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ABSTRACT

In an effort to explore significant supply and demand variables that affect the teacher labor market in the Southeast, a qualitative research study was undertaken to examine the market patterns of initial career choice, position availability, recruitment and selection, turnover, and mobility of public school teachers. An ethnographic investigation of schools or departments of education at six universities and six school systems in two southeastern states used document analysis, on-site observation, and interviewing to collect data for analysis of labor market variables. Five categories of inquiry guided the study: (1) background and contextual variables; (2) position availability, need, and turnover; (3) paths to education and teaching; (4) identification, recruitment, and selection of teachers; and (5) employment conditions and teacher alternatives. Following a review of the related literature and a description of the methodology, findings in each of these areas of inquiry are reported for the 12 sites studied. Then an overall synthesis of the findings is provided, along with a discussion of the implications for teacher labor market policies in the Southeast. A 34-item bibliography is included, along with two appendixes: (1) distribution of informants in school systems and universities, and (2) school system and university interview guides. (TE)

OCCASIONAL PAPERS
IN
EDUCATIONAL POLICY ANALYSIS

PAPER NO. 413

A CASE STUDY OF THE TEACHER LABOR MARKET IN THE SOUTHEAST

BARNETT BERRY

NOVEMBER 1984

Southeastern Regional Council for Educational Improvement

P.O. Box 12746 • 200 Park • Suite III • Research Triangle Park • North Carolina 27709 • (919) 549-8216

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MISS DOVE IS ALIVE AND WELL
(AND TEACHING MATH, SPONSORING THE YEARBOOK, AND COACHING SOFTBALL)

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INTRODUCTION

"Teaching is an imperiled profession." (Sykes, 1983, p. 87).

Currently, critics of public education lament that many teachers cannot teach; those who do, don't for very long; and those who can, opt for other careers. They argue that the days of "Miss Dove," with her academic skills and dedication to serve the nation's children, have waned since more career opportunities have become available to the traditional work force of the public schools--capable women. Frances Gray Patton's (1954, p. 22) account of the life of "Miss Dove" claimed that the teacher of 30 years ago

> embraced her profession with the singleness of purpose that she might, under other circumstances, have bestowed upon matrimony, or foreign travel, or carving in stone.

Miss Dove was revered and feared by both her students and their parents, who were her former students. She knew her subject matter and taught it as "unalterable laws" (p. 34). But, more importantly, her "rules were as fixed as the signs of the zodiac" (p. 8).

No one questioned her ability to teach because

> Miss Dove was a certainty. She would be today what she had been yesterday and tomorrow (p. 3).

Numerous national reports on the status of public education in the United States (e.g., the National Commission on Excellence in Education's A Nation at Risk, the Twentieth Century Fund's Making the Grade, the Education Commission of the States' Task Force for Economic Growth's Action for Excellence, and Mortimer J. Adler's The Paideia Proposal) have decried the poor state of the teaching profession and argued for specific reforms to remedy the problem of poor quality in the teacher work force. Among these proposed reforms were market-sensitive salaries to alleviate the shortage of math and science teachers, merit pay to adequately reward good teachers, and career

ladders to establish an elite corps of master teachers and to correct the present "unstaged" career of teaching (see Lortie, 1975, pp. 82-86). Most recently, the Rand Corporation has published a study--"Beyond the Commission Reports: The Coming Crisis in Teaching"--with costly recommendations to "professionalize" teaching. Their study called for salaries to range from $20,000 (for beginning teachers) to $50,000 and the establishment of career ladders to make teaching more attractive. Other recommendations included recruitment incentives (scholarships and forgivable loans), more challenging teacher education programs, and improved work conditions (less clerical duties for teachers).

State education policy makers in the southeastern states are now actively engaged in studying, enacting, and implementing proposals to improve their teacher quality. Some states have enacted substantial across-the-board pay increases for all teachers, and/or others have proposed or installed career ladders (e.g., Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia) and/or merit pay plans (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, and West Virginia). It is important to assess the effectiveness of these solutions as they relate to the problems of teacher quality and how they are juxtaposed with the processes undergirding the labor market.

There is substantial evidence that problems in the teacher labor market relate not only to supply and demand imbalances in particular subject areas, but also to the quality of the workforce as well (Schlechty and Vance, 1982, 1983; Weaver, 1983). These supply and demand imbalances were generally described by "counting heads in one fashion or another" (Bird, 1984, p. 1), and declining teacher quality was described solely in terms of academic ability--measured by scores on SATs, NTEs, and GREs (c.f., Schlechty and

Vance, 1982; Weaver, 1983). While it is not intended to disregard the relative significance of head counting, "opinion poll" research (see Akin, 1983) and the notion that "there is no evidence that the lack of academic ability makes one a more competent teacher" (Schlechty and Vance, 1982, p. 5), there is something remiss in the study of the teacher labor market. As Bird (1984, p. 1) noted:

> Limited attention is given to issues of cause and effect which are the basis of the concerns facing education policy makers. Information regarding the structure and behavior of the teacher labor market seems to be absent, because the "right" questions have not been identified before data collection efforts began, or the available data have not been examined and analyzed adequately to discover the underlying trends, causes, and efforts.

Bird called for the utilization of qualitative, rather than simple descriptive, quantitative information. Data presently available "seem to offer inadequate attention to the relationship of teacher supply and demand trends to other social, economic, and demographic trends" (p. i). Therefore, Bird concluded that:

> In order for teacher supply and demand research to be useful to policy makers, it should explore the relationships among variables which affect the market and identify effective options for control and adjustment of supply and demand conditions. This means going beyond the simple collection of descriptive data and beginning the complex process of analyzing the behavioral and institutional characteristics of the teacher labor market (p. ii).

Subsequently, in an effort to explore in-depth significant supply and demand variables which affect the teacher labor market in the Southeast, a qualitative research study was undertaken to better understand the market patterns of initial career choice, position availability, recruitment and selection, turnover, and mobility of public school teachers. Inherent in the research design was the assumption that the situational context would provide

(1) the analytical template to better understand "the structure and behavior of the teacher labor market" and (2) the basis for asking "the right questions," if not uncovering the right answers.

This qualitative study provides information that will fill the gaps uncovered by Bird (1984) through the ethnographic investigation of six universities (with either departments, schools, or colleges of education) and six school systems in two southeastern states. This investigation utilized document analysis, on-site observation, and key informant and spontaneous interviewing in the 12 locations to collect the data for the analysis of the labor market variables. Since ethnographic research is:

> primarily inductive in character, it is often necessary to utilize a series of 'sensitizing questions' to guide initial data collection and to provide decision rules for the reduction of the masses of data which ethnographic studies provide (Collins and Noblit, 1976, p. 2).

Five sensitizing categories (and questions) were employed to guide this study. They are:

1. Background and Contextual Variables. What is the rural/urban makeup of the university/school system location? What economic, cultural, or geographic variables affect this location? What are student enrollment patterns and racial diversity of both students (in school systems and universities) and teachers? What are the characteristics and patterns of teacher education programs?

2. Position Availability, Need, and Turnover. How many openings and resignations do school systems report? Why do teachers leave and where do they go? What are critical areas of teacher shortage in school systems? How does one school system compare to others on these variables?

3. Paths to Education and Teaching. What are the family backgrounds (occupationally speaking) of education students and teachers? How and when do students and teachers become interested in careers in public education? Who or what influences students' and teachers' occupational choice? How do students become interested in their particular university? How do teacher education programs recruit students? Where will students teach? Why? How long? What do students want in teaching? How do students perceive schools and what school systems want in prospective teachers? What alternative occupations do students consider?

4. Identification, Recruitment, and Selection of Teachers. How do university teacher education and placement officials engage in the "placing" of their students in teaching positions? How do students and teachers engage in their placement in teaching positions? What are the recruiting and hiring procedures of school systems? How many and what kinds of applicants do school systems "have on file?" Where do teachers come from? What characteristics do school systems look for in teachers?

5. Employment Conditions and Teacher Alternatives. What are schools like for teachers? What conditions attract teachers to teaching/their school system/their school? What do teachers want in teaching? What can school systems do to attract and retain teachers? What alternative occupations do teachers consider? Why do teachers stay in teaching?

This investigation is a preliminary, exploratory study of the issues raised by Bird (1984). Findings from the study may provide educational decision makers in the Southeast with the basis for a better understanding of the teacher labor market.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Relevant literature on the teacher labor market was reviewed to determine the research findings and some of the assumptions undergirding the conclusions derived from that research which would provide a better understanding of the interface with this ethnographic investigation--especially to provide decision makers with reasonable policy alternatives based on market processes. Areas reviewed are related to research on the quality, mobility and turnover, and the initial career choice of the teaching work force.

Quality

Public perceptions of the poor quality of the teaching work force are not new in the United States. William Waller in 1932 and J. D. Koernor in 1963 characterized teachers as having lesser academic qualities than their counterparts in other fields. Yet, as Schlechty and Vance (1982, p. 2) point out, until recently, "quantitative issues (assuring an adequate supply of teachers) were so overwhelming that serious consideration of qualitative issues were often sublimated or given secondary importance." While Schlechty and Vance (1982, p. 31) asserted that it is "not totally clear that education today is any better able to retain the services of new and inexperienced teachers than it was in the past," they point out, primarily from the National Longitudinal Study, that "there is a major difference in the retention rate of those [practicing teachers] who are highest in ability and those who are lowest in ability."

Weaver (1983, p. 4) made similar claims--noting that "because of the absence of national test scores data before 1970," one could not make a "large-scale, systematic assessment of entry teachers' academic abilities."

However, he continued by asserting that "the data since 1970 do allow the question of entry teachers' academic ability to be answered, and the answer will please very few" (1983, p. 4).

Both Schlechty and Vance (1982, 1983) and Weaver (1983) attributed the inability of public schools to attract and retain the best teachers to "shifting career choices" for both males (especially black) and females and to the lack of status and adequate financial compensation when compared to other occupations and professions. Weaver (1983, p. 64) noted that "pay for teachers is not the single cause of the problem, although salary is an extremely important factor in the talent-flow dynamic." Schlechty and Vance (1983, p. 45) recommended changes in the occupational structure of teaching to "enrich the career possibilities for all teachers." Weaver (1983) recommended the "open(ing) up of the marketability of teachers" (p. 31) since "talent will eventually flow to opportunity" (p. 22). He asserted that by mandating that schools of education train more than just teachers of public school students, consumers of these schools (i.e., teachers, would-be teachers and employers of teachers) could "test the ideas of teacher educators in an 'open' market" (p. 5). Weaver (1983, p. 5) concluded that presently:

> Consumers are, in effect, stuck with whatever the suppliers say teacher education ought to be. By opening up the system to prepare educators of adults [as well as school teachers] in corporate training environments, colleges of education would be forced to define what they are good for in a market where consumers have other choices.

Most career ladder plans are based on the premise that the best teachers want to climb the hierarchy by taking on more responsibility and, subsequently, more status and salary. Then, elevated status and salary will be bestowed upon the best teachers as they teach less and engage more in the

supervision and evaluation of other teachers. Thus, much like the recommendation to open up schools of education, career ladders assume that the best teachers of public school students would desire to manage adults as well as children and adolescents.

Mobility and Turnover

In reviewing the literature on the mobility and turnover of the teacher work force, Bloland and Selby (1980, p. 13) stated:

> General research trends indicate that mobility has been studied from the institutional perspective as personnel turnover, rather than from the viewpoint of the teacher and that important affective and personality issues have been neglected in favor of demographic factor identification.

These authors reported that considerable data are available when the primary research interest is only in the quantitative analysis of occupational trends. Even so, while "most studies of job mobility have been conducted in industrial settings rather than in professional areas such as teaching" (p. 14), those studies that have dealt with teacher mobility have generally neglected the "qualitative and humanistic aspects of occupational turnover" (p. 13).

Nonetheless, Bloland and Selby (1980) reviewed research on teacher mobility from 1975 to 1980 and categorized variables of teacher satisfaction, attrition, and turnover into three areas--demographic, professional and personal, and school-related factors. A brief summary of their review follows:

> Demographic Factors Male teachers are more likely to change than females, with single males the most mobile. Single women are less mobile than men but more likely to leave teaching than married women. There is no apparent relationship between educational attainment and teacher mobility. Black teachers were found to be more stable and less mobile than white teachers. The higher the socioeconomic status of the teacher while in college and

of the teacher's parents, the more likely the teacher was to leave the field (p. 17).

Professional and Personal Factors. Salary is an important factor in career change for male teachers and relatively unimportant for women. The salaries of male teachers tend to fall below those of their non-teaching peers while for female teachers salaries are slightly above the median for female college graduates. There is little opportunity for advancement for the classroom teacher (other than for a move into administration), and even this possibility is difficult for males and severely limited for females. For many teachers, the imposition of non-teaching, menial duties and the lack of professional recognition by administrators and school boards has been a source of dissatisfaction. Some authors feel that "teacher burnout" is cause of attrition but no evidence was cited. Preferences of teacher spouse and best friend are both important determinants of career change (pp. 19-20).

School-Related Factors. The frequency of teacher career change increases with the size of the school while teachers in small faculty groups are more satisfied with their job situations than are those in large faculty groupings. Although the research is not clear, the problems of classroom discipline and the lack of intrinsic rewards for interaction with students may be important factors in the career change decisions of teachers. Satisfactions derived from interactions with colleagues are associated with job satisfaction and occupational stability; the congruence of teacher/colleague approaches to pupil control is directly related to job satisfaction. An important factor in teacher career change is dissatisfaction with the principal which may stem in part from the principal's role, often unintentional, in reducing or eliminating teacher opportunity for creativity in the classroom (p. 22).

Bloland and Selby (1980) concluded that more research needs to "identify why people leave teaching and how they feel about it" (p. 23) and concentrate on midcareer changes since most studies have been limited to younger teachers who may or may not have been committed to teaching in the first place. They hypothesized that teacher mobility may be related to adult developmental changes in later life, rather than to situational variables.

The relevance of much of the recent mobility and turnover research is questionable. Most of the research has been carried out through sample

survey techniques, and the reasons given for leaving teaching most frequently were assumed to be causes of turnover. As W. W. Charters (1957, p. 296) noted over 25 years ago:

> The fallacy in these studies lies, first in accepting at face value the reasons provided by teachers for changing jobs and second, in interpreting these reasons as the causes of turnover. Almost any change in a teacher's position entails some increase in salary, if for no other reason than that he has an additional year of teaching experience behind him . . . . "Better position" as a cause of turnover is meaningless . . . . What teacher would give as the reason for changing jobs, "worse position"? If a new position were not better in some way, a teacher would be unlikely to take it.

In addition to the shortcomings identified by Charters, the existing research also failed to address the issue of "What's an appropriate turnover rate among public school teachers?" Little attention has been given to the comparison of teacher turnover among various school communities and to turnover experiences in other occupations. In summary, most studies of teacher mobility and turnover do not allow for an understanding of what "better" is and what it means for those teachers who do move and for those who don't move. Later, Charters (1967, p. 180) noted that if researchers were "conversant with common knowledge regarding teacher attrition," they would realize that have been asking the wrong question. The "question is not why teachers quit, but why they stay." While some authors described "high school teaching as a humiliating profession" (Lee and Pruitt, 1979), and those in the classroom related "why they are miserable," (Mead, 1980) teachers do stay. As Charters (1967, p. 193) noted:

> Investigators persist in tracing all teacher turnover to working conditions of the school as though they had never heard of marriage and the family. It is clear to me that the obvious facts about the teaching career are not so obvious after all.

