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**A STUDY OF THE REASONS FOR FAILURE ON THE  
JOB OF SOME GRADUATES OF  
INTERMOUNTAIN SCHOOL**

**LEWIS J. FISH**

**1960**

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A STUDY OF THE REASONS FOR FAILURE ON THE JOB  
OF SOME GRADUATES OF INTERMOUNTAIN SCHOOL

by

Lewis J. Fish

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Education

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Major Professor

\_\_\_\_\_  
~~Head of Department~~

\_\_\_\_\_  
~~Dean of Graduate Studies~~

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
Logan, Utah

1960



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were treated as equals. They learned something of our American way of life and enjoyed it enough to want to share in it. They knew that to be able to compete with others they would have to get an education and be able to speak English. When these veterans and defense workers returned to the reservation after the war, they started a movement to get the children into school (25, p.252). This movement grew until 91 percent of all school age children were in school in 1957 compared with 32 percent in 1945 when the movement started (4, p.310).

These children, most of them teenagers, were the material that Intermountain School had to work with when it opened its doors in 1950. A special education program had been worked out by the Bureau of Indian Affairs for Navajo students. It was a five-year program and was aimed at teaching the English language, social skills, and three "r's" and a trade to these children so that they would be employable before they became so old that they dropped out of school to get a job or to get married.

In 1951 some of the children coming to Intermountain School were young enough to initiate a six-year program and shortly after that an eight-year program was begun. Now there is an "Accelerated Regular Program" for those who are near enough to the proper grade for their age that they will, in most cases, be able to catch up before they are out of high school. There are plans now for initiating a regular elementary and high school program, in addition to the special programs already in operation, for the benefit of those children who begin schooling at the age of 6.

Upon graduation the student is placed by the school and follow-up work is done for three years, or longer if necessary, after the

student graduates to help with satisfactory placement.

The writer and the staff of Intermountain School are interested in knowing just how successful the graduates are. This study is just a small part of the constant evaluation of the program. It is being conducted in an attempt to find areas in which training may need improvement.

### The Problem

The Intermountain School staff and the writer are both very much interested in knowing just how successful the school has been in turning out useful and productive citizens.

This study is an attempt to analyze some of the reasons for failure of some of the students who have held more than one job since they graduated from Intermountain School. This will add to the information that is being gathered by the Intermountain School staff for the purpose of making a more effective program.

### Hypothesis

This study is made on the premise that the problems of the graduates are not caused by technical deficiency but arise from the inability to adapt to the predominate culture and from not being accepted by this culture.

### Delimitation

This study is limited to the 1955 through 1957 graduates of Intermountain School who have held more than one job. It is recognized that this represents only a portion of the graduates of Intermountain School and that those not included in this study may have problems of a



different nature. The lack of responses on the part of the graduates in some cases may be due to the lack of ability in English. There may also be other areas of consideration that should be included before reaching any final conclusions as to the nature of the problems facing Intermountain School graduates. Any conclusions reached in this study will be based upon the information used.

#### Method of Procedure

As has been previously mentioned there is a follow-up program on all graduates for three years after graduation. There are some cases where they leave a job and go to another on their own without the knowledge of the school. There are also some cases where graduates may go back to the reservation without the knowledge of the school. The majority, however, are visited periodically by a counselor and if troubles arise from a job, the counselor makes an additional visit to both the employee and the employer. All visits are recorded and filed in the individual graduate's file at the Intermountain School. These records afford a fairly complete picture of each graduate's difficulties, and they provide the main source of information for this study. A semi-annual report on the graduates of the school, as published by Intermountain School, was used as a supplement to the information obtained from the individual records (9, pp.1-120). The individual folder of each of the 714 graduates included in this study was examined. Information obtained from those folders was entered on a form (Appendix A) which had spaces for entering information in a number of problem areas, a number of jobs and for the source of the information whether it be the employer, employee, or the visiting counselor. The list of difficulties was constructed from information gained from studies done at

Intermountain School previously and supplemented by suggestions given by the writer's committee. From these sources a list of 10 expected areas of difficulty was compiled. As the study progressed five more were added as problems were encountered in the research that had not been originally included in the tabulation sheet.

As the tabulation progressed it was found that in many cases the employer would give one or a number of reasons for dismissing an employee. Sometimes complaints would be registered and the difficulty taken care of without a dismissal taking place. Sometimes there were no reasons given for change on the part of the employee. This was noticed most where the fault was very obviously the employees. Because of this method of tabulating difficulties, a given number assigned to a certain difficulty indicates only a relative importance to that area and does not tell exactly how many jobs were lost because of any given problem.

An attempt was made to verify information from the folders by sending a questionnaire to graduates to get their views directly on reasons for changing or leaving jobs. This attempt was unsuccessful; of 158 questionnaires sent only 18 responses were received. Of these nearly every one said that he changed jobs because he liked the one he went to better.

