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SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES AMONG FARM AND NONFARM YOUTH: 1950 and 1960

**Economic and Statistical Analysis Division
Economic Research Service**

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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This report was prepared under the general supervision of Louis J. Ducoff, Chief, Farm Population Branch. Calvin L. Beale of the Farm Population Branch and Charles B. Nam of the Bureau of the Census made a number of helpful suggestions.

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HIGHLIGHTS

Information from the 1950 and 1960 Censuses of Population is used to derive estimates of the number and proportion of farm and nonfarm youths who dropped out of school before finishing high school. The analysis is focused on dropout rates for males, on differences between major regions, and on comparisons of white-nonwhite differences within the farm and nonfarm school-age populations. Data also are presented which may be used to derive dropout rates for females and to make detailed comparisons between the South and the rest of the United States.

The estimated total number of school dropouts includes youths who had completed fewer than 12 years of school and were not enrolled in school--referred to as actual dropouts--plus the number of youths enrolled in grades (other than the 12th grade) two or more grades below the level of most youths of the same age--referred to as probable dropouts. Because 16 is the age when most State provisions for compulsory school attendance no longer apply, detailed analysis is limited to youths 16-24 years of age. To provide an overall description of the number of actual school dropouts in 1950 and 1960, estimates are made of the number of actual dropouts 14-24 years of age.

Dropout rates are shown by age and residence for the entire United States, and for the South separately, and the prevalence of dropouts among 19-year-olds is shown for each of the 50 States by residence, and by color for the Southern States.

White-nonwhite comparisons are limited to the South because census data by color and residence were published only for that area and such comparisons for other regions are not possible. In addition, the nonwhite farm population is concentrated in the South.

Highlights of the analysis include:

Persons 14-24 Years Old

1. Between 1950 and 1960 both the number and proportion of actual school dropouts among 14-24-year-olds declined from 7.8 million (32 percent) in 1950 to 6.1 million (23 percent) in 1960.

2. In 1950, 40 percent of farm youth and 28 percent of urban youth 14-24 years old had dropped out of school. By 1960, dropout rates were about the same for urban youth (21 percent) as for farm youth (23 percent).

3. In both years, nonwhites had substantially higher dropout rates than did whites--in 1960, nonwhite dropout rates (36 percent) were higher than those of whites (30 percent) a decade earlier.

Persons 16-24 Years Old

1. In 1960, 27 percent of all persons 16-24 years old had dropped out of school and an additional 3 percent were retarded two or more grades in school and are considered probable dropouts. Comparable percentages for 1950 were 38 percent and 4 percent, respectively.

2. Among male farm residents 16-24 years old, the estimated total (actual and probable) dropout rate for whites declined from 54 percent in 1950 to 32 percent in 1960; for nonwhites, the decline was from 89 percent to 70 percent.

3. Contrary to the situation in 1950, total dropout rates for farm males were slightly lower than those for rural-nonfarm males in 1960. This reversal may have been due, in part, to the change in definition of farm residence between 1950 and 1960. In both years, the highest dropout rates of any group were those of nonwhite farm males.

HIGHLIGHTS - Continued

Prevalence of Dropouts Among 19-Year Olds

1. A State-by-State comparison of the number of school dropouts 19 years of age showed that West North Central States had the lowest rates (23 percent) and that East South Central States had the highest (45 percent).

2. In Nebraska, Minnesota, Iowa, and Utah dropout rates for 19-year-olds did not exceed 20 percent, whereas in Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, and South Carolina dropout rates were 45 percent or more.

3. In six States (Kansas, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Nebraska, and Ohio) dropout rates for 19-year-old farm youth were lower than those for rural-nonfarm or urban 19-year-olds.

4. The estimated percentage of 19-year-old high school graduates was moderately correlated with the proportion of the State adult population with at least a high school education ($r = .647$) and with the average State per pupil expenditure for education ($r = .447$).

* * * * *

SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES AMONG FARM AND NONFARM YOUTH: 1950 AND 1960

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To judge by the tenor and scope of current discussion, two of the more important tasks of U. S. education are those of assuring qualified students an opportunity to attend college and of reducing the number of persons who fail to complete high school. High school graduates seeking college admission and school dropouts seeking employment are in quite different circumstances, but in both instances the goal of education is similar--to provide a larger proportion of youths with more, and better, education. Where high school completion has become the norm, failure to complete school often places the individual at a serious disadvantage. The failure of able students to complete high school or to attend college results in a loss of talent and inadequate use of what some have termed "human resources," and represents an important social and economic loss.