Initial Career Choice

The teacher shortages of the 1950s and early 1960s prompted numerous investigations to uncover the motivations of those aspiring to teach. For example, both Fielstra (1955) and Richards (1960) found that former teachers have the most influence on students' decisions to become teachers. While Haubrich (1960) found job security to be the most significant determinant, Wright (1977) concurred with Fielstra and Richards. In their review of the literature, Roberson, Keith, and Page (1983, p. 13) asserted that Wood (1978) "noted a gradual shift in the reported motivations of prospective teachers from factors such as teacher influence and job security reported by the studies of the 1960s to inner, more personal motivations." However, Roberson et al. (1983, p. 14) claimed that:

> Most such studies of the motivation for teaching have simply tallied responses to questions concerning why the respondents entered teaching. Most have used small samples of beginning education majors without comparing them to those in other fields and without controlling for important background factors such as family background characteristics or intellectual ability.

Noting the importance of recent research on the academic ability of those entering and staying in the occupation of public school teaching (c.f., Schlechty and Vance, 1982, 1983), Roberson et al. (1983, p. 14) utilized a large stratified sample from a national longitudinal survey to discern the "importance of background characteristics, individual attributes and performance, and perceived influences and motivations on the aspiration to teach." The results of their study "generally support earlier research, but also suggest changes over time in the relative importance of influences on the aspiration to teach" (p. 20). Four conclusions drawn from their study included:

1. Now, as in the past, it is primarily white females who aspire to teach. Seventy-five percent of those aspiring to teach (in the present sample) were white females.

2. Those aspiring to teach are much less concerned with earning a good income than are those choosing other professions. This effect seems especially true for males.

3. Job security, once reported as an important motivation for entering teaching, does not appear to be an important consideration today, except for blacks. Today's teacher aspirants are influenced by a desire to work with friendly people and (for blacks and males) are not especially concerned with "success."

4. Consistent with previous research, it appears that teacher aspirants today are somewhat less able intellectually than their classmates. Lower ability is a notable influence for females and blacks who aspire to teach, but not for white males. It seems possible that affirmative action, while creating opportunities for women and minorities, may drain off some teaching talent to professions with higher rewards (p. 20).

Furthermore, in building upon the above conclusions, Roberson et al. (1983, p. 20) stated:

> Currently, those who desire a good income do not enter the teaching profession. Those who do enter teaching, while less concerned with income, are also often less able than others. Clearly, if we desire excellence in teaching, we need to reward it (p. 20).

The authors' policy recommendation of financially rewarding the occupation of teaching was consistent with other recommendations that <u>assumed</u> those who do not presently choose to teach, would do so <u>if</u> salaries were substantially increased. That is, they assumed that pay draws the academically able student away from teaching, ignoring the contextual nature of the teaching job. Furthermore, their study did not address the salary expectation differentials that exist for both (1) females and males and (2) those prospective teachers who live in urban and rural areas.

Roberson et al. did not account for the grade level and subject matter preferred by the sample of teacher aspirants in their study. These factors

have been associated with academic ability (Super and Crites, 1962) because secondary school teachers (who are more subject-oriented) score higher on measures of academic ability than elementary school teachers (who are more people-oriented).

In addition, recent research on the initial career choice of teachers emphasized the importance of the occupation as an avenue of upward mobility for young people whose alternatives may be limited (Lortie, 1975; Schwarzweller and Lyson, 1978). However, as career options become more available for blacks and women, "teaching may not be as popular a vocational pursuit as it once was" (Falk et al., 1981, p. 69). Wimpelberg and King (1983, p. 5) note a similar problem in the career choices of men:

> While men once delayed the choice of career futures until late in their college lives, they are [now] enticed to declare a choice soon after matriculating in order to stay apace in the "pre-professional" competition.

Subsequently, it was suggested that more attention be given to recruiting prospective teachers since most of those now entering teaching do so "through self-selection" (Hopfengardner, Lasley, and Joseph, 1983, p. 10) and many females consider their teaching career as secondary to familial goals (Charters, 1967; Jamar and Ervay, 1983). Since most researchers decried the ability of those choosing to enter teacher education programs (Weaver, 1983), it is possible that conventional policy alternatives might not have addressed the "right" solutions. As Wimpelberg and King (1983, p. 6) stated:

> If improved status, money, and climate are strongly to be desired but not likely to be accomplished as major reforms, we propose that another remedy--less traditional in its form and substance, but requiring only minimal alterations in teacher education--is worth considering. Let us demythologize teaching and strip ourselves of the expectation that work in classrooms is or must be a once-and-for-all career choice to be declared in the sophomore year of college and pursued until teacher retirement allows one to maintain the highest income for subsistence

> in old age. Let us instead recruit and support short-term teachers who either will enter the classroom with the decision to defer immediate preparation for other professions or will undertake teaching because they are ambivalent about which direction to take after the baccalaureate degree. In either case, we suggest that able teachers may be attracted to the field as a kind of domestic educational peace corps.

This review of literature suggests that qualitative aspects of the teacher labor market have been neglected since most studies have utilized "face value" teacher and student responses on sample surveys. The most publicized research pointed to low pay and/or the occupational structure of teaching as determinants of the poor quality of the teacher supply. However, the fragile assumptions upon which this research was built and some other studies pointed out that there are potentially more powerful factors affecting supply and demand of teachers. With a qualitative approach to the teacher labor market, policy makers may be able to "demythologize teaching" as Wimpelberg and King suggested and begin to utilize an interpretive context in policy formulation, enactment, and implementation.

METHODOLOGY

While considerable research has been conducted in the teacher labor market, there has been very little that was qualitative or ethnographic in nature. If one is to go "beyond the simple collection of descriptive data" and begin the "complex process of analyzing the behavioral and institutional characteristics" as Bird (1984, p. ii) suggested, then it is necessary to begin the research agenda by asking "What is going on here?" This question undergirds the process of qualitative methodology and was the basis for newer approaches to evaluation studies and policy analysis (Murphy, 1980). The policy relevance of research designs based on the question "What is going on here?" was illuminated by Douglas (1976, p. 189) when he wrote that almost all social research has/had, either singly or in combination, four general goals:

1. Providing us with knowledge of the members' situated experience--that is, social meanings, the way it looks to the members of society, and so on;

2. Providing us with knowledge of how the different experiences of different individuals and groups are related to each other in concrete settings--that is, the interaction of multi-perspectival experience;

3. Providing us with knowledge of the extensiveness or representativeness of members' experience, with special emphasis on providing knowledge of the universally shared experience of the world--that is, the representativeness of findings about social meanings, the structure of meanings and so on; and

4. Providing us with knowledge that can be used in practical efforts to solve social problems--that is, policy-oriented knowledge, relevant knowledge, and so on.

The Case Study

The case study, an ethnographic/qualitative research strategy, provides the interpretative context necessary to attain Douglas' goals of social

research. Walker (1980, p. 34) noted that the case study is "an examination of an instance in action," and its essential purpose is to "capture and portray those elements of a situation that give it meaning." Subsequently, case studies, in their attempt to understand "multiperspectival experience" and how participants act on these experiences, provide in-depth understandings of questions which "cannot well be answered using strictly survey and quantitative methods "(Wilcox, 1980, p. 41).

Bogden and Biklen (1982) noted that qualitative research is characterized by its emphasis on a) the natural setting as a direct source of data, b) the researcher as the key instrument, c) process and participant perspectives, d) descriptive data (collected from interviews, field notes, documents, etc.), and e) inductive analysis. This last characteristic, inductive analysis, is essential to the assumptions that support a qualitative research strategy. As Bogden and Biklen (1982, p. 29) noted:

> Theory developed this way emerges from the bottom up (rather than from the top down), from many disparate pieces of collected evidence that are interconnected. It is called grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). . . . You are not putting together a puzzle, whose picture you already know. You are constructing a picture which takes shape as you collect and examine the parts. The process of data analysis is like a funnel: things are open at the beginning (or top) and more directed and specific at the bottom. The qualitative researcher plans to use part of the study to learn what the important questions are (p. 29).

Case studies tend to shed new light on educational issues relating to both process and context. A major strength of this type of research is "its capacity to go beyond already existing questions to redefine or to transform the questions which are asked to render them more meaningful and potentially more powerful" (Wilcox, p. 41). Thus, the case study provides a mechanism which allows educational policy makers not only to question conventional solutions to teacher labor market problems, but also to question the

underlying assumptions on which the conventional wisdom is based.

The Case Study: Representativeness of Findings and Their Relevance for Policy

The qualitative researcher "tries to take into account the relationship of a piece to a whole, but, out of necessity, narrows the subject matter to make the research manageable" (Bogden and Biklan, 1982, p. 50). With their small (but purposive) samples, case studies are traditionally criticized for their lack of random sampling and, consequently, representativeness and generalizability.

However, in traditional social research, the quantitative approach (e.g., sample surveys) usually "relies upon the representativeness of individual respondents and not upon the representativeness of situations or experiences" (Collins and Noblit, 1976, p. 26). Where traditional quantitative studies define issues of representativeness and generalizability in terms of similarities and differences among comparable populations, qualitative studies consider each population to be unique. A comparison of studies in qualitative analysis requires an interpretive context to enhance the understanding of the similarities and differences.

The case study provides the interpretative context as the situations are representative of the setting under study--in this investigation, the teacher labor market in the Southeast. When considering the policy-relevance of social research and this approach to representativeness of findings, Collins and Noblit (1976, p. 26) argued that case studies can "better capture situations and settings which are more amenable to policy and program intervention than are accumulated individual attributes" (which are the results of sample survey research). Furthermore, they asserted that case studies reveal not static attributes, but understandings of humans as they

engage in action and interaction within the context of situations and settings. Thus, inferences concerning human behavior are less abstract than in many quantitative studies, and one can better understand how an intervention may affect behavior in a situation (p. 26).

A Case Study of the Teacher Labor Market in the Southeast

One hundred eighty (180) persons were interviewed. Those key informants interviewed consisted of deans, department chairs, student teaching coordinators, placement officers, and students in the education units in the universities; and superintendents, assistant superintendents, personnel directors, principals, assistant principals, and teachers in the school systems (see Appendix A for informant distribution in each site). Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed to these informants and their universities and school systems. While most of these interviews were arranged through the dean or department chair in the school (or department) of education in the university or the superintendent in the school system, some interviews occurred spontaneously as the investigator located other key informants after being on site.

Twelve sites in two states were selected to capture geographical, economic, and cultural diversity representative of the Southeast. These six school systems and six universities are located in a range of urban (metropolitan and industrial) to isolated rural (no industrial base) sites. Some sites have predominately white populations, while others have predominately black ones. Tables A and B outline significant background and contextual variables which are necessary for understanding the teacher labor market processes in these sites.

TABLE A

SCHOOL SYSTEMS

SYSTEM	COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS	CONTEXT	ENROLLMENT: STUDENTS AND TEACHERS	WHO INTERVIEWED* TOTAL	CO	P	T:	ELEM	INT	SEC
I	Metro Area; Population, 300,000; **MFI = $18,600	Inner City System; White; Site of Major State University	30,000 Students (75% Black); 2,000 Teachers (60% White)	20:	2	3	15:	3	5	7
II	Metro Area; Population, 500,000; MFI = $22,000	Urban, Suburban, Rural System; Top Salary Supplement Paid to Teachers; 13% Local Teaching Positions; Many Universities in Area	70,000 Students (40% Black); 4,000 Teachers (70% White)	37:	3	4	30:	6	9	15
III	Rural Area; Population, 20,000; County Seat Population, 700; MFI = $11,100	No Industry, No Shopping Centers, Few Government Jobs; Church Important to Community; Nearest University 100 Miles Away	4,500 Students (80% Black); 275 Teachers (35% White)	10:	2	2	6:	0	2	4

**MFI is 1980 Median Family Income for county in which school system is located

(Source: County and City Data Book 1983, United States Department of Commerce)

*CO = Central Office
P = Principal
T = Teacher
E = Elementary
I = Intermediate)
S = Secondary

TABLE A

SCHOOL SYSTEMS (cont'd)

SYSTEM	COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS	CONTEXT	ENROLLMENT STUDENTS AND TEACHERS	WHO INTERVIEWED*						
				TOTAL	CO	P	T:	ELEM	INT	SEC
IV	Rural Area; Population, 26,000; County Seat Population, 6,000; MFI = $13,800	Some Industry; 50 Local Teaching Positions; Nearest University 30 Miles Away	5,500 Students (56% Black); 320 Teachers (62% White)	16:	2	2	12:	5	0	7
V	Metro Area; Population, 300,000; MFI = $19,600	Mostly Suburban and Rural as Inner City Has Own School System; White Flight in the Past; Many Universities in Area	24,000 Students (18% Black); 13,000 Teachers (86% White)	11:	1	2	8:	0	5	3
VI	Rural Area; Population, 32,000; MFI = $14,500	Site of Major State University; 23 Local Teaching Positions; College Town of 10,000 People	5,000 Students (17% Black); 270 Teachers ("All White")	13:	2	2	9:	2	1	6

TABLE B

UNIVERSITIES

UNIVERSITY	LOCATION	SCHOOL HISTORY	APPROXIMATE ENROLLMENT: UNIVERSITY/EDUCATION/ UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION	STUDENT BACKGROUND	WHO INTERVIEWED* TOTAL:	E	P	S
I	City Population, 60,000; Surrounding Area, Rural; Military Base	Black College	2,500/ 400/ 240	Many Rural First-Generation College; Military Dependents; Community College Transfers	12:	3	1	8
II	City Population, 35,000; Surrounding Area, Rural	White Teachers' College	13,000/ 1,900/ 1,300	Many Rural First Generation College; Some Urban Students Unable to Enter Other Universities	10:	1	1	8
III	City Population, 175,000; Major Metro	White Female Teachers' College	10,000/ 1,300/ 800	Daughters of Female Alumnae; Community College Transfers	11:	2	1	8

*E = School or Department of Education officials (dean, professor, student teaching coordinators)
P = University Placement Officials
S = Education Students

TABLE B

UNIVERSITIES (cont'd)

UNIVERSITY	LOCATION	SCHOOL HISTORY	APPROXIMATE ENROLLMENT: UNIVERISTY/EDUCATION/ UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION	STUDENT BACKGROUND	WHO INTERVIEWED* TOTAL:	E	P	S
IV	City Population, 10,000; Resort and Urban College Town	White Teachers' College	10,000/ 1,600/ 1,200	Many Rural First-Generation College; Many Urban Students See School As "Fun Place"	15:	2	2	11
V	City Population, 35,000; College Town	Major Research University	20,000/ 675/ 350	Urban; If from Rural, High SATs; Many Second-Generation College	13:	4	1	8
VI	City Population, 150,000; Major Metro Area	Black College	5,000/ 375/ 250	Many Rural First-Generation College; Many Children of Teachers	12:	3	1	8

Once these sites were identified, the appropriate individuals (e.g., deans or superintendents) were contacted for an initial interview and to arrange for interviews with other key participants to discuss teacher labor market processes as they relate to their institution. The investigator attempted to "talk" to representative groups of individuals. For example, in school systems, there was an attempt to talk to a representative range of teachers based on sex, race, grade level, and subject matter. Similarly, in universities, there was an attempt to talk to a representative range of education students based on the same variables. In addition, given the teacher labor market concerns in the fields of math and science, these teachers and education students were sought. However, since the investigator had to rely on others (deans, superintendents, or principals) to arrange "convenient" interviews, a representative group by site was not always realized. However, a broad range was realized when the 12 sites were combined.