Whenever possible the writer will give the opinion of the graduate, the employer, and of the counselor who made the visit at the time of the difficulty. This should provide some fairly reliable information on reasons for job failure and reasons for changing places of employment.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

Until very recent years most Navajo people were employed as common laborers and seasonal workers. Because of this very little has been written about employment of the Navajo on individual jobs in a white society. There have been some studies done in related areas, however. Christiansen (3) studied opinions of employers concerning work habits of Intermountain students who were working during the school summer vacation. Cockrill (2) did a study on teaching social attitudes at Intermountain School. He discussed job placement of 168 junior students and came to the conclusion that the reason for difficulty was poor attitudes.

Baker (1) also did a study in which he personally interviewed 60 boys from one graduating class one year after graduation. He asked them what they felt their problems were. According to his study the boys needed English, companionship, and, in the case of the boys who were placed outside of their trade, more training. Munz did a study on alcohol (18) in which he concluded that about 10 percent of the boys he studied had difficulties because of the use of alcohol.

These studies have shown that there is a problem in the area of employment but none has dwelled upon this problem enough to provide any definite answers. Since there is so little written on Navajo employment, this chapter will deal with Navajo background to find out what bearing, if any, it may have on difficulties experienced on the job by Intermountain School graduates.

All authors reviewed seemed to agree that there is considerable difficulty experienced by Navajo people in adjusting to the American society. The cultural conflicts have been very ably summarized by Zintz (32, p.8) as lying in 10 different areas. These are presented by him as "Conflicts in Cultural Values":

The traditional Navajo child places great value on:

1. Harmony with nature.
2. Level of aspiration: Follow in the ways of the old people.
3. Cooperation.
4. Anonymity.
5. Submissiveness.
6. Work to satisfy present need.
7. Sharing wealth.
8. "Time is always with us" Indian time.
9. Humility.
10. Win once; let others win.

The middle class anglo-teacher is sure to place great value on:

1. Mastery over nature. "I am the master of my fate, I am the conqueror of my soul."
2. Level of aspiration: Climb the ladder of success. Each man is expected to achieve at a level higher than his father achieved.
3. Competition.
4. Individuality.
5. Agression (socially acceptable).
6. Work to get ahead.
7. Saving for future.
8. "Clock watching." "Time lost can never be regained"
9. Win first prize if at all possible.
10. Win all the time.

Since these values are so divergent and there is no literature written upon the employment of Navajo people in the American society, the background of the Navajos will be discussed since it may easily be that beliefs so different from those of the predominate culture could lead to some of the difficulties the Navajo children encounter in the American society.

### CHAPTER III

#### BACKGROUND OF NAVAJO LIFE

##### The Pre-reservation Navajo

The Navajo tribe is a member of the Athabaskan language group which, according to authors reviewed, migrated some time in the 1300's or 1400's from the northern part of the North American continent, probably Alaska, to the area in which they now dwell. Some writers go even farther and claim that the Navajo migrated from Asia to Alaska (7, p.6). In any event they had settled in the area of New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Colorado and were in control of the territory when they were first met by Spanish colonizers in 1538 (7, p.5).

As the Navajo traveled south he came in contact with other tribes and from them learned many skills that he felt to be worthwhile. Two of the more important items that he acquired were weaving and farming. Both were learned from the Pueblo Indians (12, p.5).

As settlers became more persistent many of the other tribes gave in to the pressure of the white man but not the Navajo. The Navajo continued to be a semi-nomadic people who lived principally by raiding other Indian tribes as well as Mexican and Spanish settlements. This type of living helped to change cultural patterns since prisoners and slaves often had new ideas that were incorporated into the culture if they were felt to be worthwhile. Cattle, other livestock and many other items were introduced into the Navajo tribe in this manner. The Navajo tribe was constantly being joined by refugees, who were being treated unjustly by some of their enemies or who sympathized with the Navajo cause. This great influx of people had a great influence in



changing the way of life of the Navajo (12, p.6).

As the pressure of the white settlers became greater, the Navajo retreated to Canyon de Chelly where he could reside in relative safety and could come from there to swoop down on any settlement that was near by for plunder (12, p.6).

When the United States took over the Navajo territory from Mexico, treaties with the Indians were attempted but with little success. The Navajos were divided into many clans and a treaty with one gave no assurance that another would stick by the agreement.

The government often was not to be depended upon to keep its end of the agreement, and the Navajo also had the habit of raiding as part of his livelihood. This combination of circumstances resulted in very poor relations between the Navajo tribe and the United States government. To curb the Navajo, the United States Government united all of the Indian tribes in the area to work with the army. Navajos were killed on sight, and if they could not be caught or killed their crops and cattle were destroyed (12, p.6).

