9.52	14.29	18.10
Store Systems	20.95	4.76	26.67	4.76	11.43	53.33
Transportation	58.10	4.76	5.71	1.90	7.62	2.86

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

After a review of the literature, it was decided by the investigator that the need for a study of project-approach distributive education classes was evident; therefore, he sent for the names and addresses of all schools and teachers that had previously conducted project-approach education classes. Eighty-four per cent of all the states in the United States were represented in the study; of this percentage, twenty-five states reported having one or more of these programs.

A preliminary questionnaire was sent to one teacher in each state for two purposes: (a) to have them complete the questionnaire, and (b) to have them express their opinions and make recommendations that they felt would improve the study. After revision, the questionnaires and follow-up letters were sent. Of the 217 questionnaires sent, 105 were returned in usable form, thus making this a return of 48.4 per cent.

Of the units of study listed, all were covered in more than 50 per cent of the programs; the two that were covered in all cases were securing a job and selling. The following subjects were taught in more than 90 per cent of all cases reporting: advertising; buying; careers in distribution; customer services; display; economics of distribution; human relations; merchandise information; merchandising; pricing policies; receiving, marking, and storing; store layout; store organization; and store systems--money handling.

In addition to the above, 80 to 90 per cent of the returns indicated that the following units were covered: business communications;

control--turnover; credit and collection; management; and product, brand, and packaging policies. In at least 70 per cent of all programs, insurance and transportation units were presented. Of the remaining areas of study, market research was taught in 69.5 per cent of the classes, record keeping in 65.7 per cent, and business law in 51.4 per cent.

The survey also indicated what approaches were used in the teaching of the various units. The method of teaching most frequently employed was lecture--discussion--student reading which was termed "strictly academic" on the questionnaire; this was used in 920 of the total of 2835 cases. The next-favored technique was "practice" which was used in 853 cases; the third-most-often-used method was "individual observation," 642. Research by the students was assigned in 523 instances; field trips were taken in conjunction with various units in 385; and manuals were made by students in 328.

Conclusions

Business law, record keeping, market research, insurance, and transportation were shown to be omitted by approximately 50 to 80 per cent of the questionnaires. It is the opinion of the investigator, and obviously the judgment of the teachers, that--with the exception of record keeping--these subjects would better be covered in the second-year cooperative program. Two possible explanations for this are: (a) These subjects are not essential to meet the objectives of the project-approach course, and (b) due to limited class time, other subjects are needed more by the students in acquiring the skills that they should have at the

completion of this class. Record keeping was not covered, because students become familiar with this in many separate units of study; moreover, record keeping on a full-time basis is not a distributive occupation. Also many schools offer a separate course in record keeping.

It was concluded by the investigator that since the strictly academic approach was used as the primary teaching method, the teachers are not adequately preparing the students to meet the objectives outlined for the course. The name "project-approach" indicates the use of projects as a prime factor in teaching the class. It is the duty of the teacher of this class to provide actual projects or learning experiences in the classroom that will enhance the student's value to the employer when the former becomes a learning worker.

Selling, one of the most important units for the class, was actually practiced by only 80.5 per cent of all the classes reporting; practice was used as a method by a greater percentage in this unit than any other unit. Of all opportunities in which practice could be applied, only 30 per cent of the teachers used it. This alone definitely shows the need for further development of practical application of methods.

Since there were no classes in which actual practice was completely omitted, the survey shows that it is not impossible to provide this type of learning experience. Transportation, insurance, and business law would possibly be the most difficult areas in which to incorporate practice as evidenced by the fact that less than 6 per cent of the units involved utilized it; however, role playing, mock trials, and panel discussions could be adapted to these categories. Further development is obviously necessary in these fields.

In such units as careers in distribution and merchandise information, research was the main method used; this is essential, logical, and definitely a preferred method in these cases. Yet this approach was used only in 54.3 per cent and 39.1 per cent of the afore-mentioned units, respectively.

Taking store organization as an example, in which 53.3 per cent of the teachers indicated that the unit was covered strictly academically, 18.1 per cent reported using actual practice and the same number used individual observation. Research was a project employed in 14.3 per cent of the cases, manuals in 9.5 per cent, and field trips were taken in 6.7 per cent. It is concluded by the investigator that if these project methods were shared throughout the entire population, then project-approach distributive education in the United States would be up-graded to fulfill its objectives and subsequently to advance.

It is simply this; in the opinion of the investigator, when one state does a satisfactory job of preparing its teachers for their part in distributive education, the information should be distributed for evaluation and use throughout the United States. Let us have improved interstate communication as well as interstate cooperation.

Recommendations

It is the recommendation of the investigator that a nation-wide meeting be called with the purpose of formally introducing and evaluating the developments of each state concerning the project-approach programs with primary emphasis on the actual projects to be used in the

course. If it is not feasible to have a special meeting for this purpose, perhaps each state could delegate one of its qualified members to attend a special meeting for this purpose immediately preceeding the National DECA Leadership Conference. This would involve additional meals and lodging for the delegate, but the major expense of travel would be eliminated.

It is also recommended that a basic uniform course outline be recognized so that these above-mentioned projects might be better utilized. Finally, it is recommended that the actual projects be designed general enough to be used by all students yet specific enough to accomplish individually desired objectives.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Letter Sent to State Supervisors

Burley High School
Burley, Idaho
January 15, 1965

Mr. State Supervisor
State Office
State Capitol Building
City, State

Dear Mr. Supervisor:

As partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Education degree in the Department of Education at Montana State University, I am writing a professional paper entitled "An Evaluation of Pre-Employment Distributive Education Classes."