Interview guides were generated for particular categories of informants. While the six different guides (one each for university education and placement officials and students and school system superintendents, principals, and teachers) were similar in regard to the "sensitizing questions," they reflected the necessary differences inherent in the participant's perspective (see Appendix B). It is important to note these interview guides were just that--guides. Research design assumptions led the investigator to believe that if situational meanings were to be understood, it would be necessary to facilitate the uncovering of these meanings in the language and through the understandings of the participants. Therefore, the interviews were conducted within an "open-ended" framework in an attempt to elicit "the multiperspectival experiences" in the diverse settings. Not all of the

sensitizing questions were addressed in all interviews since some questions did not fit into the particular "conversation" as well as others.

The interviews themselves were conducted either individually or in focused-group settings. All of the focused-group interviews were with university students since the interviews with the other categories of informants were conducted individually. The interviews lasted from 30 to 90 minutes; the length of the "conversations" was determined more by the interest and attitude of the interviewee than by other time and organizational constraints. In numerous cases, the investigator was invited to return to discuss the issues more fully.

Notes were written during the course of the interviews and later reviewed and transcribed according to the format of the interview guides. Matrices were constructed for both school systems and universities with sensitizing categories listed vertically and site data recorded horizontally. Interview responses, document analysis, and on-site observations from the school systems were categorized and analyzed according to (1) background and contextual variables; (2) position availability, need, and turnover; (3) the identification and selection of teachers; and (4) employment conditions and teacher alternatives. Similarly, data from the universities were categorized and analyzed according to (1) background and contextual variables, (2) student paths to education and teaching, (3) student perceptions of employment conditions, and (4) placement and recruiting procedures at the university. The analysis of these matrices was then transcribed into 12 individual case studies. These case studies, organized by their four respective categories, provide rich, in-depth information about how teacher labor market processes and variables affect the respective institutions. After the analysis (and writing) of the 12 individual cases, another matrix was

developed according to five "sensitizing categories" outlined in the introduction. These categories, essentially a collapsed version of both school system and university categories, provided the analytical framework for the following section--"A Comparison of Teacher Labor Markets in the Southeast."

A COMPARISON OF TEACHER ABOR MARKETS IN THE SOUTHEAST

Background and Contextual Variables

The six school systems and six universities in this case study are different. As noted in Tables A and B (in the previous section), population, context, economic base, cultural diversity, and student backgrounds provide a different situational context in each school system and university site.

School Systems I, II, and V are all located in major metropolitan areas (with major universities and colleges in the immediate vicinity), but have considerable cultural diversity among their student populations. System I has a predominately "black" student population (even though it was once a predominately "white" system), II is more racially balanced, and V is predominately "white." Both Systems I and V have been on the opposite ends of "white flight" in the past, with this variable having affected a declining enrollment in I and an increasing one in V. System V provides a "top supplement" to the state teachers' salary scale and attracts teachers from nearby "inner city" school systems; System I spends less on teacher salaries than in the past (in order to upgrade special education programs) and loses teachers to nearby suburban school systems (which, in turn, pay higher supplements). The size of School System II, a single-district county, makes it unique in that it combines the characteristics of urban and suburban school systems.

While there are schools in System II which are located within rural areas of the county, they are vastly different from those in School Systems III, IV, and VI. These truly rural school systems, all single-district counties, have far less money for local teaching positions and do not provide supplements to the state teachers' salary scale. However, there are vast differences among these three systems. System III is located in a county

that has "no industry," "no shopping centers," and "no more than 30 government jobs that pay more than $15,000 a year." The county has an approximate mean family income of $11,000. This system, which has a predominately black student population, has its central office in a town of 700 people (also the county seat) and is nearly 100 miles from the nearest university with a teacher education program. System IV is located in a county that has some industry and well-kept shopping centers. This system, which has a racially balanced student population, has its central office in a town of 6,000 people (also the county seat) and is approximately 30 miles from a state university with a large teacher education program. Many of the system's teachers have master's degrees. System VI is located in a county that has little industry, but is the center of a resort area. Also, the county contains a state university with a large teacher education program. The county has a mean family income of approximately $14,500, tourism, real estate, and the recreational and cultural opportunities provided by the college town. System VI has a larger percentage of teachers holding master's degrees than any other system in the state.

Universities II, III, and IV are traditionally "white teachers' colleges," have total student enrollments of over 10,000, and have 1,300, 800, and 1,200 undergraduate education students respectively. However, Universities II and IV are different from III in that the former are located in rural areas and attract a large percentage of first-generation college students, while the latter is located in a major metropolitan area and, being a "traditionally female college," attracts the "daughters of alumnae." In addition, University IV, located near a resort community, has the distinction of being known as "a cool school" because of the "recreational" and "party" opportunities it has for its students. Subsequently, this "rural" university attracts a number of urban second-generation college students.

Universities I and VI are both traditionally "black colleges" and have student enrollments of 2,500 (240 in undergraduate education) and 5,000 (250 in undergraduate education) respectively. While both are located within urban areas, University I is set apart by being located near a major military base and VI by being located near research and medical institutions. Both attract many rural first-generation college students. If education students are "second-generation college," then it is more likely that their parents are educators themselves.

University V is a major research institution (with approximately 20,000 students) and does not place a high priority on teacher education (350 in the undergraduate education program). Many of the university's education students are "second-generation college" and come from urban areas. Those education students who do come from rural areas tend to be "high-scoring"; the average SAT score for freshman at the university is 1,060 In fact, while education students at University V score slightly lower (1,030) than their counterparts in other degree programs on campus, they score considerably higher than their education counterparts at the other five universities (e.g., I = 699; II = 850; III = 915; IV = 842; VI = 625).

The universities have similar teacher education programs (in terms of types of courses required), except that II, III, and IV (all traditionally teachers' colleges) require longer student teaching internships. While undergraduate education enrollments have been dropping at all institutions, they generally have stabilized at Universities II, III, and IV. All six universities produce few math and science teachers as shown by Table C.

TABLE C

NUMBER COMPLETING UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS IN TEACHER EDUCATION (SEPTEMBER 1, 1982 THROUGH AUGUST 31, 1983)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
TOTAL NUMBER	78	481	166	418	163	65
Early Childhood	30	91	52	61	50	32
Intermediate	11	40	15	37	38	15
English	4	13	7	3	16	1
Math	2	9	4	11	8	0
Science	0	17	0	7	6	0
Social Studies	4	7	7	23	9	2
Foreign Language	0	3	3	1	6	0
Special Education	0	88	1	97	0	0
Physical Education	13	51	11	52	23	4
Health Education	0	26	4	8	0	2
Business	7	22	3	6	0	1
Industrial Arts	0	22	0	17	0	0
Home Economics	0	17	6	7	0	0
Art	0	22	5	7	0	4
Music	7	26	17	25	6	3
Reading	0	0	0	5	1	0
Speech/Hearing Impaired	0	15	24	26	0	0
Media	0	7	0	13	0	0
Drivers' Education	0	5	0	4	0	1
Dance/Theater	0	0	7	8	0	0

Position Availability, Need, and Turnover

School system officials report their "turnover rates" of the last few years to be in the range of 3 to 7 percent. However, turnover rates do not mean the same thing to officials in the different school systems. For example, in the more metropolitan systems (I, II, and V), internal transfers, maternity and other temporary leaves, and new local positions are combined to account for new position availability and need.

In School System I, with its 2,000 teachers, officials report that 160 teachers were hired during the 1983-84 academic year, noting that a "number of these were new positions." Officials report a turnover rate of "7 or 8 percent a year." However, they noted, "Our turnover represents no more elementary than secondary and not more math and science than any other subject area." Furthermore, in this system, central office administrators claimed that if teachers do "resign" (and 87 did last year), they do so for the following reasons (in descending order of magnitude):

(1) "move with their spouse,"

(2) "stay at home with their child,"

(3) "move to other jobs in education," and

(4) "a few dissatisfactions . . . about one percent."

If they are dissatisfied, it is usually because they "can't handle disadvantaged kids" (a high school principal) or they are "frustrated with the lack of disciplinary action taken by administrators" (a high school calculus teacher--who is resigning). While it is noted that some math teachers (especially black females) are "recruited" and hired by local utility companies, one central office administrator asserted, "We are getting them back. They discover that life is not as beautiful on the other side."

School System II, with its 4,000 teachers, reported "openings of 600

positions" for this past academic year. Officials reported that "400" of these openings were attributed to "internal transfers" and "leaves." This left the remaining "200" openings attributable to new local positions and "resignations." "Resignation" documents, prepared by the school system, show only 59 secondary and 52 elementary teachers leaving the system from July 1983 - June 1984. While this turnover rate of 5 percent has "held relatively consistent" in the past few years, there appear to be no grade levels or subject areas that are significantly more affected than others. In fact, of the 59 secondary resignations, the most notable subject areas were support services (12), vocations (9), math (8), special education (7), English (5), and science (5). Of the 8 math resignations, only 2 were at the senior high level (6 at either middle or junior high schools), and of the 5 science resignations, only 2 were at the senior high level (and these two were listed as biology positions). While the secondary document did not list "reasons for leaving," the elementary list did. Of the 52 teachers, 29 noted, "I am leaving the community"; 10 noted, "my family needs me at home"; 3 noted, "I am taking other employment"; 2 each noted, "I am dissatisfied with my job" (of the 2, 1 was a teacher of autistic children): "My health will not allow me to continue," and "I am going to school." Only one teacher noted, "I have found a position with better pay." (Three teachers did not state a reason for leaving.) Given this, it is not surprising that a central office administrator noted, "Most of our separations are because of husbands leaving or retirements--more of that than unhappiness."

One high school principal (who will need 1 math and 2 English teachers next year) noted that he has "not had too much of a turnover problem since [he's] been here" (around ten years). The ones who have left did so because of "their husband . . . a baby . . . or retirement." Furthermore, he added

that "many teachers want to work where they live and many live right near here . . . . I have never had a teacher put in for a transfer." Middle schools have different problems in this regard; one principal noted that turnover was

> rough in spots . . . . We had a French teacher transfer to the high school. It took me three weeks to get someone hired. Many of the math and science teachers who teach the more advanced subjects have left to go to the senior high . . . . Many times you hire a physical science teacher with a biology major . . . . Kids don't get the teacher who has the strongest 'prep', but [it is] not to the point that it is necessary.

In School System V, with its 1,300 teachers, officials reported 175 openings this past academic year with most of these filled because of teachers going on "temporary leave." While reporting a "turnover rate of 4 percent," a central office administrator noted that 27 teachers left for reasons of "(1) retirement, (2) spouse moving, and (3) to go into other work." Only 3 teachers were reported to fall into this last category--going into other work. An administrator related that "one physics teacher went to industry at double his salary," "one 'ag' teacher went to open his own landscaping business," and "one English teacher went to sell insurance." A middle school principal asserted that he "doesn't have a [turnover] problem," as he may have only "1 or 2 a year." These are usually "maternity leaves . . . but when that baby comes along it is awfully difficult for the mother-teacher to leave it at home." Subsequently, "many will stay out until the child grows up" (i.e., enters kindergarten). A high school principal responded to the status of teacher turnover at his school by saying, "One is retiring . . . one is resigning go back to farm with his father . . . one by termination . . . and one transfer so she can teach closer to where she lives."

In the more rural systems (III, IV, and VI), retirements and new local

positions account for new position availability and need. Additionally, in these systems, teachers are less inclined to take extended maternity leaves (for economic reasons). Since teachers in isolated rural systems (such as System III) face great difficulty in obtaining graduate degrees once they are employed, "going back to school" is also a significant reason for turnover—but the turnover rates are exceptionally small.

In School System III, officials reported a turnover rate of between "3 and 5 percent." There are presently 7 openings for the 1984-85 academic year. These 7 vacant positions included 2 science; 2 librarian; 1 each in math, speech and hearing, and EMH. While principals did not indicate any critical areas of shortage, the superintendent recognized the problems in filling a science vacancy—metropolitan systems are able to hire these people (even before they receive their degree).

When teachers do leave School System III, they generally do so for three reasons (in descending order of magnitude):

(1) "retirement,"

(2) "going back to school," and

(3) "moving to a metropolitan area" (central office administrator).

One high school principal asserted that the four "folks" who left last year did so because they:

(1) "were released,"

(2) "were moved to another position [in the system],"

(3) "left for a new position [in the system]," and

(4) "left because he and his wife were both teachers here, and they got a divorce."

System IV is also a rural system, but is less isolated since a state university with large education programs is approximately 30 minutes from the center of the county. This allows teachers to obtain graduate degrees and

change certification while still teaching in the system. System officials reported "11 vacancies" for the 1984-85 academic year. However, these 11 included "3 additional allotments . . . elementary librarians paid for by the county" and the "rest of the 8 are pretty much in grades 4-8." Furthermore, this central office administrator asserted:

> Oh, yes, we do need a science person . . . . However, we also need a coach, and it is difficult to find a science person who can coach . . . . We will probably fill it with a PE teacher--most of them are certified in biology or physical science, too.

He later stressed that these 11 vacancies are "about 11 more than last year." When teachers do leave the system, it is primarily because of retirement (all of the 1984 turnover resulted from retirements) and, on occasion, a "husband move." One principal noted that he "did lose a chemistry teacher (who had been with the system for 20 years) a few years ago to the local water treatment plant."

System VI is also a rural system, but even less isolated as a state university and resort communities are located within the county. The state university has a large education program; this allows many teachers to obtain graduate degrees while still teaching in the system. System VI officials reported that there will be "10 openings next year." These vacancies are in the areas of business (3), math (2), early childhood (2), and social studies (1), intermediate (1), and auto mechanics (1). One administrator reported that 5 of these vacancies resulted from retirements (all 3 of the business, the social studies, and the math positions), 2 from pregnancies (the intermediate and 1 of the early childhood), 1 from a spouse moving (the other early childhood--"her husband accepted a head football coach's position in nearby county"); and 2 from "going into business." Of the 2 going into business, "one was an auto mechanics teacher who is opening a garage," and

the other is a "top-notch advanced math and calculus teacher who is going to do creative crafts at home and teach part-time at [the local university]."

One high school principal (who has been in the system for 20 years) noted that he's had "very little turnover".

> One left to sell cars, but he came back . . . . One English teacher left to sell real estate, and one left to go back to school in business administration . . . . Most retire, have a baby, or move with their family . . . . Most will stay here.

In summary, all school officials reported turnover rates of the last few years to be in the range of 3 to 7 percent. While these officials did not report disproportinate turnover in any particular subject area, there was an expressed need for vocational and special education teachers as well as those in science and math. In more urban systems, internal transfers, maternity and other temporary leaves, and new local positions are combined to account for new position availability and need. Important differences also exist between urban and rural systems in regard to reasons for teacher turnover. In urban systems, "spouse moves" predominate; on the other hand, in rural systems, "retirements" predominate. Furthermore, in urban areas where families have greater incomes, there is a tendency for these teachers to be more able to take extended leaves in order to stay home and rear their children. In the few instances reported of teachers leaving due to dissatisfaction, they were in urban areas, and discipline problems and the lack of administrative support (not low salaries) were reasons for their dissatisfaction.

Paths to Education and Teaching

Generally, both university education students and school system teachers come from lower-middle- and middle-class backgrounds. Similarly, education students tend to follow the background patterns of those in the larger university, and teachers tend to follow those who live in their surrounding area. Those students attending more urban and "traditionally white" universities (III, IV to some degree, and V) and those teachers in more urban school systems tend to have parents and spouses who hold more "middle- to upper-middle-class" occupations. Similarly, those students who attend more rural or black universities and teachers from rural areas tend to have parents and spouses who hold more "lower-middle- to middle-class" occupations.

Both university students and school system teachers become interested in education because of previous positive experiences in their own schooling, role models (both teachers and family members), and "their burning desire to work with children." While the latter reason is more closely aligned with elementary teachers, secondary teachers who have a strong identification with their subject matter ("I love history" . . . or "I had a great science teacher") also have a strong attraction to young people. As one high school chemistry teacher (System II) asserted, "I prefer people to equipment" (emphasis added).

University V students provide a wide range of reasons for choosing education. Students noted that they

> enjoyed high school . . . [were] close with several of [their] teachers . . . always loved history . . . get fulfilled helping kids . . . love children . . . like the free time to spend with [their] family and hobbies . . . [and] June, July, and August.

In addition, education provides similar rewards that some students find in

religion and church. As one student noted:

> I was supposed to teach . . . . I decided [to go into education] more through prayer . . . plus, I've always loved kids, and I've worked in the summer program at my church (white, female, 22 years old, intermediate education).

Another asserted:

> I've worked with young people in churches . . . . Recently, I started [to work] with young people at a summer camp . . . . It was almost like seeing the light—I have something to offer (white, male, 31 years old, former manager of retail store).

Religion is an important variable, especially in rural areas. As one System III principal noted, "I am here by the grace of God . . . . I had a vision that [this school system] was the place to be" (emphasis added).

Importantly, one cannot determine when students and teachers become interested in teaching as much as one can predict what they will teach when they become interested. As one elementary education student (University III) asserted, "I first decided when I was a little girl . . . . I wanted to teach ever since the second grade." One second grade teacher from System IV claimed that she made her decision to teach, "When I was real, real small . . . . I remember when I was real, real young—I must have been in the second grade." Secondary students and teachers spoke of the influence of "their coach," or a particular teacher and subject at a particular grade level. Many will teach or are teaching the exact subject and grade level in which they were most influenced as students. This pattern tends to be consistent across all universities and school systems and emphasizes the considerable significance of role models in the path to teaching.

Student alternatives to education. Education students at the six universities (and teachers in school systems as well) generally see teaching

as an "exciting" and "challenging" occupation. In many cases, teaching is a chance to fulfill their childhood ambitions of "molding minds." Many education students do not seriously consider alternative occupations, and, if they do, these occupations are somewhat stereotypical--nursing, physical therapy, and art design for women, and farming, forestry, and carpentry for men. These alternatives predominate among the more rural students. When female education students think about alternative occupations to teaching, they do so in terms of traditionally female ("waitress," "office job," "secretarial things," or "factory") work. Those that have held such other jobs see education as more desirable.

One former legal assistant explained her move to the teaching occupation (she is obtaining certification in early childhood):

> It's hard to explain . . . . [I] originally started out in business . . . found I was not cut out for it . . . [due to] hours, time, and difficulty . . . . I couldn't get away for vacations [with her husband].

She continued:

> I'm not geared toward management . . . nor am I inclined toward factory work . . . . [I've] got to be competitive . . . have to be backstabbing [in management work] . . . education is not as competitive.

Another student noted that she "wouldn't want to work [where her husband works--a synthetics factory] . . . . They move there." She explained that "salaries [in teaching] are low compared to [husband's job] . . . but money is not everything."

Even the more urban students at University V consider business or research-related fields as "too impersonal." While one student noted that he "never considered being a lawyer," an M.D. who left a "post-doc fellowship to get certified to teach chemistry," asserted:

> I want more free time to spend with my family and hobbies . . . . While I spend more time on lesson plans than I

> thought [I would], there is less pressure [in teaching] . . . . Patients want disability [payments], narcotics, and for you to prop up costs for insurance . . . . Students might want good grades, but they won't die on you . . . . In medicine, everything is an endless series of ethical decisions.

He further noted:

> I tried doing research [in chemistry], but I discovered that I lacked that something that is needed--I get aggravated with grants . . . . Also, I couldn't pursue [a career in research] without the backing of my supervisor.

When queried about the vast differences in income between doctors and teachers, he responded:

> If teachers worked only 8-3, their salaries would be reasonably fair--but many don't . . . . I can survive on very little--my values are in line with teachers' salaries . . . . I would like to have a little land, but I am just not sure what security [financial] means.

Most importantly, when discussing alternative occupations, education students stress that teaching suits their personality, life style, and values. However, for some, the alternative of going into the major program in their area of certification is problematic. When queried about "not going into math," two students (both intermediate math majors) at University I responded, "Whew, Calc II! (second-level calculus) . . . . You have to know what you are doing . . . and what you are talking about . . . . I'm not that smart. But, more often than not, if other occupations or fields of study are perceived as being alternatives, these perceptions tend to be short-lived. As one student asserted, "I took economics and accounting . . . . I was getting by [in terms of grades] . . . but it was not what I wanted to do the rest of my life."

While most students see themselves "teaching forever," there appears to be a bifurcation of career paths in education for those students in Universities I, II, and VI (traditionally black or rural), and those in III, IV,

and V (traditionally white and/or urban). Many of those in the latter group of universities see themselves as "professors of education" or supervisors in their school systems. On the other hand, those in the former group of universities see themselves as classroom teachers--period. If education students cannot find their job (back home), there is the alternative of "not working" (her fiancee is in the military), "working in a group home or in day care" (she is single), or "waitressing" (she is divorced and has a child). For many, not finding a job in teaching is a "depressing thought." This is especially so for the many students who cannot "go back to daddy's jewelry store," "go back to school" (graduate), or "get married." While these characterizations are expressed predominately with females in mind (when their alternatives are solely tied to their spouse and their station in life), male students and teachers from rural areas also appear to be somewhat "stationary." As one placement official from University II noted:

> Most men in education feel at one time or another we should get into the business world and make a fortune . . . . A lot of them have come to me [for counseling] and I tell them you'll be back--you're a born teacher . . . . Well, sure enough, they leave [one worked in "life insurance and another" worked in "Wendy's management training"] and come back [to this office] looking [for a teaching job].

Student perceptions of schools. Education students at Universities III, IV, and V appear to have a more comprehensive understanding about "what schools are like" and "what schools want in teachers" than their counterparts in Universities I, II, and VI. Universities III, IV, and V also produce more secondary education students, and they tend to more aware of the "discipline problems" and the extracurricular demands which are placed on teachers. Because of this, these students recognize that school systems are looking for "classroom managers," disciplinarians, and coaches. One University III

student noted that there is "a lot of outside work . . . . We're responsible for values as well as what's in the textbook . . . . [We will get] very little or no support [from parents and, in some cases, administrators]." Most urban students realize that they will "have only 25 minutes for lunch with duty," but this is "ok," since it is "more important to work with kids than to go out to restaurants." At University IV students noted that school systems are interested in a variety of prospective teachers' characteristics and attributes. These include:

> Motivation--they ask 'what can you do if the child refuses to do anything' . . . . My interviewers kept asking about discipline . . . they want a particular point of view [liberal or conservative] . . . . They want to know your personal ideas as well as those on education . . . . If I had come across as a liberal, they wouldn't have hired me.

However, the need to have coaching skills stands out in student perceptions of what school systems are looking for in potential candidates. At University IV, one student claimed that "the first question he [the interviewer] asked me was if I could coach . . . . You see, it is hard to get coaches." Still another student noted the emphasis on coaching in filling out applications:

> Let me tell you about their application [a particular school system] . . . . On the first page, it asks you [in order] home, address, height, weight, something about your parents, and "what can you coach" . . . . On the second page, it asks you "what you are certified in."

A placement official corroborated the emphasis that systems place on a new teacher's ability and willingness to coach:

> They want you to coach--especially in high schools . . . . You'll find very few positions without coaching . . . . Your first year you must teach and coach . . . . The majority of systems would like that science person to coach.

In summary, one female math student asserted, "There is an opening in math

[at the local high school], but I've heard not to apply because they need football coaches . . . . They'll find a football coach who will teach math." Similar concerns exist at University V. One social studies major expressed her concerns:

> Unfortunately, I'm social studies, and I can't coach . . . . I have to compete with males who are more coaches than teachers . . . . That's infuriating . . . . I am capable of everything but coaching . . . . Maybe I could be a cheerleading counselor or something like that.

Another female student (intermediate math major) also felt the pressure from school systems to coach--and ultimately was concerned that she won't get a job: "I'll tell them that I'm good . . . swimming, tennis, volleyball--it depends on what they want . . . . I don't know how to stick out above the others . . . . Can you help me?"

On the other hand, one male social studies student felt comfortable about his marketability as a teacher because of his "association with football at the University." He asserted that "with football they [school systems] know that you have the things that will make you a good employee." But his story about his interview at a teacher placement "job fair" is even more telling (about a system's need and desire for coaches):

> I handed him [the system's representative] my resumé . . . . I told him about football knowing that to get a job [you've] got to coach . . . . He circled football on my resumé and turned completely away, telling the person seated next to him, that "I was an excellent prospect . . . ." He didn't ask me any other questions, and he signed [on a form]--"excellent applicant." He told me that if they changed United States History to the 11th grade he would need three United States History teachers. He then told me, "if I have an opening, I'll call you--if I don't, I'll make one."

More important than anything else is the perception by students that school systems want someone who is reasonably intelligent (a "2.5 GPA"), can deal "with 30 different kids individually," and can fit well into the school.

This appears to be why one University III student asserted, "[school systems] want teachers from their home system . . . . (They) like for you to be at ease . . . and don't want you to do anything far-out."

Many students at Universities I, II, and VI perceived that "children are bad," but they did not appear to be too concerned. Their concern and understanding about employment conditions were seemingly overridden by their concern for employment. In fact, as one education official at University II noted:

> Many undergraduates don't think about job conditions . . . . They don't understand what it is to have a repressive principal . . . and we don't help them . . . . I am trying to get the teacher education faculty to understand about these [employment conditions] . . . but, if it is not in the text . . .

Salary is one variable that many students in all universities were quite willing to complain about, but they tended to be very vague about specifying what they are worth. When pressed with "what would be a fair salary?" most tended to hesitate, but finally noted that "$13,000 is not bad for a beginning salary" (if you are single), and that "$16,000-$20,000" would be adequate compensation. As one young divorced mother responded:

> Twenty thousand would be fair . . . . I'm divorced . . . [and] that would pay for my boy's nursery school and my student loan . . . . I could live on it [$20,000] . . . be able to save some money . . . get a home and make house payment

But, more often than not, students from rural areas tended to emphasize the hope that "they would not be struggling . . . but comfortable." More importantly, though, most quickly asserted as one did, "Money is not the reason [we] go into education" (emphasis added).

The recruiting of education students to universities. While most of the universities "essentially do nothing" in terms of recruiting students to

their education programs, those who do, asserted that they are not very successful because many students "have already made up their minds for a high-demand field like business administration." However, it appears that officials at the traditionally black universities (I and VI) were more pessimistic about recruiting undergraduate education students than their counterparts in other institutions. As one University VI official stated, "There is now more opportunity for minority students" than ever before. Furthermore, he noted that because of this, "Why should students enter education--especially those in math and science?" A placement official at the same university explained that this is a serious problem since:

> School systems have such limited budgets . . . [and] industry is real interested in qualified minority students . . . [and will] come in and hire a chemistry major and then <u>send</u> them to school in chemical engineering.

Subsequently, the education department "takes those that come to them." Furthermore, attracting students to education at University VI "is going to reach a very critical stage," as most students will not be able "to attain the NTE cut-off score for entry into the program [a forthcoming state-wide admission criteria]."

While officials at Universities II, III, IV, and V were concerned about their enrollments, they seemed to be more confident that students will continue to "come to them." Their large education programs (at II, III, and IV) have very good "reputations," and there are many administrators who have graduate degrees from their institutions; this provides a built-in mechanism for public relations and recruiting.

In addition, University III, traditionally a female teacher's college, is noted for "the number of alumnae that send their daughters back to their school." However, since education officials at University III see "the

competition [for students] getting tougher," and they "want good students," the school is becoming "pretty aggressive" in its recruitment procedures. Professors work at having "good rapport with high school guidance counselors," and the school sends out "individual brochures." Once high school seniors are accepted and identified as having some interest in education, present students and professors make contacts with them. The school has "coffee and doughnuts" and "orientation" meetings where they encourage them to enter the teacher education program. Furthermore, one official stated, "We encourage them to sit in on education classes as freshmen . . . so that they can see how we get along as a family." The efforts at recruiting and socializing with their students appear to work since many noted that they "feel good about" and "love this school."

For most students at University V, family and other personal ties determined that they would go to this prestigious, but not as costly, institution (as compared to some of the state's well-known private universities). Students from this university noted that "in my family you come here . . . always was supposed to come here . . . . All my friends came here . . . my sister came here. However, with dropping student enrollments in education, officials are beginning to count more heavily on the school's faculty advisor to undergraduate majors (most undergraduate programs have a faculty member represent them). The present advisor was specifically picked (unofficially to recruit the undecided majors) because she is "outgoing, charming, young, and relates well with students."

Student mobility. Generally, education students in universities (and teachers in school systems) want to teach in a place that is "familiar." However, definitions of "familiar" appear to differ according to the

background of the student or teacher. For urban students, familiar tends to mean teaching "back home," in their university town, or in a place like their university town. While urban students are "surprisingly immobile," they are not as immobile as many rural students who fall into only one or two mobility categories. As one education official asserted:

> The first category doesn't want to leave [town], so they wait 3-4 years working as aides in the local school system [or other college-student type jobs]. The second category tends to come to the University "from a particular rural town, having been taught by "Mrs. K", then goes back to [their old school] to take over for "Mrs. K" when she retires."

The same official noted that he has "seen [these behaviors] over and over again."

However, some rural students who attend urban universities don't want to go back home at all. As one (from University V) stated:

> The area I was born and raised is sort of lost when it comes to education . . . . I don't want to go back there . . . . There are not that many job openings, but more importantly there is a lot of pressure going back home . . . . My philosophy doesn't click [there] . . . . I don't want to be scrutinized.

Another "rural" student at University V claimed, "I like this place [university town]. First of all, there are bookstores here and neighbors who I can talk to . . . . Rural areas are dominated by ignorance and prejudice." While one education official (University V) asserted, "We try to tell them to be agile and mobile," another official at the same university related:

> A lot just go back home . . . . They are in contact with their home school system . . . . Parents have a lot to do with this . . . . You know, the father is good friends with the superintendent--a lot of that goes on.

As one placement official (University V) noted:

> I'm surprised they're so immobile . . . . I guess it is because they've been here 4 years making a niche . . . . It was the same at [the last university placement office she worked in] . . . . Business and graduate students

> are flexible . . . . Maybe it has something to do with their maturity.

Another placement official (University i) lamented the immobility of education students by asserting:

> They [education students] don't like to leave home . . . . School teachers just don't leave . . . . Now, those management guys say, "I don't care if it's Kalamazoo"--they are unfixed, ready to go . . . . [These differences among students] are a serious concern of mine . . . . Come to think of it, those business people are a bit more mature and stable--they know how to buy that car and find that apartment.

In summary, as students enter the labor market for teachers, they enter with considerable enthusiasm for fulfulling their lifelong ambition to teach and with considerable anxiety toward finding a job--a job they anticipate will be back home or near the university which they are now attending. Other occupations are not seriously considered by many candidates, since teaching for these students is less of a career and more of a calling--a calling which suits their backgrounds, personalities, life styles, and values. However, the personalities, life styles, and values of rural students are considerably different from those of urban students as their characteristics tend to fit their respective backgrounds. While education students are not "unfixed and ready to go" like "those management guys," they are willing and able to respond to the varied demands of public school teaching.

The Identification, Recruitment, and Selection of Teachers

Teacher placement by universities. Many university teacher education programs do very little to place their students in full-time teaching positions. All program officials stress the importance of students developing "informal networks" and doing well in their student teaching internships, but their efforts seldom go beyond such encouragement. As one

official from University I noted, "I preach to them that they need to know someone . . . [and encourage them to do well in their] student teaching experience as it may tip it for them." A few universities, notably III and IV, have formalized some of these informal networks by university officials' working in school systems and by school system officials' serving on university teacher education "advisory councils." In regard to the latter, University IV has essentially institutionalized students' desire to return home to teach by having students "choose where they will student teach." This results in 49 school systems being utilized as student teaching sites. In fact, superintendents and principals from those systems are members of the university teacher education "advisory council."

While most officials just "encourage" students to do well in their "student teaching experience," those at University III take it a step further by insisting that their students "invite their principals to observe their student teaching." One University III official noted that this strategy "works quite well." Furthermore this university holds seminars which train students "to do well in their interviews"--insisting that they "say more than 'I love children.'" In addition, University V enhances the marketability of its students by encouraging them to hold dual certifications, responding to a need of school systems to have "flexible" teachers.

All students appear to know that the most important avenue for getting a job is "who you know." However, those students at Universities III, IV, and V appear to be more "persistent" and go beyond working the informal networks in their efforts than their counterparts at Universities I, II, and VI. Urban students are more apt to believe that teaching jobs can be obtained on the basis of merit. As an education official at a rural university (II) stated, "In this part of the state, knowing the superintendent is the most

important" and noted avenue for employment as a teacher. In fact, one student, confident of her employment back home (where her mother works for the school system), claims, "I'll go to the Board of Education . . . . I'll talk to people--people involved with my mother."

Identification and recruitment by school systems. The process of recruiting and selecting teachers in school systems emerges from the character of the locale itself. School systems within "highly mobile" metropolitan areas (I, II, and V) and those in close proximity to universities (I, II, III, V, and VI) take on a particular characteristic--a plethora of "applicants on file" (see Table D).

System III, with 275 teachers, and System IV, with 320, generally have enough "applicants on file" (both have approximately 100) since they rely on those "want[ing] to come home and teach in [these] rural setting[s]."

TABLE D

SCHOOL SYSTEM APPLICANTS ON FILE

SYSTEM	NUMBER OF TEACHERS EMPLOYED	NUMBER OF APPLICANTS
I	2,000	1,000
II	4,000	3,500
III	275	100
IV	320	100
V	1,300	600
VI	270	300

In metropolitan and university communities, school system officials "assume the right people will walk in the door . . . as people are leaving, people are coming." As one administrator (V) noted, "We have a built-in supply with students who go to school here and want to stay" (emphasis added). In these areas, medical and law schools attract "able spouses," and industry brings in "many middle managers [who] come in with certified wives." There appears to be one more factor in the identification of the available teacher pool in these urban areas--those females who have been out of the labor market for some time and are now reentering. One administrator (I) accounted for this by noting:

> I've seen a lot of applicants who are 30-38 years old . . . have had teaching experience . . . and their children are now grown. I could name you a dozen of these that I've talked to this past year. They are good candidates because of their maturity . . . . In many cases the divorce has necessitated their going back to work.

With their "built-in supply," these metropolitan school systems spend very little, if anything, on recruiting. If they do, it is for administrator travel to a few select universities to increase the "reservoir" in such "critical areas" as math and science. As one System II administrator noted, "We may hire 30 to 40 math and science [per year] and our reservoir is 50." With considerable concern, one administrator (V) stressed that recruiting in math and science presents "two horns of a dilemma--more demand and fewer people." He continued:

> We are going to need more because there are not as many people to choose from . . . . We need to recruit people in areas where there is not enough depth of the pool . . . . Filling one math position is like filling 3-4 regular positions--a real headache.

While not many math and science teachers are leaving this system or any others, for that matter, this System V administrator described how the last

science (chemistry) resignation was replaced:

> Well, we lucked into finding his replacement . . . . There was one in our files that was teaching in [a nearby system] and was on leave . . . . He came here because he was dissatisfied with his assignment [not teaching enough advanced subjects] and discipline.

While metropolitan school systems rely on their "built-in supplies," rural systems tend to utilize informal mechanisms available to them in their settings. Finding science teachers is not easy for rural systems since "metropolitan systems [are] able to hire these people" even before they receive their degrees. Still, they are able to fill these vacancies when they arise. One administrator (III) explained how he filled five math and science positions over the past few years:

> One worked in a bank 20 miles away from here and she decided she wanted to teach . . . . Another worked in a neighboring county and wanted to come back home ("we're happy") . . . . Another was at [the nearest university], and the principal knew the department chair--he put us in touch with her . . . . Another was hired from the next county when her husband was transfered to our "Big Star" [grocery store chain] . . . . and finally we hired a gentleman [from a close by county]--he was released there, but for reasons that would not bother us.

While this administrator later asserted that filling these vacancies was "just sheer luck, man," one principal (IV) related a story of how he replaced a chemistry teacher (the one who went to the water treatment plant):

> I looked at several applicants and I wasn't satisfied . . . but then I found a lady from New York . . . . She moved into the area with her husband . . . . He was originally from here and wanted to farm again . . . . My guidance counselor met her at a church and told me about her.

In fact, the informal network of identifying and selecting is enhanced by the most notable cause of turnover in rural systems--retirement--because "when somebody retires, everybody hears about it around here."

Other important variables in the identification, recruitment, and selection of teachers include being an aide or a substitute teacher. Many teachers noted that "it's one way of getting your foot in the door." As one System IV principal stated, "There is a pool of fully certified aides [at the elementary level] . . . fully capable . . . who don't want to leave home." In fact, she noted, "Most teachers hired in the past ten years served as an aide for at least a year." While being an aide is a somewhat exclusive job-seeking mechanism for elementary teachers, subbing is used considerably by both elementary and secondary teachers in their job search. In fact, in School System II, "procedures for hiring" encourage this job search method by applicants in that those with any teaching experience in the system have "hiring priority" over others.

Recruiting by schools systems on university campuses is rather limited since administrators tend to call on the department chairs they know. Some system administrators tend to see university placement officials as "inept" and "catering to IBM . . . who they will turn heaven and hell over for." As one System I administrator asserted, "Placement offices don't encourage education folks . . . . [They] don't help [them] to be sellers . . . . They do nothing to acquaint students with the real world." In some instances, placement offices are not utilized at all by school systems in their recruiting process. As one System III administrator stated, "I don't bother with teacher agencies (university placement offices) . . . . A person needs to get a job on his own."

On the other hand, placement officials tend to believe that the recruiting process in public education is "not helped" in that school system representatives sent to the universities are not the best. One University III official noted, "We get a lot of dinky-dunks . . . . They are most likely not representative of the system . . . . I get the feeling they are

not doing a good job back at central office." Furthermore, one university official claimed:

> Recruiters from education are more conservative, refined, seasoned, and comfortable. They seem to be quite serious about what they are doing, but not as vocal or candid . . . [while] recruiters from industry are all young, dynamic, assertive . . . hard-charging and in the front of the seat.

Teacher selection. The hiring processes in the large metropolitan systems are considerably more centralized since many principals lamented that they get to interview "only a handful." While "over 90 percent of all applicants are interviewed by (the) central office," in School System II, one principal claimed:

> A lady called me from New York . . . . She and her husband were moving to the area and heard about (my school) . . . . I couldn't do a thing . . . I can be courteous . . . I can push for her . . . but I look at it as a lesson in futility . . . . I'd rather spend my time with kids.

While some rural systems (such as System IV) also have centralized hiring processes, there is more opportunity for informal school-level recruiting to take place. In fact, informal recruiting is encouraged in these systems. As one high school principal (System VI) asserted, "The informal way is the way to find good teachers . . . . The formal way is the way to get what's left over" (emphasis added). For many principals, this means talking to other principals at conferences to "see if they know someone moving [their] way." For teachers, "it's who knows who." A high school math teacher reiterated the importance of the "informal connection" as she related the story of her hiring several years ago:

> It's who knows who . . . . The university was paying for a coordinator's position [which I was holding], and the funding was stopped . . . . I didn't have a job in the summer . . . . They had an overload [student enrollment] in September, and a friend of mine [another coordinator in the county] called me . . . . I called them on Tuesday and started work on Thursday.

Administrators noted a number of constraints in the recruiting process--enrollment fluctuations, budget decisions, and, most notably in larger systems (like I, II, and V), "internal transfer policies." Since some of these systems "must first look at [those] already employed" before hiring a new teacher, one administrator (II) asserted:

> The internal transfer [policies] are a big problem . . . . We miss a lot of folks because of that . . . because of all of these internal policies we can court and sign outstanding people, but we cannot court and sign average people.

The bureaucracy inherent in a school system like this one underscores the fact that teachers work for the system and not for the individual schools. Yet, in School System II with its flexible local money (approximately 13 percent of all positions funded by the county), the system "can court and sign outstanding people" early in the recruiting season and later place them in the most appropriate vacancy. As one central office administrator noted, "We can justify signing a '3.5' (GPA) any time." Hiring is a year-round process for central office administrators in System II. With internal transfers, spouse moves, and the interviewing of "everybody who applies," the personnel office keeps "moving" so that they "can solve immediate solutions on a short-term basis." In fact, a System II administrator, in comparing his work in his large metro system to that what's done in other systems, claimed, "Ours is like an employment agency, and theirs is like an executive search." However, with many internal and external constraints placed upon them in the hiring process, a number of administrators have learned that if they "don't

have a certified teacher in every classroom by September that the world would not stop."

Teacher characteristics. If a candidate meets the certification and extracurricular requirements for a particular position, there are very few differences among administrators and principals on what characteristics that person ought to possess. For System II administrators those characteristics included, "(1) a desire to deal with children, (2) a certain amount of intelligence [meaning a 'strong 2.5 GPA'], and (3) a reasonable history of accomplishment." In School System I, these characteristics included:

> "Being able to feel for the child . . . and having that child respect you. . . . Not wanting to win all the time . . . being a manager, an organizer, and disciplinarian" [principals].

As one central office administrator noted (with some hesitation):

> The best academic qualities are not necessarily what we want . . . . We need someone who has a commitment to teaching . . . the ability to communicate and organize . . . to withstand pressure . . . and have empathy as opposed to sympathy . . . . Also, yes, she should have that energy level--especially at the elementary level.

One high school principal in System I corroborated this importance of interpersonal skills relative to academic qualifications by stating:

> I picked up someone in November . . . . She's very bright . . . and at that time I said she's a savior [high test scores and GPA] . . . but she turned out to be a terrible teacher . . . . She doesn't expect enough . . . she just can't handle people.

An administrator in System VI continued in the same vein:

> I'm not looking for someone just in math . . . . They have to be able to relate to kids and adults . . . . The "number one" thing is interpersonal and intrapersonal skills . . . to deal effectively with parents . . . got to have a good philosophy . . . . I don't know what order [these characer'stics ought to be in], but they need to have a real concern for kids.

A middle school principal in System V asserted that "Teachers have to be an advocate for kids . . . interested in the education of the child--I'm talking about total education." For a high school principal in the same school system, the notion of "total education" is important, albeit with a slightly different slant. He noted, "In the high school we are looking for people who can do more than teach . . . . I got 20 different sports and an 80-member marching band (emphasis added). A high school principal in System VI asserted:

> They must be able to teach a variety of courses . . . have a good GPA . . . and I always ask about the extra-curricular around school [coaching, dances, clubs, etc.,] . . . . The classroom comes first . . . . The other is secondary, but important.

In isolated rural school systems that encourage them "to come back home" to teach, it is not surprising that it takes someone from "back home" to fit into the community and teach. Subsequently, in order to teach in School System III, an administrator noted:

> First, you have to love the church . . . not like life in the fast lane . . . have a real appreciation [for those who are] poor and illiterate . . . . Talk about teaching the whole child--our teachers really have to do it.

While a certain amount of intellect is necessary for good teaching, most all agree that "being able to think of and understand (students) as individuals" is paramount. In regard to finding and hiring the most academically able teacher, one administrator in System IV emphasized, "There is a helluva difference between teaching physics and chemistry at the high school level and at the college level . . . . I wouldn't want a Ph.D. from DuPont" (emphasis added). Even if School System IV administrators wanted a "Ph.D. from DuPont," they probably would have no place to put him or her in the schools. As the same administrator related:

> We don't have the space for the added challenge [for further advance courses in science] . . . . Principals won't have flexible schedules, so we couldn't have the 2-3 hour labs needed [like in advanced chemistry] . . . . We must consider the kids' time [especially after school] . . . . We'd have an uproar from parents if kids had to stay at school longer.

In summary, very little recruiting is done by either university education or school system officials in the process of identifying and selecting public school teachers. While some university officials facilitate the enhanced marketability of their education students, most school system officials either rely on "built-in supplies" (urban) or "informal networks" (rural). The built-in supplies of urban systems are fueled by industries and universities which have managers and students (and their spouses) "coming and going." Many school systems encourage (through internal policies) the identification and selection of new teachers through their present pool of substitute teachers and aides. In fact, in many cases, internal policies inhibit the recruiting of new teachers as system administrators "must first look at [those] already employed." School system officials are not necessarily interested in prospective teachers with "the best academic qualities" since it is most important for teachers to relate to children and parents, organize, discipline, and be involved in extracurricular activites--especially coaching. In rural areas, those with "the best academic qualities" might not necessarily be what the system needs.

Employment Conditions and Teacher Alternatives

What schools are like. All six school systems examined in this study of the teacher labor market are considerably different. However, one variable under investigation, teachers' perceptions of "what schools are like," appears to hold constant across all six systems. Schools are "demanding" and

"stressful" places in which to work. Yet, these demands (and the stress) vary according to the extent to which "discipline problems" arise at the individual schools. For example, at one high school in School System I with a high percentage of "low SES" students, a resigning math teacher (white, female, first year in the system, who teaches calculus as well as general math) asserted:

> I know I don't like it . . . . It's student attitude, discipline . . . the whole nine yards . . . . I thought kids wanted to learn . . . I don't know, [expressing considerable exacerbation to me at this point in our conversation]--it's their language, their behavior, the way they talk . . . . They don't have any respect . . . . In my two last classes [both general math], we're all hot and tired [there's no air conditioning in her room] . . . . I can't teach them anything . . . they won't be quiet and they won't listen . . . . When I send in discipline referrals it takes 3-4 days before something is done [by the administration].

On the other hand, an elementary school in the same system, characterized as "a good place to work . . . [having] parental support, a [good] reputation . . . and high test scores," places different kinds of demands on its teachers. Teachers described how they "love teaching at [their] school," and the principal asserted that "someone is always asking me if 'I can come in on Saturday' . . . [or] I have to chase them out at 5:30." Yet, these teachers don't see their employment conditions as totally ideal. As one third grade teacher of 28 years stated, "Kids are not as bubbly about education [as they once were] . . . . It used to be that it was 'I want to be a doctor' . . . now it's Michael Jackson . . . a breakdancer . . . or Boy George." One high school science teacher (black, female, 45 years old, 24 years' teaching experience) in School System II said:

> I have a different kind of student . . . . It used to be that schools were the center of activity [in the community] . . . now the malls are . . . most all of them [students] drive . . . . We used to have home visitation--now no one is home.

While one System II high school teacher (white, male, 45 years old) claimed that "there is less discipline now and more questioning of authority," a young middle school teacher asserted:

> After awhile you feel like you are fighting a losing battle . . . . Kids are wilder . . . they are not as interested in hard core academics . . . . You've got to play schemes [to motivate them] . . . . You spend most of your time trying to get them serious . . . . Maybe society in general has changed.

However, these conditions are not present just in the metropolitan systems. As one high school teacher (white, female, 35 years old, 13 years' experience) in School System IV noted, "It's different from when I first started teaching . . . Students' morals and attitudes are different . . . . They resent discipline . . . I don't know why?" One older teacher (black, male, 60 years old) seemed to explain these differing student attitudes in terms of "the changing world." He explained that "when I started teaching, if a child was unruly you'd punish him and then the parents would punish too . . . . They are not under the parental control as much now." Another teacher's response seemed to further illuminate the above one: "Kids don't really respect their parents, so how can they respect us . . . ? They (parents) do things just to shut the child up--like put them in front of the TV." However, it's not just "kids" who don't respect teachers, it is the parents as well. As one teacher in School System VI claimed, there is "more pressure from parents now. You know you cannot say or do anything to students . . . . Parents are ready to jump on you . . . . Working with parents is the big thing . . . . They come out here and tear you to pieces."

These perceptions do not necessarily differ relative to the degree of cultural diversity in a school system. In System III (with its 80 percent black student population), one principal asserted that "teaching would be

better if we could do something with parents . . . . We need to protect teachers from parents." In System VI (with its 90 percent white student population), one 60-year-old first grade teacher claimed, "You have to be so careful . . . . The child will say 'my mama will sue' . . . . We let parents win."

This theme of societal change is prevalent among most teachers in all systems and they seem to be at a loss as to what to do about it. As one teacher noted:

> Education is not the number-one priority for families today . . . . Without cooperation from parents, we're fighting a losing battle . . . . It's happening in every class [meaning in all socioeconomic classes] . . . . They [parents] have jobs and don't know what their kids are doing . . . and they're too tired to deal with their kids when they get home at night.

But, most importantly, teacher dissatisfactions regarding societal changes and student attitudes manifest themselves in such a way that teachers "now recruit [their] students away from teaching." While teachers have rarely encouraged their most academically able students to become teachers, it appears that teachers are even less likely to do so now as student and parental attitudes and behaviors frustrate and alienate them.

Attracting teachers to teaching. Nonetheless, conditions exist which attract teachers to teaching, to their systems, and to their schools. While teaching school can be "frustrating," it is "never the same." Therefore, teachers find school attractive when compared to working in an office ("that's boring!") or in a factory. In schools they can gain a "sense of pride" in "knowing that [they] are molding minds." While the "human element . . . helping people" aspect is a prevalent attractor for all teachers, many are attracted by the hours ("I can teach and still be a housewife [and]

mother") and the stability ("it's steady income") of the job. In addition, for those who come from rural, lower-income backgrounds, the salary and retirement benefits are seen as attractive employment conditions. This appears to be especially significant in School System III where there are "no more than 30 government jobs [in the county] that pay more than $15,000 a year." On the other hand, teachers working in metropolitan and "college town" environments noted that "it's [the city] a great place to live" and "it's [the town] a nice place to raise children."

While teachers want "more money" and "financial security" from their employment, they tend to see administrative support as more salient to a school system's ability to attract and retain its teachers. For example, one chemistry teacher in School System II noted that she recently had an excellent student teacher, but, "she got no administrative support [during her internship] . . . . She quit, and now she's in graduate school . . . . They lost a good teacher."

In response to what school systems can do to attract and retain teachers, one high school principal in System I noted:

> They love what they are doing. Well, I don't know if more money will help--they don't want to be poverty-stricken though . . . . The best teachers are not doing it for money anyway. To keep them, give them the freedom to do what they want to do.

Many want to be "treated as professionals." However, in some cases, a teacher's dissatisfaction with employment conditions relates to the very nature of schools having to be responsible for minors. As one teacher in School System II stated, "I like working in the school . . . except when you take 7th grad s to lunch . . . . There is no time for yourself." Another teacher claimed that, "I don't like people checking up on me . . . . If you've got something to say to me, come to me and say it . . . . Teachers

are professional and are not treated as such." Another noted that, "We are not treated professionally enough . . . . I can't take a day off to play golf . . . . I'm professional enough to know when I should or can leave and when I can't."

Teachers and administrators are generally not interested in merit pay, career ladders, or other similar reform measures to attract and retain "quality" educators. Most noted that extra responsibilities (more hours at school) and extra salary would appeal to males (who are "head of families") and "ambitious females . . . as long as it [would] not [be] paper-pushing." While most males in urban and rural systems work extra jobs anyway, the "ambitious" females who are interested in career ladders tend to be found in urban systems. However, many administrators noted that "mothers" are concerned about time away from their families. Also, in rural areas, the school schedule and calendar allow for many to work on family farms.

Finally, many see merit pay or career ladders creating "morale problems." As one System I administrator noted, "Everybody can't be a master teacher . . . . The beginning teacher won't think that she will get there . . . . It will be a longevity reward." One former retail clothing store salesperson (white, female, 23 years old), now a business teacher in School System II, responded to a query about "career ladders" in business and in schools: "You can advance there [at the department store] and pretty quickly . . . . A career ladder might be good in schools, but it seems like it takes a long time to get [to be a master teacher] . . . . I won't be here in five years.

It is difficult for most principals and teachers to believe that increased salaries will attract more qualified teachers since "money does not make a teacher," and "those who want to teach . . . well, [they] are going to

teach." As one secondary principal in System II asserted:

> I am not sure there is too much we can do under the present set-up . . . . They [teachers] do not want to be bothered with dis ipline . . . . They're interested in subject matter . . . . Money may do something, but to get the maximum effects, I don't think it will come from money.

One of his teachers noted that

> Even with the increased salaries they [legislators and policy makers] are talking about, we are not going to attract the people industry is now pulling [in] . . . . School systems need to address teacher burnout.

Finally, in trying to understand what rural systems can do to attract and retain quality teachers, it is important to understand a few significant issues. First, in these counties if one has a college degree, he or she is either a lawyer, a doctor, or a teacher. As one System IV teacher said, "What you have to realize is that the young people of quality [we] are talking about are at least one-half of the most educated people in the county now." Since the rural systems generally attract only those who are from the area, it stands to reason that they are already attracting and subsequently retaining most of the best, i.e., the few who attend college and return to teach. As one administrator (System IV) noted, "We attract our best graduates." Second, while teachers describe their desires in terms of "increased salary," "reduced paperwork and other nonessentials," "smaller classes," and "dental insurance," there are significant variables that school systems cannot control in attracting and retaining teachers. For instance, to attract young teachers from outside the area, one teacher questioned, "What does a young person do here on Saturday night?" (emphasis added). This teacher's question epitomizes an inherent problem in the rural system's ability to attract education students and teachers from outside their area. People from urban areas generally desire urban life styles.

Alternatives to teaching. In terms of alternative occupations, teachers are, in many cases, restricted to locales because of their spouses' jobs. Others tend to limit their perceptions of alternatives in terms of traditionally female work roles like "secretary" or "administrative assistant." Even for those who appear to have more marketable skills, such as one high school chemistry teacher, "the working conditions of schools, hours, and being with students" fit his values and life style. This teacher noted he "did research one summer in a chemistry lab, [but] just didn't like it." Furthermore, for some math teachers, they feel they are not as "marketable" as some think--with their "master's [in] secondary education math" as opposed to "just math." One teacher explained this by:

> I just got bogged down while working on my M.S. in math . . . . I had just finished my undergraduate degree, and I wanted the break [M.S. in math requires being a full-time student] . . . . The M.S. was just "too hard."

While many teachers complained that "there are not many [alternative] jobs available," others who have been in other occupations stressed the significance of "convenient" hours of teaching. For example, in School System II, a former engineer (now a high school math teacher) "got tired of traveling," while one former business manager (now an elementary teacher) "realized it was more convenient to teach [while raising] my kids." For the latter, leaving the more lucrative salary with the telephone company was not difficult "since [she] had a husband and [her] salary was gravy."

On the other hand, in more rural systems, the "vast majority of teachers would receive a salary cut if they left teaching." As one System IV teacher said, "Most teachers say 'what can I do' . . . . You see, when most people make a move, they move up." Even those in rural areas who could "move up," don't because of their "love of teaching" and their well-established roots.

One principal in System IV noted that his calculus teacher "Is not willing to move . . . . Her daddy lives right down the road."

Why do teachers stay in teaching? Consider these responses:

> It gives me time to vacation and have time with my children (teacher, System IV).
>
> I'll do this until I retire . . . . Just give me money . . . . Most of us feel this way [as] very few of us want to move up . . . . Most of us were raised here . . . . We do not want to move or travel . . . . We do not have much initiative (teacher, System IV).
>
> Some are capable of higher paying jobs, but they love it . . . . Their husbands are in the area . . . . Many are farmers, and this is as good a job as you can find around here . . . . For others, this is as good as they can do (high school principal, System IV).
>
> They don't have anything else to do . . . . They enjoy teaching . . . their spouses are employed here (high school principal, System I).
>
> I want to help people and my state (high school teacher, System III).
>
> People who want to teach--teach . . . . It is not a money thing, . . . teaching is not like a job (high school principal, System V).
>
> I can't imagine doing something without kids (elementary school teacher, System I).

Some do feel frustrated and trapped, as one System II teacher told:

> I don't want to leave education, even though I don't like the lack of independence . . . . You know, teaching--that's what I'm good at . . . . Honestly, the money has kept me from going elsewhere . . . . Many teachers have invested years . . . you're comfortable . . . . They complain in the teacher's lounge, but their convictions are not that strong . . . . You see you've got a house and a mortgage . . . you can't leave--practically.

But, more often than not, "nothing on the outside could attract [teachers] away from teaching--you would have to drive [them out]."

While schools are perceived as "demanding" and "stressful" places to work, they do provide the "convenient" hours that most teachers desire.

Discipline problems with students are the major source of the stress that is placed upon teachers. In large part, these discipline problems are a result of the overall "questioning of authority" in schools and the lack of support by both parents and administrators. While most teachers want more money ("who doesn't"), it is well recognized by those in the field that "the best teachers are not doing it for money anyway." Subsequently, most administrators and teachers do not believe career ladders and merit pay will attract more qualified teachers. In rural areas, many of the "best" are already teachers since most people in these locations do not hold college degrees. Furthermore, urban students and teachers are less inclined to be attracted to rural areas because these locations have limited cultural and social opportunities. Most teachers do not consider alternative occupations since they are restricted to their particular location because of their spouses' jobs, or "it is home." Even for those who have marketable skills, teaching provides a goodness-of-fit between their occupational aspirations and their personalities, life styles, and values.

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND ALTERNATIVES

This final section includes a synthesis of the findings across the five sensitizing categories, their implications for teacher labor market policies in the Southeast, and alternative recommendations for educational decision makers to consider in order to attract and retain quality teachers in public school classrooms.

Synthesis of Findings

Background and contextual variables.

* There is a significant bifurcation between rural and urban locations in regard to variables affecting the teacher labor market in the Southeast. School systems located near industries and universities have a significantly deeper pool of applicants to draw upon in the processes of identification, selection, and recertification of teachers.

* Public school teaching salaries provide good incomes in rural areas.

* Public school teachers are some of the more highly educated people in rural areas.

* Rural areas do not offer the cultural and social opportunities that many young adults from urban universities expect from their postgraduate life style.

* The lack of cultural diversity in student populations of school systems appears to be associated with fewer discipline problems as perceived by administrators, principals, and teachers.

* Urban universities attract significantly more second-generation college students than their counterparts in rural locations. Among education students, "second-generation" teacher candidates are more likely to view themselves as holding positions other than classroom teacher in the future. In most cases, these students see themselves as public school administators or professors of education.

* Universities which are traditionally black institutions tend to attract more rural first-generation college students.

* While undergraduate education enrollments have been dropping at all universities, they have generally stabilized at those institutions which are traditionally teachers' colleges. Traditionally black universities are facing further decreased enrollments. Many minority teacher

candidates are projected not to meet new standardized testing criteria for admission to teacher education programs.

* Universities which are traditionally teachers' colleges generally require longer student-teaching internships.

* Universities produce far more early childhood and intermediate teacher candidates than any other fields of study. While few math and science candidates are being produced, there also is a scarcity of English, social studies, foreign language, and industrial arts candidates relative to the total number of students completing undergraduate degree programs in teacher education in each of the universities.

Position availability, need, and turnover.

* School system officials report their turnover rates of the last few years to be 3 to 7 percent.

* System officials do not report disproportionate turnover in any particular subject area.

* System officials report a need for vocational and special education teachers, as well as those in science and math. However, in filling these vacancies, many system officials report a need for teachers that can do more than just teach--such as the willingness and ability to coach.

* In urban areas, teachers leave for the following reasons (in descending order of magnitude): (1) spouse's moving, (2) family, (3) other positions in education, and (4) retirement.

* In rural areas, teachers leave for the following reasons (in descending order of magnitude): (1) retirement, (2) going back to school, (3) other positions in the school system, and (4) family (depending on the financial ability of the family earning only one income).

* If teachers do leave because of dissatisfactions, it appears that discipline problems and the lack of administrative support are the more significant causes of their dissatisfactions. Low salaries do not appear to be a factor.

Paths to teaching and education.

* Generally, both university education students and school system teachers come from lower-middle- and middle-class backgrounds. For many, especially those from rural areas, teaching is an occupation which represents a "step-up" from their parents.

* Generally, both university education students and school system teachers become interested in education because of previous positive experience in their own schooling, role models (teacher and family), and "their burning

desire to work with children." For many, teaching provides similar rewards to those found in religion and church.

* While teachers (and most likely guidance counselors) have rarely encouraged their most academically able students to become teachers, it appears that teachers are even less likely to do so now since working conditions in the school environment continue to frustrate them.

* Generally, students and teachers will teach at the same grade level (and in the subject area) in which they were most influenced as students.

* For most, teaching provides convenient hours that fit the life style and expectations of most education students and teachers.

* Many education students and teachers consider business, industry, or research-related fields as "too impersonal." This includes present math and science teachers. However, urban students and teachers tend to see themselves more in roles in education (supervisor, principal, professor) than in classroom teaching. If rural students and teachers do consider alternatives to the classroom, they do so in terms of stereotypical female (waitressing) and blue-collar (carpentry, assembly-line) occupations.

