

MANAGEMENT POLICIES CONCERNING THE EMPLOYMENT OF DISTRIBUTIVE
EDUCATION STUDENTS IN RETAIL GROCERY, SPECIALTY,
AND DEPARTMENT STORES IN BILLINGS, MONTANA

by

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

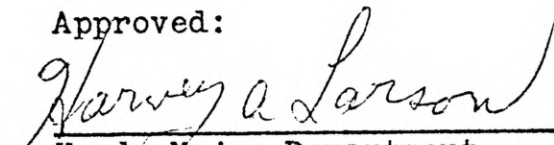
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The distributive education program at Billings Senior High School has been in operation since 1951, and a similar program was established at Billings West High School in 1963. At the present time some of the students in distributive education are not working. Many of the employed students in the cooperative distributive education program are not working in jobs related to their areas of interest. The writer has lived in, worked in business in, and taught in the school system of Billings during the past five years. He became interested in this study as he finds it difficult to understand why this situation concerning the part-time employment of these students exists. Because of its size, location, and business structure, Billings is generally felt to be the distribution center for a large portion of Montana and Northern Wyoming. The writer was unable to determine the last date on which a survey was conducted to determine the interest and willingness of the business managers in the community to cooperate in the training of these students. Cooperation between the schools and businesses in this area is advantageous to the students, the schools, the cooperating employers and the community as it strives to provide better educated and adjusted future employees.

Statement of Problem

The problem of this study is to determine if cooperative distributive education programs are being utilized in retail grocery, specialty, and department stores in Billings, Montana, to the maximum benefit of these stores, the students, the schools, and the community.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of this study is to determine answers to the following questions:

1. How many of the retail stores that are presently participating in the cooperative distributive education program plan to continue this policy?
2. If these types of stores are not presently involved in the cooperative distributive education program, would they be interested in participating in the program?
3. If they express a willingness to participate in the program, in which of the areas of distribution would they be willing to assist in the training of these students?
4. If a business indicates that it is not interested in participating in the cooperative distributive

education program, why does management have this attitude toward the program?

This study is needed for the students, the schools, the retail businesses, and the community if the result of this program is to be employable workers adjusted to the world of business.

Scope and Limitations

The writer with the assistance of School District Number 2 Administration selected retail businesses in the following categories: Grocery, specialty, and department stores. For the purposes of this study, it was felt that these businesses would be most likely to take part in the cooperative distributive education program in Billings and were of greatest interest as related to the Career Center scheduled to be opened in 1974. A random sample of these businesses listed in the 1972 Billings Telephone Directory will be used for this study.

The limitations of this study will be:

1. Only the retail businesses located in the Billings community will be sampled.
2. This study will include just those businesses listed in the 1972 Billings Telephone Directory.

3. The random sample of retail businesses will include only the categories grocery, specialty and department stores.
4. The review of literature is limited to the Montana State University Library and the library of the professional staff of the School of Commerce at Montana State University.
5. The review of literature is limited to publications of the years 1968 to 1974.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study the writer will use the following definition of terms.

Distributive Education (10:335): "... a program of instruction for people who are, or wish to be, engaged in the field of marketing and distribution."

Cooperative Education (10:93): "... the cooperative plan of vocational instruction using the work situation as a "school laboratory" in which occupational competencies are developed through supervised occupational experiences while related instruction is given in the school."

Department Store (11:346): "... handle a wide variety of goods such as women's ready-to-wear and accessories, men's and boy's wear, piece goods, housewares, and home furnishings."

The distinguishing characteristic of department stores is that they are organized into separate departments like limited line and specialty shops - for the purpose of promotion, service and control. They are normally large stores."

Grocery Store (11:350) "... is essentially a large store specializing in groceries. They also sell convenience goods, but in quantity."

Specialty Store (11:345) "... is a type of limited line store found in downtown areas, fashionable shopping districts, and large shopping centers. It usually is small, has a distinct personality, and aims at a carefully defined market segment by offering a unique product assortment, knowledgeable salesmen, and better service."