In 1863 Colonel Kit Carson was successful in making prisoners of 9,000 of about 13,000 Navajos by starving them out and destroying all crops and herds that could be found. The prisoners were marched on foot 300 miles to Ft. Sumner where they were detained for five years (12, p.7, and p.228).

While at the fort, the army attempted without success to train them in farming and settle them near by. At the end of five years the government attempt at relocation was abandoned and the Navajos were allowed to return to their home land, on the condition that they cease raiding. The Navajos were determined to adapt to the reservation and to

get along in a manner that would not cause them any trouble with the government. They lived up to their promise in spite of the difficulties that beset them in doing it. One of the more serious difficulties was the lack of any means of support. Their farms and flocks had been destroyed when they were taken to Ft. Sumner. Now they faced the problem of how to survive without plundering and without visible means of support. The government recognized this problem and supplied some sheep and food for them until they became established. The settlers either did not recognize the Indian's problem or they seemed to think that Indians did not have the same right as white citizens did because most of them took advantage of the Indians whenever the opportunity presented itself (27, pp.167 and 183).

#### The Navajo Economy after Ft. Sumner

When the Navajos returned to the reservation from Ft. Sumner determined to make their living without resorting to raiding, they logically turned to sheep raising which they had learned prior to their captivity. The ability that they had developed in using the wool produced, and selling the finished product in the form of rugs helped in boosting the income that came from sheep.

Sheep raising was supplemented by silversmithing. This craft was highly developed during the period shortly after the return from Ft. Sumner, and Navajo jewelry made from turquoise and silver made very saleable items. The encroachment of the white society and the possession of saleable merchandise in the form of jewelry and rugs caused many Navajos to attempt to join the white society. The Navajo were unsuccessful in nearly every case. They were rebuffed socially, cheated

in business dealings, and in general relegated to the role of second class citizens (31, pp.66-67 and 108). Lands and livestock were taken from the Navajo by trickery and graft by white people as often as was possible. This had two effects. One was teaching the Navajo some of the arts of graft and trickery. The other was the withdrawal of the Navajo from all unnecessary contact with the white society and the establishment of a social and economic culture that was very nearly self supporting. The only contact that many of the Navajos ever had with the outside world was with the trader whom he trusted. From the trader the Navajo bought and sold the things that were necessary to keep him alive (16, p.417).

With sheep as the main-stay of the economy the flocks flourished until the reservation was overstocked to the point that the land would not support the large numbers of livestock. Herds of horses, a sign of wealth among the Navajo, were a common sight (31, pp.60 and 133). The U. S. Government was aware of what was happening and in 1934 forced all sheep raisers to sell a percentage of their sheep to bring the number of livestock down to the number that the reservation would support. This program was poorly explained to the people and not very intelligently carried out. Because of the misunderstanding and, in many cases, severe hardship that came to the people through this program, most Navajos felt that they had one more reason for hating the government. Reducing the stock on a percentage basis made it possible for the large owner to cull his herd to make it even more profitable. The small owner on the other hand was forced into poverty with the reduction of his herd (31, p.133; 4, p.237).

Since sheep could not be relied upon to supply the people with a

livelihood, blankets were used as a source of income, as was silver-smithing. In spite of all their efforts they were able to support themselves just barely above the starvation level. As a result more and more of the men and boys went to work for the white man. The type of work that the Navajos were able to get without any special skill or knowledge of the language usually led them to become dissatisfied with the jobs and eventually to return to the reservation where poverty and starvation were common, but where they had the satisfying company of their clan members and of their religion (31, p.110).

Because of the reasons just stated and others, the Navajo blames the white man for the majority of his troubles. Tuberculosis, the greatest killer for years on the reservation, is today second only to alcohol as a cause of Navajo death. Both were obtained from the white man (16, p.417; 28, pp.23-29).

Just as the people were faced with a barren reservation and very little incentive to leave the reservation to find work, World War II broke out and many of the Navajo men were inducted into the armed forces. Many who could not serve in the armed forces found jobs in defense or industry. The effects that this had upon the tribe in wanting to get their children into school has been discussed earlier in this paper. It was because of this desire for education among the Navajo that Intermountain and other similar schools were put into operation. In 1957 the interest in education had grown to the point that 26,787 school age children out of a total of 29,585 were in school (4, p.310). In addition the tribe now supports students who are academically capable of college work if they cannot financially maintain themselves in college (4, p.314).

### The Evolution of the Navajo Clan

The clan was for years the backbone of the religious and social life as well as the government of the Navajo people. These clans have developed from large family groups which have continued their relationships for many generations. The number in clans has been added to over the years by conquest, intermarriage, and adoption until the clans are quite large. The clan was regarded as a family organization, and ceremonies and rites were held primarily for those within the clan. Government was by means of pressure from the elder members of the clan. If someone failed to respond to the suggestions of the clan he would be ostricized, which left him completely without friends, land, a job, or any other means of support. This made the control of the clan very effective, and crimes were very seldom committed as long as the clan remained in power. At the time that the reservation was formed the United States Government desired that there be set up a tribal government that would be responsible for the entire reservation. The tribe complied with the government request, but with reservations since they liked their own clan system and distrusted such a large body. The government control set up by the tribe has been much less effective than the clan system. However, they are now learning to make the tribal government system operate (11, pp.64-65).