* Many math education students and teachers, especially those from less prestigious universities, consider higher levels of training in their subject matter to be too difficult.

* While most education departments in the universities do very little to recruit students to their programs, there is some evidence that recruiting efforts that sell the program can enhance enrollments. Traditionally black university officials are pessimistic about recruiting, given the test score cut-offs that are now required for entry into undergraduate teacher education programs. Presently, students self-select the education program of their choice on the basis of familial and personal relationships and the academic standards set by the particular university.

* Education students are considerably immobile regarding where they will teach. For urban students, they would like to teach back home, near their university, or some place like their university town. For rural students, most would like to teach back home. In a few cases, these students would like to teach in a place like their university town since they do not perceive themselves as "fitting in" back home. However, many of these students reject their hometowns, choosing and entering a university that is very unlike "back home."

Identification, recruitment, and selection of teachers.

* Most recruiting of university education students is marked by informal networks and the limited mobility patterns of students. Some school systems travel to select universities to increase the "reservoir" of the pool. Recognizing the immobility of students, system officials do not travel very far.

* Some universtities enhance the marketability of their students by encouraging them to have dual certificates and by working through networks during their student teaching internships.

* In metropolitan and university communities, school system officials "assume the right people will walk in the door," but in rural communities officials utilize informal networks in finding teachers.

* Some urban school systems are "seeing" older and experienced applicants as "their [applicants'] children are now grown," and, in some cases, "divorce has necessitated their going back to work."

* Metropolitan school systems, with a number of locally paid positions, have the ability to hire top-quality candidates early in the recruiting year, knowing that they will find a slot for them later.

* Many school systems encourage (through internal policies) the identification and selection of new teachers through their present pools of substitute teachers and aides.

* Placement officials and school system administrators do not always perceive each other as being effective in their respective roles in the recruiting process.

* In metropolitan systems, centralized hiring procedures frustrate school-level administrators who would like to "see" more candidates. In rural areas, some administrators believe that informal recruiting processes are more effective than formal procedures in the identification and selection of teachers.

* In metropolitan systems, internal transfer policies inhibit the recruiting of new teachers since system administrators "must first look at [those] already employed," and officials receive a high number of internal transfer requests from teachers.

* School system officials are not necessarily interested in prospective teachers with "the best academic qualitites." Systems want those with "a certain amount of intelligence," but most importantly, teachers need to be able to relate to children and parents, organize and discipline, and be involved in extracurricular activities.

* Sports are an extracurricular activity that is of considerable importance to school systems. Subsequently, administrators are very interested in finding teachers who can coach and, in some cases, coach well.

* In rural areas, the most academically able teachers (in any subject area) might not fit into the perceived needs and the demands of the community. As one administrator asserted, "I wouldn't want a Ph.D. from DuPont." Another noted, "you have to love the church [to teach here]."

Employment conditions and teacher alternatives.

* Schools are considered to be "demanding" and "stressful" places to work. However, the demands and stress vary according to the extent to which "discipline problems" are perceived by teachers within individual schools and among school systems.

* Teachers, in all school systems, generally believe that societal changes have negatively affected parental and student attitudes toward public education, schools, and teachers themselves. Teachers asserted that "there is less discipline now and more questioning of authority" in schools since "kids don't really respect their parents, so how can they respect [teachers]."

* Generally, teachers find school working conditions more attractive when compared to working in alternative occupations. Most teachers and education students compare public school employment conditions with those in an office or a factory assembly line.

* While most teachers want "more money" and "financial security" from their employment, they tend to see administrative support as more salient in a school system's ability to attract and retain its teachers.

* Many dissatisfactions in public school employment conditions result from the very nature of the school itself—an organization that is responsible for minors and the teachers within the organization who are expected to serve as their guardians.

* Other dissatisfactions arise from teachers "not being treated professionally enough." As one noted, "I'm professional enough to know when I should or can leave and when I can't."

* Career ladders for teachers, which are intended to provide extra status and monetary reward for extra responsibility, tend to appeal more to males and "ambitious" females who are presently within the teaching work force. While this appears to hold in both urban and rural areas, one is more apt to find "ambitious" females in urban school systems (even though they may still be tied to their spouse's occupational mobility). Many females do not want to spend time away from their families. Others, both male and female, do not want administrative responsibilities because they see themselves solely as classroom teachers.

* Still others see career ladders as not providing younger, talented teachers with an opportunity for quick advancement as in industry and private business.

* Many administrators and teachers tend to believe that increased salaries will not attract more qualified teachers "since money does not make a teacher."

* Quality teachers presently employed in the Southeast are not generally being attracted to other occupations. Administrators perceive these teachers as effective because of their devotion to teaching a variety of

students and their willingness to be involved in numerous non-teaching duties and responsibilities. These teacher characteristics (along with their desire to have work days that fit their family life style) appear to keep these teachers committed to teaching despite the perceived demeaning, frustrating, and bureaucratic employment conditions.

Implications for Teacher Labor Market Policies in the Southeast

This report is not intended to contradict recent findings concerning the declining academic ability of the teacher work force and demographic trends which represent supply and demand imbalances in particular subject areas (c.f., Darling-Hammond, 1984). However, the findings of this report suggest that expanded career opportunities for the traditional teacher (i.e., the female) do not necessarily account for this decline in "quality" and these demographic imbalances. Thus, it is concluded that career ladders, merit pay, and substantial across-the-board pay increases will not, by themselves, significantly alter salient variables affecting the teacher labor market in the Southeast.

Career ladders are one policy solution to the problem of attracting and retaining quality teachers. Given the attention this reform is receiving, it is important to address the potential impact this reform would have based upon the findings of this study. Career ladders inherently depend on occupational stability and a willingness of teachers to remain within a local or state system. While this study describes a stable teacher work force (contrary to conventional wisdom), it is evident that familial demand moves urban teachers in and out of school systems far more than their counterparts in rural areas. Also, while most teachers (urban or rural) are generally not interested in career ladders, the more "ambitious females" who are interested in non-classroom, administrative responsibilities tend to be found in urban school systems. There is an apparent lack of goodness-of-fit between mobility patterns and occupational aspirations of those teachers in both

urban and rural school systems. While urban teachers are more likely to desire to climb the career ladder, they are also more likely to be less stable since "spouse moves" and other family circumstances (pregnancies, small children, greater income) move them into and out of (and, in some cases, back into) the labor market. On the other hand, while rural teachers are more likely to be stable since provincial life styles, expectations, and values keep them "back home," they are also less likely to climb the career ladder ("[they] do not have much initiative"). Therefore, stated from a policy point of view, this means that career ladders are most meaningful, useful, and adaptable in the urban setting where the mobility patterns of teachers prevent the extended membership necessary for advancement in the hierarchy. Rural teachers, whose life style and mobility patterns are more amenable to the organizational structure of career ladders, are uninterested in them and have disdain for attempts at extending their teaching day or school year.

The efficacy of merit pay and across-the-board pay increases in attracting and retaining teachers is also questioned, because these findings emphasize the prevalent perception that "money does not make a teacher." Importantly, this study suggests that more money might not necessarily attract those presently choosing to teach since schools require a teacher to be responsible throughout the day for a group of diverse minors, work with an inflexible schedule, have very little clerical support, and function in a rigid bureaucratic organization. Could it be that those not presently choosing to teach want to work with adults, go out to lunch every day, have two secretaries, and work in a more professional organization?

Researchers and policy makers are presently analyzing the teacher labor market in a manner which fits a narrow conceptualization of the problem.

This is due, in large part, to their methodological approach to the problem--which ignores situational context. This study, emphasizing the importance of "local knowledge" (Geertz, 1983), has prompted this author to conclude (borrowing a phrase from W. W. Charters):

> It is clear to me that the obvious facts about the teaching career are not so obvious after all (1967, p. 33).

The teacher labor markets surrounding school systems vary depending on their geographic proximity to universities and their teacher education programs, the fiscal capacity of local governments, and the diversity of local industrial opportunities. These factors influence personal and cultural decisions of occupational availability and choice and labor mobility. Compounding these factors are local definitions of what constitutes a quality work force and their specific, everyday needs, limitations, and actions.

While the Rand report released in July 1984 encourages more systemic structural changes to professionalize teachers (c.f., Darling-Hammond, 1984, pp. 16-19), this preliminary and exploratory study of the teacher labor market in the Southeast uncovers those contextual variables which could more fully explain the perceived decline in teacher quality and which begin to ask questions that fit present-day realities. Educational policy cannot necessarily remedy all the convoluting factors affecting the teacher labor market as presented by this study, but it must account for them if policies are to be regionally (urban versus rural) sensitive and, consequently, effective and efficient, fair and just, reasonable and possible. Emerging from this study are the following important factors which policy makers need to recognize:

- -- economic, cultural and social differences between urban and rural teacher labor markets,
- -- mobility patterns in urban areas which tie teachers to their spouses and their nuclear families,

-- mobility patterns in rural areas which tie teachers to their communities and their extended families,

-- the importance of role models for career identification and selection by students and the absence of positive modeling for today's public school students by their teachers,

-- that school systems and universities essentially do nothing in terms of recruiting and marketing,

-- teacher identification and selection (based primarily on criteria other than academic qualities) which emphasize human relations skills, coaching skills, and fitting into the particular community,

-- the pattern of urban teachers to reenter the occupation after an extended absence due to spouse mobility and separations, child rearing, or graduate school,

-- that school systems, due to public budget processes, internal policies, and certification standards, have little flexibility in the identification and selection of teachers (those systems with more locally paid teaching positions have more flexibility),

-- societal changes and the nature of present-day authority structures as they relate to teachers and teaching,

-- the primary importance of student discipline problems, parental attitudes, and administrative support (not money) on the morale of teachers,

-- that the occupation of public school teaching is embedded within a socioemotional context and still provides for teachers convenient hours in rearing a family and the opportunity to deal with children and adolescents,

-- that for many students and teachers, teaching is not a career, but a calling, and

-- that career ladders, as presently being designed and implemented in numerous sites in the Southeast, do not provide opportunities for quick advancement that many young, talented college graduates may expect.

Alternative Recommendations

Any recommendations offered to attract and retain quality public school teachers must reflect an understanding of the diverse contexts manifested in urban and rural locations as indicated by the above factors. The teacher

labor markets surrounding school systems vary along economic, geographic, and cultural dimensions. Given that this is an exploratory and preliminary study, this report offers the following recommendations for consideration:

1. School systems should become more knowledgeable of and sensitive to labor market forces indigenous to their locale. By systematically utilizing data regarding where teachers are coming from, why they are leaving, and other potential applicant pools, school systems can begin to market themselves and recruit in order to influence the labor market in their area.

2. Legislatures and state education agencies should provide mechanisms for all school systems (not just those with available local money) to be more flexible in their recruiting and hiring processes. More resources should be devoted to recruitment and personnel management.

3. School systems should examine how their present internal policies are affecting the recruitment and hiring process.

4. To recruit those presently not choosing to teach, all school systems must pay attention to the school milieu which is presently frustrating and alienating teachers. This situation is currently discouraging positive role models for tomorrow's teacher candidate pool: today's public school students. In fact, school systems can systematically identify, encourage, and recruit their high school students who are presently not choosing to teach.

5. Presently, school systems select teachers on the basis of non-academic criteria. Given the auxillary and extracurricular functions required of schools, staff support for teachers needs to be expanded.

6. Urban school systems (with nearby industry and universities) have more capability to attract teachers presently not choosing to teach. They can:

   a. promote the hiring of able, but noncertified, teachers and assist them in receiving certification while they are teaching,

   b. work with industry to recruit spouses of transferring spouses,

   c. work with universities to recruit graduate students and/or their spouses, and

   d. recruit and hire young, bright, energetic college graduates (B.A.s) in high-demand areas (math, science, special education, etc.) for a short-term period and, in turn, pay for their M.A. degrees (such as in

computer science) and then help place them in local industries. Since teachers' salaries are now closer to beginning salaries in industry ($16,000 - $18,000), upward salary adjustments for these teachers would not be necessary.

(NOTE: This recommendation is potentially more efficient than incentive scholarships since, in this case, the school system would get the services of the talented graduate while he or she receives the benefit, i.e., further training.)

7. Recognizing that many urban students and teachers do not desire to live in rural areas with limited social opportunities, rural school systems can promote (i.e., market) the benefits of living outside the city much as industry does in attracting talented graduates to their rural industrial sites.

8. While career ladders (even in combination with merit pay) do not address significant factors affecting the teacher labor markets, it is apparent that if they are to have any positive impact on urban school systems, organizational plans must address the mobility patterns of teachers within the context of the local situation. This means that local systems and states utilizing career ladder structures need to address the possibility of reciprocity agreements among inter- and intrastate school systems.

CONCLUSIONS

While a national reform movement continues to demand that the public schools upgrade the quality of their teacher work force and correct for supply and demand imbalances in math and science, this qualitative study of the teacher labor market reveals that what is considered to be a national problem is not a problem at all, in some cases, at the local level. In fact, this study highlights that conventional remedies such as career ladders and merit pay do not address the significant variables of urban/rural contextual differences, divergent (and limited) mobility patterns of urban and rural teachers, career role modeling, limited recruitment and marketing by school systems and universities, the need of many educators to find teachers with altruistic characteristics and coaching skills, and the desire of many teachers to have work schedules that fit their family life styles. Also, career ladders and merit pay do not begin to address the working conditions of teachers as they are impacted by the lack of student discipline, counterproductive parental attitudes, and little administrative support. The bureaucracy of today's schools has influenced the low morale present among public school teachers.

Recent research identified new and higher paying career opportunities for women and minorities as the primary explanation for the apparent decline in teacher quality evidenced by the National Longitudinal Study (NLS). Ignoring, for the moment, the critical question of whether the NLS data have been correctly interpreted to reveal a decline in teacher quality, this study points out that there are many other significant factors involved in the supply of and demand for teachers. In fact, it would be naive to ascribe a decline in teacher quality to a single cause. Policy prescriptions designed

to correct perceived problems of teacher supply could be found to be ineffectual and misdirected if based on too narrow interpretation of causation. (In fact, attempts to attribute causation to the dynamic processes involved in the teacher labor markets facilitate simplistic solutions.)

The factors emphasized in this study shed a different light on the conventional analysis of the decline of "quality" in the teacher work force since 1970. Given the importance of changing authority structures and mobility patterns determined by familial preferences, it is suggested that further research be conducted to ascertain the impact that racial integration and "spouse moves" has had on the decline in teacher quality.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, massive integration occurred in most school systems in the Southeast. This is the period in which the NLS began tracking the academic abilities of those entering and exiting the teaching occupation. Given that this study illuminates the salience of social change occurring through the public schools, it can be hypothesized that integration could have had a significant influence on the entry and retention of the most academically able. This factor is not accounted for by researchers who conclude that the "best" are leaving due to the lack of career opportunities within teaching. A hypothesis is that the more academically able in the Southeast left teaching primarily because of their unwillingness to make the accommodations that integration in public schools necessitated. In summary, could teachers have been <u>pushed away</u> from teaching by their inability or unwillingness to cope with integration, rather than <u>pulled away</u> by other opportunities?

Recently, industries moving into the Sunbelt have increased the occupational mobility of many workers and managers who may very well have

"certified (in teaching) spouses" who follow them to different industrial sites. The positive association between executive mobility in private industry and past academic achievement is well recognized in the management literature. A hypothesis that has attracted some logical assent and that merits serious empirical examination is the notion that academically able (and hence more mobile) industry executives also tend to choose academically able spouses. That linkage may account for a significant share of the observed high mobility of academically able teachers: When the executive moves, the "certified spouse" school teacher, who is also academically able, moves along with the family.