Assumptions

The writer assumes that through this study he plans to find that cooperative distributive education is not being utilized to its potential in Billings, Montana. The reason for this will probably be the fact that the retail businesses in the community are not familiar with the program. They do not realize the benefits to all concerned that would accrue from their participation in such a program as are indicated

in the Review of Literature section of this study. This unfamiliarity with the program by the retail businesses will probably be found to be a result of a lack of communication between the schools and the business community

Plan of Presentation

A random sample of 100 percent of the businesses in the classifications retail grocery and department stores and 50 percent of the businesses selected in the categories retail speciality stores as listed in the 1972 Billings Telephone Directory will be used for this study. The managers of the retail businesses selected in the random sample will be asked to reveal their interests in participating in the cooperative education program by completion of a questionnaire. The writer will mail the questionnaire and self-addressed return envelope along with the pamphlet "Distributive Education - Here's What It Will Do For You," furnished by the Marketing and Distributive Education Supervisor, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Helena, Montana, to the managers. Approximately one month later a follow-up letter will be sent to those businesses who have not returned the questionnaire.

The writer hopes that through this study the school, the retail businesses, and the community will become more aware of the cooperative distributive education program and its benefits. Through this awareness it is hoped that the program will be improved, expanded and placed in its proper prospective by all those concerned.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

The Billings Public School System offers a two-year distributive education program. The program in the junior year is designed to acquaint the students with the field of distribution and the factors affecting the various areas of distribution. This program is designed to give the students the knowledge and information necessary to assist them in selecting tentative future careers. The senior year program is a cooperative program where students may spend a minimum of one hour a week working at a job in the area of their tentative career choice and at least an hour a day in related classroom instruction. This program centers around the students but the schools, cooperating employers, and community benefit from the program too. The benefits to each of these groups will be shown separately in the following sections.

The Students

The cooperative distributive education program is necessary to assist the students enrolled in making career choices and in gaining valuable work experience because many of these students may be among the group seeking the type of jobs mentioned by Marland in this article "Educating for the Real World."

During this decade, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, only 2 of every 10 jobs will require a college degree, leaving the other 8 jobs open to a high school diploma or perhaps some non-degree postsecondary training (9:4).

Although the student may have difficulty selecting an area of distribution at this age, the program provides a situation in which the student has an opportunity to discover his true interests and abilities. The experience will help the student to gain confidence in himself and to realize the role our society expects him to play as a productive member of our labor force.

The classroom serves as the instructional center of the program with the employing agency providing the needed laboratory experiences. Through cooperative training, students become acting, participating members in the learning experience rather than passive recipients (16:21).

The student can relate the knowledge acquired in school to actual situations thereby increasing the value to him. Associating with adults while at work will help him to better understand the human factors in business (5:25).

Courtney (1:60) showed that in the wholesaling area of distribution alone 200,000 new employees are needed today to meet growth and replacement requirements. Students will have a jump on the job market through participating in this cooperative program.

The School

Scheduling students to allow for release time for their jobs may present problems, but by using the employer's business the school is able to enlarge its learning facilities without any major capital expenditures. The program provides an opportunity to bring the school and the business community together in an effort to develop a strong vocational program. An advisory committee, which consists of members from the various areas of distribution and school officials, reviews the goals and objectives of the program, the content to be taught and is invaluable in helping locate training stations for students (8:22). When the student is able to see the value of his classes as related to his tentative career objective, he is more likely to retain an interest in formal education (8:18). A survey was taken of the graduates of the classes 1971, 1972, and 1973 of Fox High School in Arnold, Missouri who had participated in the distributive education program. All those responding indicated they would take distributive education again if they were back in high school and that they would recommend the program to future students of Fox High School (3:46).

The school should have a good coordinator to guide the students, to handle the related training, and to supervise

the students on the job. The success or failure of this program will probably depend on his fulfilling the job.

The Employer

Through the cooperative program employers have a new source of future full-time employees. They have assistance from the school in training these students in the skills and understandings needed for performance on the job. In addition to being relieved of some of their training problems, employers are supplied with workers who have chosen their occupations in line with their interests and abilities.

Job turnover is one of the major problems facing managers today. "Job Hoppers," people who move from job to job haphazardly searching for their niche in the work force, are costly in both dollars and time to their employing firms (4:2).

Follow-up studies have shown that employers retain a large percentage of these cooperative students after graduation. A study by Mr. Haines in 1969 showed that about 73 percent of the preparatory students entered the field for which they were trained or a related one (6:25). Most employers have found this program very beneficial to their firm even though they encountered some scheduling problems and loss of time in training students. Lester Kesterson, Missouri State Director of Distributive Education, made the following statement concerning the employer's role in cooperative programs.

The experience provided by employers is, in most instances, the most valuable part of the learning experience. It causes students to see the value of classroom instruction and it also gives them the real experiences necessary for development of the competencies needed to do the job properly and efficiently (14:56).

By informing the students and schools of current trends and practices in business, employers are able to help keep classroom training more relevant to student needs. By participating in the cooperative distributive education program the employer is able to render an important public service to the students, the schools, and the community.

The Community

The cooperative distributive education program helps high school students become aware of local employment opportunities while they are developing into productive citizens. This awareness encourages the students to remain in the community helping to build a stable work force. This program helps to provide specialized training in a variety of occupations at a reasonable cost. It aids in promoting closer cooperation and understanding between the schools and the community (20:199).

Summary

This program assists the students in making career choices and in developing the skills and knowledge necessary for entry

level work in the occupational area of their choice by providing actual on-the-job experience and related classroom instruction. Through this program the school is able to expand its facilities, offer students a more practical curriculum, and retain the interest of students in formal education. The employers benefit through assistance in their employee training and in a higher caliber beginning employee. The community is able to build a stable work force and provide specialized training at a reasonable cost. Based on present manpower demands and projected statistics, education must utilize this program so that everyone concerned will realize its benefits. It is necessary to evaluate the situation in Billings to see if we are making maximum use of the potential of cooperative distributive education programs.

CHAPTER 3

Introduction

In November, 1972, the writer, with the assistance of Mr. John Bills, School District Number 2 Director of Testing and Research, selected the types of firms to be surveyed. The survey pertained to management policies concerning the part-time employment of distributive education students. The types of firms to be surveyed represented only a portion of the retail businesses in Billings. These firms were considered to be of greatest significance in relationship to the Career Center scheduled to open in 1974.

It was decided to survey 100 percent of the businesses in the categories of retail department stores and retail grocery stores and 50 percent of the firms in the selected types of retail specialty stores. The "fish bowl" technique was employed to select the specific firms to be surveyed in each of the categories of retail specialty stores. Listed in Table I on page 17 are the types and number of firms in each classification surveyed.

Businesses Surveyed and Responses Returned

On February 16, 1973, the questionnaires were mailed to the 100 businesses selected. Fifty-five questionnaires were returned during the first month. A follow-up letter mailed

March 13 resulted in 19 more replies. One flooring materials store and one T.V. & Radio store returned their questionnaires stating they did not presently employ any sales personnel. One department store was unable to complete the questionnaire because of company policy. The initial and follow-up letters resulted in 71 usable responses as identified in Table I on page 17.

Type of Store Ownership

Each of the respondents were asked to indicate the type of store ownership for their store. The replies are shown in Table II on page 18. Twenty-two of the businesses, comprising 31 percent of those surveyed, indicated that they were chain stores. Six department and four grocery stores made up 49 percent of this classification. Franchise type of stores represented 8 percent of the total responses with six businesses specifying this form of ownership. Of the 71 businesses responding, 60 percent or 43 stores were independently owned.

Position of Individual Completing Questionnaire

As appears in Table III on page 19, the owner of the store completed 36 of the questionnaires (51 percent) and the manager of the businesses surveyed completed 29 of the

TABLE I

BUSINESSES SURVEYED AND
RESPONSES RETURNED

Type of Firm	Number Surveyed	Number First Letter	Returned Follow-up Letter	Usable Responses
Department Stores	16	8	2	9
Grocery Stores	24	13	4	17
Auto Parts Stores	4	2	1	3
Fabric Stores	3	3		3
Flooring Materials	4	2	1	2
Florist Shops	2			0
Furniture Stores	5	4		4
Hardware Stores	3	1	2	3
Lighting Fixtures	1	1		1
Lumber Companies	3	2	1	3
Men's Clothing Stores	4	3	1	4
Music Dealers	3	2		2
Pharmacies	5	1	1	2
Shoe Stores	6	2	4	6
Sporting Goods Stores	3	1		1
Women's Apparel	6	3	2	5
Western Apparel	2	2		2
T.V. & Radio Stores	6	5		4
Total	100	55	19	71

TABLE II

TYPE OF STORE OWNERSHIP OF
BUSINESSES SURVEYED

Type of Firm	Chain	Franchise	Independent	Total
Department Stores	6	1	2	9
Grocery Stores	4	2	11	17
Auto Parts Stores		1	2	3
Fabric Stores	1		2	3
Flooring Materials			2	2
Furniture Stores			4	4
Hardware Stores	1		2	3
Lighting Fixtures	1			1
Lumber Companies	2		1	3
Men's Clothing Stores	1		3	4
Music Dealers	1	1		2
Pharmacies	1		1	2
Shoe Stores	2		4	6
Sporting Goods Stores			1	1
Women's Apparel	1	1	3	5
Western Apparel	1		3	4
T.V. & Radio Stores			4	4
Total	22	6	43	71

TABLE III

POSITION OF INDIVIDUAL COMPLETING
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Type of Firm	Owner	Manager	Assistant Manager	Other
Department Stores	1	5	1	2
Grocery Stores	8	8		1
Auto Parts Stores	1	1		1
Fabric Stores	2	1		
Flooring Materials	2			
Furniture Stores	4			
Hardware Stores	3			
Lighting Fixtures		1		
Lumber Companies		2	1	
Men's Clothing Stores	3	1		
Music Dealers	2			
Pharmacies	1	1		
Shoe Stores	3	3		
Sporting Goods Stores		1		
Women's Apparel	2	3		
Western Apparel	1	1		
T.V. & Radio Stores	3	1		
Total	36	29	2	4

responses (41 percent). The remaining six questionnaires (8 percent) were completed by assistant managers, vice-presidents, and supervisors.

Number of Full-Time Sales and Sales Related Employees

The person completing the questionnaire was asked to list the number of full-time sales and sales related employees in their store. Table IV on page 21 shows the average number of female and male employees in each classification. Department stores employed an average of 13 male and 27 females and sporting goods stores averaged 10 males and 13 females for the largest averages. Grocery stores, fabric stores and women's apparel averaged five or more full-time female employees. Grocery stores, auto parts stores, hardware stores, lighting fixtures, lumber companies and men's clothing stores employed five or more full time male employees. Auto parts stores, flooring materials and lighting fixtures indicated no full-time female employees whereas women's apparel was the only category indicating no full-time male employees.

Part-Time Sales and Sales Related Employees

The only categories surveyed that did not employ any part-time sales or sales related personnel were flooring materials, lighting fixtures and pharmacies. Of the

TABLE IV

AVERAGE NUMBER OF FULL-TIME SALES
AND SALES RELATED EMPLOYEES*

Type of Firm	Average Number										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
Department Stores											FM
Grocery Stores						F			M		
Auto Parts Stores	F							M			
Fabric Stores		M							F		
Flooring Materials	F			M							
Furniture Stores		F			M						
Hardware Stores			F						M		
Lighting Fixtures	F					M					
Lumber Companies		F				M					
Men's Clothing Stores			F			M					
Music Dealers		M	F								
Pharmacies		M		F							
Shoe Stores			F		M						
Sporting Goods Stores											FM
Women's Apparel	M								F		
Western Apparel		FM									
T.V. & Radio Stores		F		M							

*F = Female

M = Male

businesses surveyed, the average number of part-time sales and sales related employees over the age of 18 is shown in Table V on page 23. Department stores, fabric stores and sporting goods stores averaged eight, four and three female employees respectively while music dealers, women's apparel and western apparel each averaged one or more female employees over the age of 18. The categories averaging one or more male employees over the age of 18 were department stores 3.5; grocery stores 3; hardware stores 3; sporting goods stores 6; and T.V. & radio stores 1.