### Religious Beliefs and Practices

The religion of the Navajo is tied into everything that he does. The place that he builds his dwelling is dictated by his religion. The cures for his illnesses are brought about by medicine men who are religious practitioners. The illness itself is brought upon the person by transgressing some law of his religion or by displeasing one of the



many deities. If the medicine of the medicine man or the "sing" is ineffective, it means that the medicine man has been treating the wrong trouble. The value of the sing is never questioned. Another kind of sing is called for after each failure until the person is cured or dies (7, p.26; 4, pp.184-210).

Navajos had not taken kindly to the white man's medicine until recently, and they came to a doctor or a hospital only as a last resort after all of the medicine man's ritual and medicines had failed to bring results. The success that the doctors had with these hopeless cases stimulated the medicine man to adopt some of the white man's drugs in addition to his own in order to keep his reputation and his practice thriving (7, pp.26-27).

Navajos continue to have faith in the sings and the medicine man, even after obtaining a good education in the best of America's schools. Often adults who live off the reservation will go home for a sing when they have some ailment, instead of consulting a doctor (14, pp.386-387). This and other patterns of behavior point out to us that Navajos seem to be able to absorb technological skill very readily and willingly. They are much less willing, however, to change social or religious patterns of culture (11, pp.111-115). Tribal religion, as it was known to the Navajo 100 years ago, is beginning to break down. The white man, especially zealous religious groups, have propagandized the Navajo with Christianity until he is trying to accept two beliefs. Because of this, the old Navajo traditions are slowly disappearing. Some of the younger children have never seen some of the ceremonials that used to be a regular occurrence. The number of medicine men now able to do what is considered good quality work is rather limited. Because of this the

populace is being forced to turn to second class singers, which does not have the same satisfying results as the ones that knew more of the legends, chants, and remedies (14, p.417).

Even with the breaking down of the tribal religion, the Navajo clings to it still. Even when devoutly converted to one of the "Christian" religions, he has no desire to give up his Navajo religion (10, pp.386-387).

### Navajo Social Structure

The pace of Navajo life is leisurely and relaxed most of the time. Their life is geared to the natural seasons, the position of the sun, or other heavenly bodies. This informal atmosphere is difficult for white people to understand, and our adherence to the dictates of the clock is hard for them to accept (31, p.3).

Although they have been able to adapt to the social and other aspects of the white man's culture when the necessity was seen or the desirability found, in most cases the Navajo has little use for the white man's method of doing things. He prefers his own unhurried way of life and is reluctant to give it up in spite of the hardships for the rush and worry of the white man's world (10, p.112).

The Navajos of today are faced with an emotional conflict by being in between two cultures. They are often ridiculed by white people if they return to the reservation after going to school and obtaining an education. If they leave the reservation to go to school, they may be ridiculed by their own people. They are accused of "forsaking the ways of the people" or of "being too good for the traditions of their fathers." When faced with this problem the Navajo finds a middle position very difficult. Young students who wish to get an education so

they will be able to get ahead but also wish to please their relatives experience much frustration (31, p.141).

In spite of the easy going pace of living the children are taught responsibility early in life. It is not uncommon to see a five-year-old child taking care of a flock of sheep that represents the livelihood of the entire family. Often he will be miles from home and with no help to turn to should the need arise (31, p.7).

Most of the social gatherings are in connection with religious ceremonies. The sings and healing ceremonies are the ones that are looked forward to most eagerly since this offers food and refreshment as well as the social participation. During the fall of the year squaw dances are held. These are purely social functions where the parents can keep an eye on their children while they walk around a circle to a chant and visit with their friends. Another social activity that is looked forward to by the whole family is the trip to the trading post. The family may visit it only once or twice a month but when they do, it is a time for the whole family to spend debating the value of each article that they plan to buy. When the shopping is finally over, they often spend the rest of the day visiting with friends and neighbors who are also at the trading post that day. The traders have learned how to visit with the Navajos in their own style as well as in their own language. This has been a great influence upon the Navajo in recent years to show them some of the values of the American way of life (27, p.190).

The Navajo social activity as well as the economy is matriarchal. The women own the property, take the lead in asking for partners at a dance or other such social activity, and own the home in which the family

lives. This is one part of the social structure that is very hard to depart from when they attempt to move into the predominate society. Although much progress has been made, the boys are often still reluctant to take the lead in asking for a partner at a social activity. On the reservation even now if a boy desires to court a girl or seek her hand in marriage, he dares not visit her but gets some relative to intercede with her folks in his behalf (7, p.32).