But, more importantly, these suggestions for further research emphasize that data presently utilized to justify career ladders and other similar reforms could very well not be accounting for those who exit the labor market and then enter again sometime later. The teachers who are most able to exit and reenter are those who tend to come from urban, upwardly mobile backgrounds. These urban, upwardly mobile teachers are the ones who tend to score higher on measures of academic ability.

Fortunately, there are many "quality" teachers in the Southeast who find that schools still provide the work schedule and the stability that they desire. If one does buy into the problem as defined by policy makers and by many educational researchers, this study reveals that there are no simple answers and standardized formulas to be plugged in--especially at the state level. While there are spot vacancy problems at the local level, schools generally can find the kind of teacher they want (some are just more difficult to find than others). School systems want teachers who fit into their community, and administrators are generally satisfied with the academic

quality of their teachers. School systems want stability, and the most academically able will not always provide that stability during the day-to-day operations of schools. For this reason, it appears that "Miss Dove," while not revered and feared as she once was, is alive and well (and teaching math, sponsoring the yearbook, and coaching softball). She is not revered and feared any more because society has changed a great deal in the last 25-30 years.

This research study began by asking of the teacher labor market: "What's going on here?" In an attempt to question conventional wisdom and to provide an interpretive context for understanding diverse situations representative of the teacher labor markets in the Southeast, an analytical framework has been provided for policy makers not only to question the conventional solutions to "the problem," but also to question the underlying assumptions upon which the conventional wisdom is based. With this understanding, it is possible for policy makers to see that solutions to teacher labor market problems are embedded <u>within</u> the context of the settings under study. Therefore, if solutions are to be effective and efficient, fair and just, reasonable and possible, they must be rooted within those settings. That is, the solutions for urban areas may be as different from the solutions for rural areas as the solutions for rural areas are different from the solutions for isolated rural areas. But then, perhaps it is the definition of the problem as well as the solution that must be understood within each setting. With this understanding, perhaps public school systems can change with society if <u>each</u> system learns what can and possibly will attract "quality" teachers to its locale and designs policies that reflect local needs and conditions.

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APPENDIX A

DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMANTS IN SCHOOL SYSTEMS AND UNIVERSITIES

APPENDIX A

NUMBER OF SCHOOL SYSTEM INTERVIEWS (BY POSITION)

SCHOOL SYSTEM	TOTAL	SUPERINTENDENT	ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT	PERSONNEL DIRECTOR	PRINCIPAL	TEACHERS
I	20	0	1	1	3	15
II	37	0	1	2	4	30
III	10	1	1	0	2	6
IV	16	1	1	0	2	12
V	11	0	0	1	2	8
VI	13	1	1	0	2	9
TOTAL	107	3	5	4	15	80

APPENDIX A

NUMBER OF TEACHER INTERVIEWS (BY SEX, RACE, GRADE LEVEL, AND SUBJECT)

SCHOOL SYSTEM	TOTAL	FEMALE	MALE	BLACK	WHITE	ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE	SENIOR HIGH:	ENGLISH	MATH	SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES	BUSINESS	*OTHER
I	15	12	3	5	10	3	5	7	0	2	3	1	-	1
II	30	16	14	9	21	6	9	15	2	4	3	3	2	1
III	6	4	2	4	2	0	2	4	1	-	1	2	-	-
IV	12	8	4	4	8	5	0	7	2	1	-	1	2	1
V	8	6	2	1	7	0	5	3	1	1	-	-	1	-
VI	9	7	2	0	9	2	1	6	2	2	2	-	-	-
TOTAL	80	53	27	23	57	16	22	42	8	10	9	7	5	3

*Other subjects include library science, vocational education, and foreign language teachers.

APPENDIX A

NUMBER OF UNIVERSITY INTERVIEWS (BY POSITION AND AREA CONCENTRATION FOR STUDENTS)

UNIVERSITY	TOTAL	DEAN/ DEPARTMENT CHAIR EDUCATION	STUDENT TEACHING COORDINATOR/ PROFESSOR	PLACEMENT OFFICIAL	EDUCATION STUDENTS:	ELEMENTARY	INTERMEDIATE	SECONDARY	OTHER
I	12	1	2	1	8	0	8	0	
II	10	1	0	1	8	2	3	1[A]	(Sp. Ed.)[2]
III	11	1	1	1	8	3	3	1[B]	(Art) [1]
IV	15	1	1	2	11	3	3	5[B]	
V	13	1	3	1	8	1	3	4[C]	
VI	12	1	2	1	8	4	2	2[D]	
STUDY TOTAL	73:	6	9	7	51:	13	22	13	3

A - Science education

B - Two were math and one each in science, social studies, and English education

C - Two were in social studies and one each in math and science education

D - Social studies and English education

APPENDIX B

SCHOOL SYSTEM AND UNIVERSITY INTERVIEW GUIDES

INTERVIEW GUIDE

School System-Central Office

1. PURPOSE OF STUDY/TELL ME ABOUT YOUR SYSTEM (STUDENTS, COMMUNITY, ETC.)

2. BACKGROUND OF INFORMANT

   A. Place of birth/home town/where were you raised?
   B. Education/College degrees
   C. Years in public education/system/present position/other experiences

3. POSITION AVAILABILITY, NEED, AND TURNOVER

   A. Teachers presently in system (number, where from - home and university, race, sex, experience)
   B. Vacancies (this year and upcoming) turnover rate/applicants/how many . . . which areas go? . . . where have your resignations gone?
   C. Critical areas of shortage? (math/science)
   D. How would you compare your system with others you are familiar with (on the above variables)?

4. TELL ME HOW YOUR SCHOOL SYSTEM GOES ABOUT EMPLOYING TEACHERS

   A. How do you find candidates? (aides, substitutes)
   B. Who's involved (central office, school-level, other institutions)?
   C. How are they involved (process, costs, time, advertising, campus visitations, conferences)?
   D. Who do you usually talk to . . . informally or formally?

5. TELL ME ABOUT CHARACTERISTICS OF CANDIDATES/TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

   A. What characteristics do you look for in teachers?
   B. Which universities provide the best teachers.
   C. How do you know that you have the best?

6. JOB CONDITIONS

   A. What do/can you do to keep the best?
   B. Ten vs. 12-month policy proposal.
   C. What keeps teachers here? . . . as teachers . . . at particular schools . . . in your system. (Why not something else?)
   D. If they left, where would they go?
   E. If they left, where wouldn't they go?

7. TELL ME ABOUT THE D-M INVOLVED IN ACTUAL HIRING OF A NEW TEACHER

   A. Relationship between C.O. and Principals
   B. Interview and selection process

8. IF YOU HAD YOUR WAY, TELL ME HOW YOUR SCHOOL SYSTEM WOULD GO ABOUT EMPLOYING TEACHERS.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

School System - Principal

1. PURPOSE OF STUDY/TELL ME ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL (WHAT DO TEACHERS DO HERE?)

2. BACKGROUND OF INFORMANT

   A. Place of birth/home town/where were you raised?
   B. Education/college degrees
   C. Years in public education/system/present position/other experiences

3. POSITION AVAILABILITY, NEED, AND TURNOVER

   A. Number of teachers in school/approximate race, sex, experience, degrees
   B. Vacancies (this year and upcoming) turnover rate/where do they go/applicants--number/areas
   C. Critical areas of shortage
   D. How would you compare your school with others you are familiar with (on the above variable)?

4. TELL ME HOW YOU GO ABOUT EMPLOYING TEACHERS

   A. How do you find candidates? (aides, sub)
   B. Who's involved (central office, school-level, other institutions)?
   C. How are they involved?
   D. Who do you usually talk to . . . informally or formally?

5. TELL ME ABOUT CHARACTERISTICS OF CANDIDATES/TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

   A. What characteristics do you look for in teachers?
   B. Which universities provide the best teachers? What skills do they provide?
   C. How do you know that you have the best?

6. JOB CONDITIONS

   A. What do/can you do to keep the best?
   B. Ten vs. twelve month - policy proposal.
   C. What keeps teachers here . . . in your school . . . in your system . . . in teaching itself?
   D. If they left, where would they go?
   E. If they left, where wouldn't they go?

7. TELL ME ABOUT THE D-M PROCESS INVOLVED IN ACTUAL HIRING OF A NEW TEACHER

   A. Relationship between C.O. and principals
   B. Interview and selection process

8. IF YOU HAD YOUR WAY, TELL ME HOW WOULD YOU GO ABOUT EMPLOYING TEACHERS.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

School System - Teachers

1. PURPOSE OF STUDY/TELL ME ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL

2. BACKGROUND OF INFORMANT

   A. Age, Sex
   B. Place of birth/home town/where were you raised?
   C. Father and mother's occupation?
   D. Are you married/spouse's occupations?
   E. Degree earned/when/where/why there/any graduate work now?
   F. Other job experiences

3. PRESENT POSITION AND MOBILITY

   A. Position and responsibilities (What do you do here?)
   B. How did you get here (school/system/other systems)?

      - How did you come to leave _____ for _____?
      - How did you hear of the opening at _____?
      - How did you get the job here? Any difference with teaching jobs elsewhere?
      - What attracted you (here/other places)?

4. INTEREST IN PUBLIC EDUCATION AND TEACHING

   A. At what point did you make the definite decision to enter teaching?
   B. What qualities did you possess that facilitated your notions that you would fit well with teaching?
   C. What were the major attractions that teaching held for you at the point where you decided to enter it?
   D. What persons do you think influenced you in your decision to become a teacher?
   E. Describe your feelings about teaching
   F. Describe an outstanding teacher
   G. In what ways is teaching different from what you expected when you made the decision to go into the field?
   H. What other occupations did you consider seriously as possibilities?

5. PERCEPTIONS OF OTHER JOB OPPORTUNITIES AS THEY COMPARE TO TEACHING

   A. If you received a number of job opportunities at the same time, what job conditions would attract you?
   B. What do you think you gain by being a teacher rather than in _____ (other occupation)?
   C. What do you think you lose by being a teacher rather than in _____ (other occupation)?

School System - Teachers (cont'd)

6. FUTURE MOBILITY

A. Where do you hope to be, professionally, in 5 years, 15 years, 25 years (if young teacher)?
B. If you wanted/could leave here, where would you go?
C. If you had to leave here, where would you not go?

INTERVIEW GUIDE

University - School of Education

1. PURPOSE OF STUDY/TELL ME ABOUT YOUR UNIVERSITY, COMMUNITY, AND STUDENTS

2. BACKGROUND OF INFORMANT

   A. Place of birth/home town/where were you raised?
   B. Education/college degrees--type, year received
   C. Years in public education/system/present position/other experiences

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION/STUDENT INITIAL CHOICE

   A. What's your teacher education program like?
   B. Number of students in program/and SAT/AVG GPA/admission standards?
   C. How many students apply to your program?/Number accept/Number reject.
   D. How do you recruit students to your program?
   E. What attracts students to your program (specifically)?
   F. What attracts students to your education (generally)?
   G. How many students leave your program per year?/Where do they go?

4. DESCRIBE THE ROLE OF YOUR OFFICE IN "PLACING" STUDENTS FROM YOUR PROGRAM, ETC., IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

   A. How do you find out who has positions for students, teachers, and then full-time, certified teachers?
   B. Who's involved (school systems, personnel in your office, other institutions)? How are they involved (workshops, conferences, other contacts)?
   C. How do school systems recruit "high demand" students?
   D. Do you try to place particular kinds of students in particular systems (characteristics)?

5. DESCRIBE THE ROLE THAT THE STUDENT PLAYS IN LOCATING A TEACHING JOB

   A. What procedures do students usually follow to find a job?
   B. What preferences do students have (location, work conditions - ten vs. twelve months salary)/Are there any job preference differences among BAs, MATs, specialists? Student alternatives to education?
   C. Which students are more marketable - what do they do differently than those who are not?
   D. How would you describe the relationship between student teacher and full-time positions?

6. IF YOU HAD YOUR WAY, TELL ME HOW YOUR OFFICE WOULD BE ABOUT PLACING STUDENTS FROM YOUR PROGRAM.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

University - Placement Officers

1. PURPOSE OF STUDY/TELL ME ABOUT YOUR UNIVERSITY, COMMUNITY, AND STUDENTS

2. BACKGROUND OF INFORMANT

   A. Place of birth/home town/where were you raised?
   B. Education/college degrees--type, year received
   C. Years in public education/system/present position/other experiences

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

   A. Your specific role/job description
   B. How many students do you place/where do they go?

4. DESCRIBE THE ROLE OF YOUR OFFICE IN "PLACING" STUDENTS FROM YOUR PROGRAM, ETC., IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

   A. How do you find out who has positions for students, teachers, and then full-time, certified teachers?
   B. Who's involved (school systems, personnel in your office, other institutions)? How are they involved (workshops, conferences, other contacts)?
   C. Describe recruitment procedures - Who sees whom? How/Where/outcomes?
   D. How do school systems recruit 'high demand' students?
   E. Do you try to place particular kinds of students in particular systems (characteristics)?
   F. Differences in education recruiters and non-education recruiters?

5. DESCRIBE THE ROLE THAT THE STUDENT PLAYS IN LOCATING A TEACHING JOB

   A. What procedures do students usually follow to find a job?
   B. What preferences do students have (location, work conditions - ten vs. twelve months salary)/Are there any job preference differences among BAs, MATs, Specialists? Student alternatives to education?
   C. Which students are more marketable - what do they do differently than those who are not?
   D. How would you describe the relationship between student teacher and full-time positions?

6. IF YOU HAD YOUR WAY, TELL ME HOW YOUR OFFICE WOULD BE ABOUT PLACING STUDENTS FROM YOUR PROGRAM.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

University--Student Teachers

1. PURPOSE OF STUDY/TELL ME ABOUT YOUR UNIVERSITY/HOW DID YOU GET HERE?

2. BACKGROUND OF INFORMANT

   A. Age, Sex
   B. Place of birth/home town/where were you raised?
   C. Father and mother's occupation?
   D. Are you married/spouse's occupation?
   E. Degree earning/cognate interest/other experiences?

3. INTEREST IN PUBLIC EDUCATION AND TEACHING

   A. What were the circumstances at this time? How do you feel about that decision now?
   B. What were major attractions that teaching held for you?
   C. What persons influenced your decision?
   D. What other occupations did you consider seriously?
   E. How does this compare with _____ (other occupation previously mentioned)? Generally, how do you perceive teacher earnings and working conditions to those of other occupations?

4. HOW DO YOU PLAN ON GOING ABOUT GETTING A JOB IN A SCHOOL-SYSTEM?

   A. To which systems have you applied (elicit reasons)?
   B. Where do you intend to teach?
      If you can't get a job at _____ (preference), what will you do?
   C. How long do you plan to teach?
   D. Where won't you teach?

5. HOW IS IT THAT YOU WILL "SELL" YOURSELF TO SCHOOL SYSTEMS?

   A. How would you describe yourself as a potential teacher?
   B. Characteristics that systems are looking for. (What are schools like?)
   C. How will you convince school systems?
   D. Who do you know?
      Who helps?
   E. How would you describe the procedures?
   F. When do you think you'll know about a job (notification of being hired)?