The average number of part-time sales and sales related employees under the age of 18 is shown in Table VI on page 24. Of the businesses responding, department stores averaged 2.5 females and 2 males, grocery stores and hardware stores averaged 2.5 males and sporting goods stores averaged 2 females. The only other types of firms employing sales and sales related employees under the age of 18 were grocery stores and fabric stores averaging less than one female employee and men's clothing stores, shoe stores, women's apparel, and T.V. & radio stores averaging less than one male employee.

TABLE V

AVERAGE NUMBER OF PART-TIME SALES AND SALES RELATED
EMPLOYEES OVER AGE OF 18*

Type of Firm	Average Number											
	.25 .50	.75 1.00	1.25 1.50	1.75 2.00	2.50 3.00	3.50 4.00	4.50 5.00	6.00 7.00	8.00			
Department Stores						M			F			
Grocery Stores		F			M							
Auto Parts Stores	F											
Fabric Stores	M					F						
Flooring Materials												
Furniture Stores	F	M										
Hardware Stores	F				M							
Lighting Fixtures												
Lumber Companies		M										
Men's Clothing Stores	M											
Music Dealers		F										
Pharmacies												
Shoe Stores		F										
Sporting Goods Stores					F		M					
Women's Apparel	M	F										
Western Apparel		F										
T.V. & Radio Stores		M										

*F = Female

M = Male

TABLE VI

AVERAGE NUMBER OF PART-TIME SALES AND SALES RELATED
EMPLOYEES UNDER AGE OF 18*

Type of Firm	Average Number									
	.25 .50	.75 1.00	1.25 1.50	1.75 2.00	2.50 3.00	3.50 4.00	4.50 5.00	6.00 7.00	8.00	
Department Stores				M	F					
Grocery Stores	F				M					
Auto Parts Stores										
Fabric Stores	F									
Flooring Materials										
Furniture Stores										
Hardware Stores					M					
Lighting Fixtures										
Lumber Companies										
Men's Clothing Stores	M									
Music Dealers										
Pharmacies										
Shoe Stores		M								
Sporting Goods Stores				F						
Women's Apparel	M									
Western Apparel										
T.V. & Radio Stores	M									

*F = Female

M = Male

Education Preferred of New Full-Time Sales and Sales Related Employees

The replies to the question concerning the education preferred of new full-time sales and sales related employees revealed 74 percent (53 replies) desiring a high school education, 3 percent (2 replies) vocational school, 20 percent (14 replies) two years of college and 3 percent (2 replies) four years of college. The replies as given by the types of firms is shown in Table VII on page 26.

Firms Offering In-Service Training to Entry-Level Employees

Table VIII on page 27 gives a breakdown of the businesses surveyed concerning their policies of offering in-service training to entry level employees. Forty businesses (56 percent) said their firm didn't offer in-service training. Of the 31 businesses (44 percent) offering in-service training, only three indicated that the training was not open to all employees. These three firms stated that their in-service training was open to only management trainees.

Firms Presently Employing Cooperative Distributive Education Students

One department store, two grocery stores, one auto parts store and two shoe stores said they were presently employing cooperative distributive education students as appears in

TABLE VII

EDUCATION PREFERRED OF NEW FULL-TIME SALES AND
SALES RELATED EMPLOYEES

Type of Firm	High School	Vocational School	2 Years College	4 Years College
Department Stores	7		2	
Grocery Stores	14		3	
Auto Parts Stores	3			
Fabric Stores	2	1		
Flooring Materials	2			
Furniture Stores	2		2	
Hardware Stores	3			
Lighting Fixtures	1			
Lumber Companies	2		1	
Men's Clothing Stores	2		2	
Music Dealers	1			1
Pharmacies	1		1	
Shoe Stores	4		2	
Sporting Goods Stores		1		
Women's Apparel	4		1	
Western Apparel	2			
T.V. & Radio Stores	3			1
Total	53	2	14	2

TABLE VIII

FIRMS OFFERING IN-SERVICE TRAINING TO
ENTRY-LEVEL EMPLOYEES

Type of Firm	Offers In-Service Training	If yes: it open to all employees Yes	Is open to No	Doesn't offer In-Service Training
Department Stores	5	5		4
Grocery Stores	7	7		10
Auto Parts Stores				3
Fabric Stores	2	1	1	1
Flooring Materials	1	1		1
Furniture Stores				4
Hardware Stores	3	3		
Lighting Fixtures	1	1		
Lumber Companies	2	2		1
Men's Clothing Stores	2	2		2
Music Dealers				2
Pharmacies	1		1	1
Shoe Stores	3	2	1	3
Sporting Goods Stores				1
Women's Apparel	1	1		4
Western Apparel	1	1		1
T.V. & Radio Stores	2	2		2
Total	31	28	3	40

Table IX on page 29. One student was employed by each of these stores and all of them indicated they planned to continue employing these students in the future except the auto parts store. This firm stated their reason for not continuing this program was because of difficulty concerning the scheduling of working hours for the student employee.

Table X on page 30 shows the answers of the 65 businesses (92 percent of those surveyed) not presently employing cooperative distributive education students. Of these 65 firms, 14 (22 percent) indicated they had been contacted in the last year by a school official concerning the program, 47 (72 percent) stated that no one had contacted them in the last year about the program and 4 (6 percent) omitted the question. Thirty (46 percent) of these businesses not employing cooperative distributive education students stated they would be interested and an additional 13 businesses (20 percent) stated they might be interested in such a program. Twenty-two firms (34 percent) didn't think they would like to participate in this type of program. Ten of these 22 businesses stated no reason for their not being interested in the program, six firms wanted full-time employees only, two firms felt they were too small and the other four were not interested at this time.

TABLE IX

FIRMS PRESENTLY EMPLOYING COOPERATIVE
DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION STUDENTS

Type of Firm	Number of Firms	Number of Students Employed	Plan to Continue in the Future	
			Yes	No
Department Stores	1	1	1	
Grocery Stores	2	2	2	
Auto Parts Stores	1	1		1
Fabric Stores				
Flooring Materials				
Furniture Stores				
Hardware Stores				
Lighting Fixtures				
Lumber Companies				
Men's Clothing Stores				
Music Dealers				
Pharmacies				
Shoe Stores	2	2	2	
Sporting Goods Stores				
Women's Apparel				
Western Apparel				
T.V. & Radio Stores				
Total	6	6	5	1

TABLE X

FIRMS NOT PRESENTLY EMPLOYING COOPERATIVE
DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION STUDENTS

Type of Firm	Number of Firms	Have you been told about the program in the last year			Do you think you might be inter- ested in such a program		
		Yes	No	Omitted	Yes	No	Maybe
Department Stores	8	3	4	1	6	1	1
Grocery Stores	15	1	13	1	6	6	3
Auto Parts Stores	2		1	1	1	1	
Fabric Stores	3	1	2		2		1
Flooring Materials	2		2		1	1	
Furniture Stores	4		3	1	2	1	1
Hardware Stores	3	2	1		2	1	
Lighting Fixtures	1		1			1	
Lumber Companies	3	1	2		2	1	
Men's Clothing Stores	4	2	2		1	3	
Music Dealers	2	1	1			2	
Pharmacies	2		2				2
Shoe Stores	4	1	3		3		1
Sporting Goods Stores	1		1		1		
Women's Apparel	5		5		2	2	1
Western Apparel	2	1	1			1	1
T.V. & Radio Stores	4	1	3		1	1	2
Total	65	14	47	4	30	22	13

Learning Experiences Available If The Firm Were To Employ A Student-Learner

Each of the firms surveyed was asked what learning experiences they could offer if they were to employ a student-learner. Table XI on page 32 shows learning experiences and the percent of firms surveyed in each category that gave a positive response.

Seventy-five percent or more of all the firms indicated that receiving and marking merchandise and stocking merchandise would be the two learning experiences most frequently available to student-learners.

The learning experiences of selling merchandise, arranging counter and/or window displays and operating a cash register would be the next most frequently offered experiences to student-learners. Forty-seven percent or more firms offered these experiences.

Forty-four percent or more firms indicated students would be allowed to handle complaints and merchandise returns and exchanges whereas forty-two percent and more stated students would be allowed to attend store meetings.

Telephone usage, sales promotion and/or advertising campaigns and credit procedures would be less frequently offered experiences. Telephone usage was as low as 29 percent

TABLE XI

LEARNING EXPERIENCES AVAILABLE IF THE FIRM
WERE TO EMPLOY A STUDENT-LEARNER

Learning Experience	Percent of Firms			
	Grocery Stores	Specialty Stores	Department Stores	Total of all Firms Surveyed
Receiving and Marking Merchandise	82	80	89	82
Stocking Merchandise	88	75	89	80
Arranging Counter and/or Window Displays	59	60	70	62
Sales Promotion and/or Advertising Campaigns	24	29	56	31
Selling Merchandise	53	71	59	69
Operating a Cash Register	59	47	67	62
Credit Procedures	18	38	67	37
Handling Complaints and Merchandise Returns and Exchanges	59	44	44	49
Telephone Usage	29	49	56	45
Attend Store Meetings	53	42	78	49
Other Experiences	6	9		6
Respondent Omitted Question	12	13	11	13

and averaged 45 percent by the firms. Credit procedures was rated at 18 percent by some firms and averaged 37 percent. Sales promotion and/or advertising campaigns was as low as 24 percent and averaged 31 percent of those responding.

Other experiences written in that the firms could offer consisted of sacking groceries, delivery, and janitorial work.

Six percent of the grocery stores and nine percent of the specialty stores omitted the question concerning learning experiences entirely.

Additional Comments Made By Respondents

Ten of the respondents in the survey made additional comments in the space provided on the questionnaire. None of these firms employed any cooperative distributive education students although seven of them did hire part-time employees. Three respondents said that they were familiar with the program but weren't aware there was such a program currently in operation in the community. Two other firms expressed a desire to train young people in their store's operation but could not explain why distributive education students were not employed in their firms. Another respondent expressed surprise that distributive education students had not applied at his store. One firm expressed interest in the program but felt his store

was too new to consider it at the present time. The remaining three firms stated they hired no personnel under the age of 18 as they found these individuals were too immature or students were unable to work enough hours to make it worthwhile in their store's type of business.

Summary

In this chapter, the writer has shown the responses of the firms surveyed. The responses to each question were analyzed and averaged according to the type of business. These averages for each type of business are shown in the preceding tables. The responses indicate a definite interest by the businesses surveyed and the potential necessary facilities for a meaningful and successful cooperative distributive education program in Billings, Montana.

Conclusions and recommendations drawn from the results of this study are summarized in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was undertaken by the writer to determine if cooperative distributive education is being utilized in retail department, specialty and grocery stores in Billings, Montana, to the maximum benefit of these stores, the students, the schools and the community.

A questionnaire was sent to a random sample of businesses in these categories to determine:

1. If the present cooperative distributive education program is actually meeting the needs of the students, the stores, the schools and the community.

2. The potential willingness of the selected businesses in the community to assist in training future employees through cooperative distributive education.

Based on the questionnaires returned by the businesses sampled in these categories, the investigator makes the following summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

Summary

On February 16, 1973 questionnaires were mailed to the 100 businesses selected by the random sample in the categories

retail department, specialty and grocery stores. The initial and follow-up letters resulted in 71 usable responses (see Table I, page 17).

The respondent was asked to indicate the type of store ownership for their store. Twenty-two stores indicated they were a chain store, six said they were a franchise store and the remaining forty-three responding stated they were independent stores (see Table II, page 18).

Thirty-six of the questionnaires returned were completed by the owner of that store. The manager completed twenty-nine and the assistant manager two of the questionnaires. The remaining four questionnaires were completed by vice-presidents and supervisors (see Table III, page 19).

Each business was asked to list the number of full-time sales and sales related employees. Department and sporting goods stores each said they employed ten or more full-time male and female employees. Grocery stores, fabric stores and women's apparel averaged five or more full-time female employees. Grocery stores, auto parts stores, hardware stores, lighting fixtures, lumber companies and men's clothing stores employed five or more full-time male employees (see Table IV, page 21).

The only categories surveyed that did not employ any part-time sales and sales related employees were flooring materials, lighting fixtures and pharmacies. Department stores, fabric stores, and sporting goods stores averaged eight, four and three female employees respectively over the age of 18. Sporting goods stores, department stores and grocery and hardware stores averaged six, three and one-half, and three male employees respectively over the age of 18. (see Table V, page 23). Of the businesses responding, those employing more than one part-time sales and sales related employee under the age of 18 were department stores averaging two and one-half females and two males, grocery stores and hardware stores averaging two females (see Table VI, page 24).

The replies to the question concerning the education preferred of new full-time sales and sales related employees revealed fifty-three replies desiring a high school education, two replies vocational school, fourteen replies two years of college and two replies four years of college (see Table VII, page 26).

Forty businesses said that their firm didn't offer any in-service training to entry level workers. Of the thirty-one offering in-service training, only three indicated that the training was not open to all employees (see Table VIII, page 27).

One department store, two grocery stores, one auto parts store and two shoe stores said that they were each presently employing one cooperative distributive education student. The auto parts store was the only firm indicating they didn't plan to continue this program in the future (see Table IX, page 29). Of the remaining sixty-five businesses responding, fourteen said they had been told about the program and forty-seven said they hadn't been contacted in the last year by a school official concerning the program. Thirty of the businesses stated they would be interested and an additional thirteen stated they might be interested in participating in the cooperative distributive education program. Twenty-two of the firms surveyed expressed no interest in becoming involved in the program (see Table X, page 30).

Receiving and marking merchandise, stocking merchandise, arranging counter and/or window displays, selling merchandise and operating a cash register were indicated as learning experiences available by over fifty percent of the businesses answering this question if their firm were to employ a student-learner (see Table XI, page 32).

Ten respondents made additional comments in the space provided. Seven of these responses were favorable concerning the cooperative distributive education program.

Conclusions

On the basis of the findings of this study, as summarized above, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The majority of firms (five out of six) presently involved in the cooperative distributive education program believe their present experience to be worthwhile.

2. The majority of the businesses surveyed (sixty-nine percent) stated they are, would or might be interested in the cooperative distributive education program.

3. The number of part-time sales and sales related employees as given by the businesses responding indicate an excellent potential for conducting cooperative distributive education in Billings, Montana.

4. Seventy-four percent of the businesses surveyed desire future new full-time sales and sales related employees to have a high school education and fifty-six percent do not offer in-service training to entry level employees so this program would be fulfilling a real student, employer and community need.

5. The learning experiences the firms stated they could offer student-learners they might employ would benefit all concerned by providing better educated and adjusted future employees.

6. The present cooperative distributive education program in Billings, Montana, is not being utilized to the maximum benefit of the students involved, the stores, the schools or the community.

Recommendations

The writer makes the following recommendations based on the findings of this study:

1. The present cooperative distributive education programs be studied in order to determine what factor or factors are stifling what appears to be a desired and needed program in the Billings community.

2. That other businesses in the categories retail department, specialty and grocery stores be surveyed in order to determine the total number of actual employers willing to assist in the cooperative distributive education program.

3. That firms in categories other than those selected by this writer be surveyed to determine management policies of these businesses concerning the employment of cooperative distributive education students.

APPENDIX

March 13, 1973

Dear Sir:

Recently you were sent a letter and survey form regarding distributive education in the local high schools. As yet we have not received the completed form from you.

In a random sample of this kind, the higher the percentage of return the more accurate our evaluation of this program can be. We should really appreciate your taking a few minutes of your time to complete the form and return it to us in the enclosed envelope.

Thank you for giving this matter your attention.

Sincerely,

John Miller, Business Teacher
Billings West High School

Enc.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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