The clan encourages its members to be conformists in all ways. Their action in doing this discourages leadership just as effectively as it does the less desirable types of social behavior. The values are placed upon the ability to work together and upon the ability to conform rather than upon any outstanding abilities (113, pp.68-73).

The most common type of marriage among the Navajo people is similar to what is called in the American society "common law marriage." It is not deemed necessary to go through any elaborate ritual to get married. All that is necessary is the consent of the families concerned, and the people who desire to get married just move in together. There are rituals for getting married, but they are about the same as a very fancy and expensive church wedding is to the average American and are not very often used because of the great expense involved (12, p.21; 31, p.15).

#### Education Practices

Education was first offered the Navajo by the United States Government in 1868 (24, p.13; 29, p.6). At this time the government promised to provide one competent teacher for each 30 Navajo children between the ages of 6 and 16 "who could be induced or compelled to go to school."

Because of mutual distrust the process of education did not get ahead very fast. Children were often kidnapped to get them to attend school. The first recorded regular class was in 1888 at which time there were 35 Navajo children attending school. Many students of the original and subsequent classes were dissatisfied with school and ran away. Because of this and other factors many schools closed until there were almost no school facilities available to the Navajo people. Their education from that time until after World War II was gained mostly by observation of what other people did, learning the traditional Navajo trades, or by getting a job on the railroad if times were really bad. Going off the reservation to work was looked upon as bad just the same as going to school because both required giving up some of the old ways and the majority were not willing to give up any of these ways if it was not absolutely necessary (31, p.136).

There are a number of ways in which the background of the Navajo is different from that of the predominate culture. It is these differences that make it difficult for them to accept many of the concepts of the white man's culture. It is these same differences that make it just as hard for the white man to understand the reasons for the Navajo unwillingness to change. Their laws in respect to the treatment of people is an example. Slavery has existed among the Navajos from before the first contact the Spanish had with them until they were forced to give it up at the time of Ft. Sumner. To them slaves were property that could be treated as the master wished, even to selling, torturing, or killing. If a Navajo had slaves, they would be killed at the time of his death along with his favorite horse to accompany him on his trip to the other world. The same type of philosophy was connected with the



treatment of one's enemies even though such treatment of a member of the tribe would be unthinkable. The concept that all are equal before the law is very silly to them (7, p.31).

Many Navajo men who were drafted during World War II could not speak or understand much English. As was mentioned earlier in this paper they learned to appreciate some of the ideas belonging to the white culture that they had not been willing to accept previously. As these veterans brought some of these concepts of the American society back to the reservation, the many Navajos began to realize that an education and a working knowledge of the English language was very desirable if they were to get ahead enough to enjoy some of the new found advantages of this society (26, pp.258-259).

Since the movement started, momentum has been slowly building up until now there is pressure from most of the people on the reservation to get the younger ones into school.

There are reasons for a Navajo to remain on the reservation other than his lack of technical skill. In many cases a person is not motivated to leave the reservation to seek employment except when in dire financial conditions. This is often because the jobs previously held off the reserve were of the most menial variety. In such a case the town could not supply the emotional support that was formerly given by the clan and the ceremonial participation which the individual felt was necessary for maintaining personal happiness (31, p.146).

Employers who hire a Navajo person for the first time have little understanding of the environment from which this person has come. If the Navajo employee is expected to possess the background of the well schooled white citizen, he may fall short and become frustrated. The

employer is likely to become aggravated because of the lack of competency in English and think that the Navajo is either mentally retarded or lazy. Either assumption is likely to lead to dismissal (31, pp.153-157).

Studies show that giving the Navajo a lot of "propaganda" is not likely to change his behavior. It seems to be well established that people acquire facts and information that are congruent with their own views quicker than those that are opposed to these views. A consistent and emotional attitude such as the Navajos have toward their home land, religion, and the ways of their people will not be changed by propaganda alone. The need for change and the results that will be achieved must be shown in a manner explicit enough that they will want to change (31, p.157).

This information on the background of the Navajo should help one to appreciate more fully the problems that the Navajo faces upon attempting to enter a society that is so very different from his own. With a knowledge of this background a person should be better able to understand some of the reasons for failure and appreciate more fully any successes.

## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION OF DATA

In presenting the data the first concern will be to compare the technical with the non-technical difficulties. If the writer's hypothesis is correct and a majority of problems are found in the non-technical area, some space will be devoted to those problems which prove to be most numerous.

Reports of trouble on the second, third, and fourth jobs were in some cases very few. Most of this was due to the reduced number of cases that were considered. Where the responses are so few that only one or two reasons for change are given out of a possible 15, the reliability of the percentages is probably not so great as when a larger number of cases is considered.