The afore-mentioned evaluation will be based upon a survey of all high school Distributive Education Coordinators in the U.S. who have in operation a pre-employment or pre-cooperative class in either the 10th or 11th grade. I am particularly interested in the teaching approach and course content.

I would appreciate very much the names and addresses of such teacher-coordinators in your state.

Sincerely yours,

Charles L. Kintz
Distributive Education Coordinator

P.S. I will be most happy to send to you the results of the survey if you so desire.

Enclosure

APPENDIX B

Initial Letter Sent to Coordinators with Original Questionnaire

Burley High School
Burley, Idaho
March 30, 1965

Mr. Coordinator
High School
Street
City, State

Dear Mr. Coordinator:

The enclosed questionnaire is being sent to one D.E. Coordinator in each state in which there is a Project Method (Non-Cooperative) Distributive Education class. You have been selected as that person in your state.

It is my hope that you will cooperate with me in this endeavor by completing this questionnaire and be of further assistance by adding your comments and criticisms of it. From these suggested changes, I will prepare a final questionnaire that will then be sent to every coordinator in your state who has a Project Method D.E. class.

This study was designed to further the goals of Distributive Education throughout the United States, and your State Supervisor will receive a copy of the results.

Very truly yours,

Charles L. Kintz
D.E. Coordinator
Burley, Idaho

Enclosures 2

APPENDIX C

Questionnaire

Dear Coordinator:

I have received your name from your state supervisor and it is our wish that you fill out the following questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire is to determine what subjects are covered in a project-approach (non-cooperative) distributive education class and what methods of instruction are used.

It is my hope that the results of this questionnaire will be used to further the aims of distributive education in the United States.

It is extremely important that this be filled out as soon as possible and returned in the enclosed addressed envelope.

Thank you,

Charles L. Kintz
D.E. Coordinator

DEFINITIONS:

No - the subject is not covered in the course of study.

Strictly academic - the subject is covered only by lecture, student reading, and discussion.

Field trip - the class is sent as a group to an appropriate place for a learning experience.

Individual observation - students are required to go to an appropriate place such as a business house to observe a phase of business individually.

Manual - students are instructed to assemble a manual such as a merchandise manual used in the National DECA contests.

Research - students are instructed to acquire further information through libraries, etc.

Practice - the students actually participate in the activity such as making displays or advertising layouts.

Other explain_____ - if there is a learning activity or teaching method that is not covered in this questionnaire, please explain briefly.

This includes any uses of special audio-visual equipment.

ASSUMPTIONS:

We shall assume that some lecture, student reading (such as in a textbook), and class discussion are involved in all of the subjects covered. Also assume that outside speakers, such as bankers, retailers, wholesalers, are invited to lecture whenever appropriate.

DIRECTIONS:

Please indicate how the subject is taught by checking the appropriate box or boxes which describes it best. If the subject is not covered, check no.

EXAMPLE:

Assume that you teach a unit of study in advertising; and during this time, the students go to a local newspaper office and observe an advertisement from the planning stages to the finished product, and that the students then return to the classroom and create advertising layouts themselves.

0. ADVERTISING

No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____

1. ADVERTISING

No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____

2. BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

No-- :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____

3. BUSINESS LAW

No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____

4. BUYING

No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____

5. CAREERS IN DISTRIBUTION

No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____

6. CONTROL -- TURNOVER

No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____

7. CREDIT AND COLLECTION

No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____

8. CUSTOMER SERVICES AND POLICIES (INCLUDING WRAPPING)

No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____

9. DISPLAY

No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____

10. ECONOMICS OF DISTRIBUTION
 No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
 Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____
11. HUMAN RELATIONS
 No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
 Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____
12. INSURANCE
 No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
 Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____
13. MANAGEMENT
 No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
 Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____
14. MARKET RESEARCH
 No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
 Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____
15. MERCHANDISE INFORMATION
 No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
 Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____
16. MERCHANDISING
 No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
 Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____
17. PRICING POLICIES
 No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
 Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____
18. PRODUCT, BRAND, AND PACKAGING POLICIES
 No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
 Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____
19. RECEIVING, MARKING, AND STORING
 No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
 Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____
20. RECORD KEEPING -- ACCOUNTING
 No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
 Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____
21. SECURING A JOB
 No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
 Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____
22. SELLING
 No__ :Strictly academic__ :Field trip__ :Individual observation__ :
 Manual__ :Research__ :Practice__ :Other__ explain_____

23. STORE LAYOUT
No__ :Strictly academic__:Field trip__:Individual observation__:
Manual__:Research__:Practice__:Other__explain_____
24. STORE LOCATION
No__ :Strictly academic__:Field trip__:Individual observation__:
Manual__:Research__:Practice__:Other__explain_____
25. STORE ORGANIZATION
No__ :Strictly academic__:Field trip__:Individual observation__:
Manual__:Research__:Practice__:Other__explain_____
26. STORE SYSTEMS -- MONEY HANDLING
No__ :Strictly academic__:Field trip__:Individual observation__:
Manual__:Research__:Practice__:Other__explain_____
27. TRANSPORTATION
No__ :Strictly academic__:Field trip__:Individual observation__:
Manual__:Research__:Practice__:Other__explain_____
28. _____
No__ :Strictly academic__:Field trip__:Individual observation__:
Manual__:Research__:Practice__:Other__explain_____
29. _____
No__ :Strictly academic__:Field trip__:Individual observation__:
Manual__:Research__:Practice__:Other__explain_____
30. _____
No__ :Strictly academic__:Field trip__:Individual observation__:
Manual__:Research__:Practice__:Other__explain_____

NAME _____

SCHOOL _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

COMMENTS: