A report is given on the third in a series of biannual surveys of Texas public school teachers. A comparison is made between findings in 1984 and data collected in 1980 and 1982 from a sample of 500 teachers. Findings indicate that more than a fourth of Texas teachers moonlight during the academic year. Nearly 40 percent of the respondents were seriously considering leaving the profession. While salaries have increased since 1980, they are still insufficient and it is predicted that there will be a severe teacher shortage in the future. Major findings from the three surveys are presented in a table and the questionnaire is appended. (JD)
Teacher Moonlighting and Attrition in Texas

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TEACHER MOONLIGHTING AND ATTRITION IN TEXAS

Abstract

As a continuation of studies in 1980 and 1982, 500 teachers were selected by a systematic sample from a population of 100,000 teachers who were members of the Texas State Teachers Association in 1984. The average Texas teacher is a female 41 years of age with 14 years of teaching experience; makes $20,259; is married; has a working spouse; has a BS degree; is not the major breadwinner in the family; teaches in an urban district; and teaches elementary school.

Approximately 40% of the teachers indicated that they were seriously considering leaving the teaching profession. Twenty-six percent of the teachers moonlight during the school year.
Teacher Moonlighting and Attrition in Texas

This is the third in a series of biannual surveys of Texas public school teachers. Data was collected in 1980 (Maddux, Henderson, and Darby, 1981) and 1982 (Henderson, Darby, and Maddux, 1982) to form a data base of information related to characteristics of Texas teachers.

The original study grew out of a subjective observation that Texas teachers were suffering economic hardship. These financial problems were forcing many teachers to "moonlight" and were causing morale problems. Figure 1 is the questionnaire used to gather the data.

![Insert Figure 1 about here]

The sample of Texas teachers was selected each year using a computerized systematic sample from a population of 100,000 members of the Texas State Teachers Association. The 1980 questionnaires were mailed in May of 1980 to 416 teachers with returns by 291 respondents (70%). The average Texas teacher in the sample was a female who was 38.6 years of age, had 11.8 years of teaching experience, and earned $14,113 per year. In order to earn an extra $2799 income, 22% held moonlighting jobs.
Almost 39% of those surveyed reported that they were seriously considering leaving teaching. About 75% of the teachers were married with 70% of their spouses working. Approximately two of three teachers had the B.A. degree. Of special significance was the fact that male teachers were scarce (only 20%) and about one-half of these were considering leaving the profession.

When the survey was repeated in 1982, the results were similar. Questionnaires were mailed to 491 teachers and were returned by 319 teachers (65%). The average salary of these respondents was now $17,351 per year. Most of these characteristics were similar except there was a 6.8% increase in the numbers of teachers moonlighting.

The depressing economic picture for Texas teachers uncovered in the 1980 study was unchanged. More than one in three teachers were seriously considering leaving teaching and salary was the major reason. Nearly 30% were moonlighting in order to supplement their salaries. The teachers' salaries were only about 62% of the intermediate family budget as published by the U.S. Department of Labor.

The questionnaires were mailed to a sample of 474 TSTA members in 1984 with 332 returned (70%). Table 1 presents the major findings from the three biannual surveys.
A nation-wide study (Rosenfield, 1979) of multiple jobholding in 1978 showed that only 4.8% of all employed workers held more than one job. By contrast, 26.2% of Texas teachers held second jobs according to the 1984 study. The average salary was $20,259 which represents a 16.8% increase over the 1982 figure and 82% of the national 1983 median family income of $24,580 (U.S. Census Bureau). There appears to be an increase in the commitment by the state for teachers' salaries.

It appears that most moonlighting teachers perform their second job for very low pay since the average amount earned moonlighting was $3615 per year by working an average of 14.4 hours per week. This amounts to $6.97 per hour.

The percentage of respondents who are seriously considering leaving teaching has risen to the highest mark in the three studies (39.4%). These 132 individuals listed a total of 138 comments as reasons for considering leaving. Forty-one percent of these were financial. This figure was 50% in the 1982 survey, a decrease of nine percent. The second most frequent reason given was working conditions including stress, burnout, paperwork, and other hassles. This category increased from 24%
in 1982 to 31% in the 1984 study.

Many teachers included lengthy messages to the researchers. Here are representative samples:

"Historically, low teaching salaries were supplemented with respect. It may be that modern society tends to equate respect with status, and status with salary. No salary, no status, no respect."

"We tried to adopt children through a regular agency but were turned down because my salary was too low."

"My teaching job consists of late nights, second jobs, working weekends, and graduate school all summer."