### Findings

#### Technical and non-technical difficulties compared

The data gathered in this research gives evidence that the great majority of difficulties is caused by social or cultural inabilities rather than a lack of occupational skill. After all known problems for boys and girls were tabulated, those that could be traced to technical inabilities accounted for an average of 3.5 percent of the reasons for losing jobs. Social and cultural reasons were given for 92 percent of changes at the least and ranged to as high as 100 percent. Table 1 compares the two types of trouble. Opinions of the employers and of the counselor who visited the places of employment at the time of job change are given.

Both boys and girls had more technical difficulty on their first job than they did on subsequent jobs. No graduate has been released from more than two jobs of lack of technical skill.

Table 1. Social and cultural difficulties compared with difficulties of technical skill

No. of jobs lost	Social and cultural difficulties		Technical difficulties		Chi square	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
<u>Girls</u>						
1	162	93	12	7	128.66	(Record)
2	40	93	3	7	31.82	(Record)
3	6	100	0	0		(Record)
1	159	93	12	7	126.38	(Employer)
2	38	92	8	8	29.86	(Employer)
3	1	100	0	0		(Employer)
<u>Boys</u>						
1	211	97	7	3	378.04	(Record)
2	57	98	1	2	54.06	(Record)
3	16	100	0	0		(Record)
1	203	96	10	4	356.08	(Employer)
2	132	98	3	2	129.34	(Employer)
3	67	99	1	1	64.06	(Employer)

Chi square with 1 degree of freedom at the 1 percent level is equal to 6.64. All percents are to the nearest whole percent.

The chi square test of distribution in table 1 rules out chance as an explaining factor, thus giving justification to the hypothesis that the problems encountered by Navajo youth are more social and cultural than occupational in the technical sense. With 1 degree of freedom the chi square value at the 1 percent level is 6.64. All chi square numbers in this table are well above that figure, the smallest being 29.86 (28, pp.203-211). This means that chance could account for the

distributions in table 1 less than one in one hundred times.

In table 2 the number of jobs held before permanent and successful placement is shown. Because of girls leaving jobs to get married, the number of permanent placements for the boys is somewhat higher than for the girls. Both boys and girls did better than is shown by table 2 since it shows a change of job for any reason. There were 27 cases where boys had left their jobs to accept a better one and 42 similar cases for girls. Volunteering for the armed forces or getting drafted was also listed as a job change for boys. Sixty boys were then serving in the military service. Forty-five percent of all boys placed were still successfully working on the first job found for them. For the girls the initial job success was 31 percent. These percentages rose as more jobs were held and more experience gained until at the time of this survey there were 82 percent of the entire group, or 590 out of 714 graduates, who were successfully occupied. Of the other 18 percent, 7 percent were unaccounted for as their whereabouts were unknown. The remaining 11 percent were known to be unemployed with the exception of two who were deceased and two who were hospitalized.

#### Social and cultural difficulties

Since it is so obvious that social and cultural problems are causing the majority of troubles, some space will be devoted to comparing those particular areas that seem to be more perplexing to the students. In the order of difficulties caused these problems seem to be seven.

Attitudes. On the first job the boys seemed to have trouble with attitudes, as shown on tables 3 and 4. Employers often complained that graduates felt themselves above such common labor as sweeping floors.

Table 2. Success of Intermountain graduates.

Category	Boys		Girls	
	No. of cases	Percent	No. of cases	Percent
Successful on original job	178	45	98	31
Changed jobs once	106	27	60	19
Changed jobs twice	20	5	10	3
Changed jobs three times	7	2	8	2
Incomplete information on number of jobs	13	2	5	1
In school again	4	1	10	3
Married, not working	0	0	71	23
Total now successfully occupied	328	82	262	82
Unemployed	40	10	36	11
Deceased or hospitalized	3	1	1	
Unknown	28	7	18	7
Total	399	100	315	100
Grand total			714	

The graduate felt that his training was such that he was or should have been hired as a tradesman, and he resented being started at the bottom of the ladder.

Boys boys and girls had difficulty in accepting criticism and often sulked or quit because of a fancied injury received when an employer talked to them to try to correct errors that were being made. What was meant as a helpful suggestion was often received as an insult or a slight.



Table 3. Difficulties of boys.