"I have quit teaching and moved to industry after 21 years in the classroom. For the first time, I have no debts, a savings account, full medical coverage, a new car, cash to spend, and a cost-of-living raise."

Only 14.8% of the respondents were male versus the 19.7% who were male in 1982. This decrease in the percentage of males was consistent with the prediction made after the 1982 survey (Henderson, Darby, and Maddux, 1982) that male teachers and single teachers were in a particularly disadvantageous position and would be more likely to leave teaching than females. There are serious implications because many psychologists believe that a male teacher image in the elementary school is important to young boys. In Texas only six
percent of males are teachers in the elementary schools while the national average is three times larger.

A further breakdown of selected questions by sex of the respondent may help explain the increased dissatisfaction of males compared to females in the study. Because 65.3% of males are the major breadwinners compared to 35% of females, it is apparent why 51% of males moonlight compared to only 21.9% of females.

Discussion

A state of crisis in education exists in Texas. More than a fourth of Texas teachers moonlight during the academic year. Nearly 40% of the respondents are seriously considering leaving the profession. The most common reason is financial. Males continue to have a particularly difficult time as their numbers drastically decrease.

The series of studies have revealed both good and bad news for the teachers, although the bad news seems to outweigh the good. The good news is that salaries have increased by 40% since 1980. The bad news is that many teachers still moonlight and even more are considering leaving the teaching profession.

There appears to be no reason to revise the past prediction of a severe teacher shortage in the future. Unless society is
willing to pay the price tag for the kind of educational system it wants, increasing numbers of teachers will leave the profession or have their effectiveness blunted by the necessity to moonlight.
References


TEACHERS AND MOONLIGHTING

DIRECTIONS: Please circle or answer all items that apply to you. Add comments if you wish.

1. What is your age? ................................................................. Years
2. Sex ................................................................. Male Female
3. Marital Status ................................................................. Married Single Other
4. If married, does your spouse work? ................................................................. Yes No NA
5. What is your highest degree? ................................................................. BA Med PhD
6. Are you the major bread winner in your household? ................................................................. Yes No Equal
7. Are you seriously considering leaving the teaching profession? ................................................................. Yes No
   If yes, why are you considering leaving?
8. In what type of district do you teach? ................................................................. Urban Suburban Rural
9. What grade level do you primarily teach? ................................................................. K-5 6-8 9-12
10. How many years have you taught in the public schools? ................................................................. Years
11. What is your current teaching salary per year? ................................................................. $
12. Do you have an extra job during the summer? ................................................................. Yes No
13. How much extra do you earn during the summer? ................................................................. $
   None
14. Do you have an extra (moonlighting) job during the regular school year to supplement your teaching salary? ................................................................. Yes No
   If your answer to Question 14 is yes, please answer the following questions.
15. Do you feel that the quality of your teaching would improve if you did not have a second job during the regular school year? ................................................................. Yes No
16. How much extra money do you earn during the regular school year? ................................................................. $
17. How many hours per week do you spend working at the moonlighting job? ................................................................. Hours
18. Would you quit the second job if your teaching salary would enable you to give up moonlighting during the school year? ................................................................. Yes No
19. How large a raise in your teaching salary would you have to get to enable you to give up moonlighting during the regular school year? ................................................................. $
20. What is your extra job during the school-year? (Please give a job title such as bookkeeper, sales clerk, rancher, etc.)
Table 1. Survey of Texas public school teachers in selected years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Characteristics</th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>1982</th>
<th>1984</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Teacher Salary</td>
<td>$14,113</td>
<td>$17,351</td>
<td>$20,259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Age</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>41.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex: Male</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>80.1%</td>
<td>80.3%</td>
<td>85.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
<td>74.9%</td>
<td>75.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse Works</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
<td>66.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree: BA</td>
<td>63.9%</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEd</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Breadwinner</td>
<td>39.9%</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Districts:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
<td>42.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Taught:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-5</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
<td>49.8%</td>
<td>45.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Years Experience</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>13.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consider Leaving Teaching</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
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<td>Extra Job in Summer</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Summer Earnings</td>
<td>$1252</td>
<td>$2076</td>
<td>$2205</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moonlight During School Year</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Hours Moonlighting Weekly</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Moonlighting Earnings</td>
<td>$2799</td>
<td>$3189</td>
<td>$3615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believes Moonlighting Detrimental</td>
<td>64.1%</td>
<td>68.5%</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like to Quit Moonlighting</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>81.6%</td>
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</table>