	Job No.	Record		Employer		Student	
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Poor attitude	1	42	20	53	20	0	0
	2	17	18	17	16	0	0
	3	5	16	6	13	0	0
Poor English	1	38	18	81	31	12	30
	2	41	44	52	50	2	50
	3	17	55	29	64	0	0
Drinking	1	37	17	25	9	4	10
	2	13	14	7	7	1	25
	3	2	6	1	2	0	0
Unable to get along	1	28	13	21	8	2	5
	2	8	8	7	7	1	25
	3	2	6	1	2	0	0
No initiative	1	24	11	34	13	0	0
	2	6	6	10	9	0	0
	3	3	6	4	9	0	0
Will not take responsibility	1	12	7	17	6	0	0
	2	0	0	4	4	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lack of friends	1	12	7	5	2	23	55
	2	4	5	1	1	2	50
	3	0	0	0	0	1	100
All others	1	19	9	27	11	0	0
	2	4	5	7	7	0	0
	3	0	0	1	2	0	0
Total	1	224		263		41	
	2	93		105		4	
	3	31		45		1	

Table 4. Difficulties of girls.

	Job No.	Record		Employer		Student	
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Poor attitude	1	51	30	60	36	0	0
	2	15	35	15	37	0	0
	3	3	50	3	50	0	0
Poor English	1	24	15	27	17	12	27
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Improper relations	1	33	20	30	18	0	0
	2	7	16	8	20	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unable to get along	1	12	7	9	6	6	13
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
No initiative	1	12	7	15	9	0	0
	2	9	21	9	21	0	0
	3	3	50	3	50	0	0
Will not take responsibility	1	6	3	0	0	0	0
	2	3	7	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lack of friends	1	9	5	0	0	27	60
	2	0	0	0	0	3	100
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
All others	1	21	13	24	14	0	0
	2	9	21	9	21	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1	168		165		45	
	2	43		41		3	
	3	6		6		0	

As students of a government school they have become accustomed to having things done for them that would ordinarily be paid for by those going to public school. Because of the students' financial status this is necessary. It has tended, however, to give the graduate the idea in many cases that the world owed him a living and it is rather painful to some graduates to come to the realization that a full day's pay is given only if a full day's work of satisfactory quality is received. Many graduates have lost jobs in the process of learning this fact of life. Losing one or two jobs seems to have been instrumental in teaching the graduates the value of a day's work, since the complaints drop considerably about poor attitudes after the ones having troubles have lost one or two jobs.

English. Lack of ability in the use of English constantly showed up in employers' complaints that the graduates were unable to understand directions or to acknowledge understanding or misunderstanding of directions. From the standpoint of the employer this was the gravest difficulty and the largest percentage of complaints from employers in all areas, that concerning the use of English. This problem diminishes much more slowly with experience on the job than do most of the other problem areas, especially for those who are so poor in English that it causes them to have difficulty on the job. Employers' comments on boys who have lost two or three jobs because of English indicate that they have as much difficulty with English as a newly placed graduate. This problem seems to be less severe with girls, especially after the first job. The reason for this difference could easily be the environment. Girls are hired largely as domestic help. In this capacity they live

in the same home as their employer and are exposed to English all the time they are awake. Of 314 girls considered in this study, 194 were living in homes. Most of those who did not live in a home had done so for some time before quitting to get married or to take a job in industry.

The boys, on the other hand, live in apartments, usually with other Navajo boys. In the evenings and during free time the Navajo language is spoken and the only contact that these graduates have with English is when visiting town and when working. Of 399 boys considered, only 42 had jobs in which they might be living with the employer. Some of these would be living in the house with the employer while others would be living in separate buildings with other hired help. This help might or might not be other Navajo boys.

Drinking. Drinking is a problem exclusively with boys. The employers were not so concerned with it as were the placement people who checked on the boys since many of the employers were not aware of it until it became so bad that the work of the graduate was affected. Other employers stated that they did not care what happened after hours as long as he did his work on the job. Three of the four deaths and hospitalizations listed in table 2 could be traced to drinking and driving. Drinking has contributed heavily to the charges by employers of irresponsibility.

Munz's study (18) on the extent that alcohol affected boys who were in the class of 1957 at Intermountain School showed that 10 percent of the 111 boys had difficulty because of alcohol. According to his study the problem with alcohol was present before graduation, and he

recommended the addition of a counselor to the staff to work on this very problem while the person so affected is still under the supervision of the school.

Initiative. The problem of lack of initiative often stems from the cultural pattern in the Navajo which teaches him that it is undesirable to do anything better than anyone else. His aim is to conform. This was discussed in the section on Background of Navajo Life. This problem seems to take care of itself as the graduates learn from their fellow workers the acceptable way of doing things and the reasons for trying to get ahead. Such complaints disappear with experience on the job.

Isolation from home and friends. From the graduate's point of view the most difficult problem that comes from accepting a job in any city away from the reservation is the lack of friends and the association of relatives that were so much a part of his way of life at home. Even when there are a number of Navajo people in an area and they are able to get together socially, they complain that they miss the functions that are associated with seasons, celebrations, and sickness at home as well as the companionship of their clan.

Inability in the use of English was also felt by graduates especially those who had trouble with their employers or landlady because of this inability. This did not seem to frustrate them as much as the lack of companionship since they were able to get help on the English by enrolling in night school. Many think that the only way to overcome the longing that they have for customs and clan is to quit and visit the reservation.

Marriage difficulties. Marriage customs are another trouble spot for both boys and girls. This shows up on girls' statistics only because they are the ones who lose jobs because of improper sex relations. Several girls not in difficulty because of pregnancy have lost jobs because they stayed out until all hours of the night with some boy. In many cases the women of the house where the girl was staying did not know who the boy was or anything about him.

It is seldom that the employer or landlady of a boys knows where he is after hours or cares very much if he does know.

Most of the difficulties in this area may well be traced to the Navajo customs which teach that a common-law marriage is not only acceptable but highly desirable. These customs were treated in the section on Navajo background. Ignorance of the state laws involved and marriage laws that make it very difficult to get married were also contributing factors.

All others. A large share of those complaints listed under "all others" were related to deficiency in technical skill. For the boys this complaint was eighth in frequency and sixth for girls. Other complaints included in this category were: laziness and stealing. There were so few of these latter complaints that they were not included in the data.



## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Summary

This study was initiated because more information was needed about reasons for failure of Intermountain students on their jobs after graduation. Other studies, as shown on page 5, have indicated the need for this inquiry and some staff members have expressed a desire to know more about the reasons for difficulties so that the curriculum might be strengthened in the necessary areas.

To get this information, individual folders containing the job histories of the 714 graduates who graduated from Intermountain School from 1955 to 1957 were carefully studied and any information that was relevant to difficulty on a job was used in the tabulation of the data. An individual information sheet (Appendix B) was used for information on each graduate.

An average of 3.5 percent of the problems encountered were caused by technical inability on the part of the graduates. If those girls who quit to get married are discounted, 74 percent of the problems can be traced to social or cultural deficiencies. Of these problems the more serious seem to be: attitudes, ability to speak and understand English, drinking, and conflict with marriage customs of the white culture.

#### Conclusions

The following conclusions appear to be justified from the data obtained in this study.

1. Problems of graduates of Intermountain School are related

in most cases to social and cultural areas.

2. Deficiencies in technical skills as well as in some social areas disappear rather quickly with experience on the job.

3. Graduates often lose jobs because of poor attitudes. Those most frequently mentioned are unwillingness to give a day's work for a day's pay and an overrated concept of the vocational ability. Many classify themselves as journeymen when they are in fact only apprentices.

4. Ability in the use of English seems to develop slowly, especially with those who are badly deficient in this area when originally placed on the job.

5. The accepted American marriage customs are different from those the young Navajo has grown up with, and conflict often arises because of these differences.

#### Recommendations

The writer, from the experiences he has gained in conducting this study, feels justified in making the following recommendations:

1. Stress the use of conversational English at all times in the Intermountain School program.

2. Spend extra time in areas of extreme cultural differences such as those found in marriage customs. While discussing the differences show understandable reasons for complying with the customs of the predominate culture.

3. Work on attitudes in a direction that will produce graduates who recognize the need for an honest day's labor for an honest day's pay.

4. Give students a realistic view of their technical ability.

Help them to appreciate the knowledge and technical skill that they possess without making them feel that they are better than they actually are or that they are above menial work.

5. Give students a better understanding of the effects of alcohol upon the human body.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Employed at present \_\_\_\_\_ No. of yrs. lost \_\_\_\_\_

Call or fired: 1st \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd \_\_\_\_\_ 3rd \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of employment: 1st \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd \_\_\_\_\_ 3rd \_\_\_\_\_  
Reasons for leaving \_\_\_\_\_

According to \_\_\_\_\_  
First job \_\_\_\_\_ Sec. job \_\_\_\_\_ Third job \_\_\_\_\_  
Est. No. Stud. Rec. Exp. Stud. Res. Wop. Stud.

Drinking							
Lack of friends							
Lack of leisure activities							
Lazy							
Poor attitude							
No initiative							
In sufficient skill							
Couldn't get along with others							
Better job							
Other reason							

APPENDIX A

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Employed at present \_\_\_\_\_ No. of jobs lost \_\_\_\_\_

Quit or fired: 1st \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd \_\_\_\_\_ 3rd \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of employment: 1st \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd \_\_\_\_\_ 3rd \_\_\_\_\_  
 Reasons for leaving \_\_\_\_\_

According to

	First job			Second job			Third job		
	Rec.	Emp.	Stud.	Rec.	Emp.	Stud.	Rec.	Emp.	Stud.

Drinking									
Lack of friends									
Lack of leisure activities									
Lazy									
Poor attitude									
No initiative									
Insufficient skill									
Couldn't get directions									
Couldn't get along with others									
Better job									
Other reasons									

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Formula for tests of significant difference, Chi square,

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

#### APPENDIX B

Formula for tests of significant difference, Chi square.

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Formula for tests of significant difference, Chi square.

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$