Some of the personal and social consequences of dropping out of high school are reported in previous studies. It is shown, for example, "... that additional schooling is associated with a very substantial increase in lifetime income." (3); 1/ that unemployment rates of school dropouts are substantially higher than those of graduates (8, 9, 10) and that jobs obtained by dropouts are generally of lower status than those obtained by high school graduates (7, 10). Another study reports substantial differences among nonfarm males in the occupations held by dropouts compared with high school graduates, and also shows that a higher proportion of farm than nonfarm males in the labor force and not enrolled in school had failed to graduate from high school (2). There is good reason to believe that continued technological development will result in even greater emphasis on education or skilled training as a prerequisite for employment in an increasing proportion of occupations.

In addition to studies of the economic and occupational differences associated with varying levels of educational attainment, there has been considerable concern with the relationships between the social and psychological characteristics of school dropouts (4, 5, 6, 11) and with some of the social problems which may result from high dropout rates (1).

In view of the fact that rural youth have had lower levels of educational attainment than urban youth, the proportion of school dropouts is generally assumed to be higher in rural than in urban areas. Since many rural youths must seek jobs in urban areas--only a small minority of farm youths can expect to follow careers as farm operators--questions regarding rural dropout rates are of particular importance. 2/

The major purpose of this report is to present current (1960) and comparative (1950) data on the number and proportion of youths in the United States who have dropped out of school short of high school graduation, and to determine variations in dropout rates between farm and nonfarm youths.

1/ Underscored figures in parentheses refer to items in Literature Cited, p. 30.

2/ For example, the subject of school dropouts was one of the major topics discussed at the 1963 National Conference on Problems of Rural Youth in a Changing Environment, held at the Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Okla., September 22-25, as it was at a previous conference on urban youth.

SOURCES OF DATA AND POPULATION COVERED

The estimates of school dropouts in this report are based on data from the 1950 and 1960 Censuses of Population. There are two considerations of particular importance in comparisons of farm and nonfarm dropout rates: (1) The definition of "farm residence" was more restrictive in 1960 than in 1950. There is some evidence that among the persons removed from the farm population and added to the rural-nonfarm population in 1960 by the change in definition the dropout rates were probably higher than in the rural-nonfarm population but lower than in the remaining farm population. Comparisons of farm-nonfarm dropout rates between 1950 and 1960 undoubtedly reflect the effect of the change in definition, as well as other factors, but the precise effect of the change in definition cannot be determined from the information presently available. (2) High rates of farm to nonfarm migration characteristic of younger persons also affect the results, particularly if there were significant differences in the educational attainment of migrants and nonmigrants.

In both Censuses, questions regarding school enrollment and educational attainment were asked for a sample of the school-age population, and are subject to sampling variability and errors of reporting and processing. (For a description of the source and limitations of the data, see Definitions and Explanations, pages 28-29.)

To provide information on the total number of school dropouts, data are presented for persons 14 to 24 years old, but the discussion is concerned primarily with the dropout rates of young men 16 to 24 years old and with comparisons of farm-nonfarm and white-nonwhite dropout rates. In part, this emphasis is due to the age detail in which census data on education are available. More important reasons for the emphasis upon males, and on the age group 16-24 years old, include the fact that the educational attainment of young men has important implications for the quality of the labor force and for the future of the young men and their families, and that most States have provisions for compulsory school attendance up to age 16. For these reasons, and because dropout rates for 14- and 15-year-olds are low, the analysis is focused on the experience of youths most of whom are under no legal requirement to remain in school. Comparable estimates of dropout rates for young women can be derived from the information presented in the tables.

At present, census data are not available to answer questions concerning other variables related to withdrawal from school, e.g., the socioeconomic status of the dropout's family; the educational background of his parents; or the occupational status of dropouts. ^{3/} Furthermore, no information is available regarding qualitative differences in the amount of schooling received or the significance of withdrawal from school to the individual concerned.

METHODS OF ESTIMATING DROPOUTS

Two estimates of school dropouts are shown in this report. The first is an estimate of actual dropouts, and considers as dropouts all persons 14-24 years old who were not enrolled in school and who had completed fewer than four years of high school. This estimate is conservative in that all those enrolled in the fourth year of high school are counted as high school graduates and no estimate is made of the number of youths enrolled in other grades who will fail to graduate. Even though some of the actual dropouts may have returned to school and may have completed their secondary education, all of them had dropped out of school.

^{3/} Information on these and related topics is to be published in a Volume II Report of the 1960 Census, and in a Census monograph tentatively titled Education of the American Population by John K. Folger and Charles B. Nam.

The second estimate adds to the number of actual dropouts the number of probable dropouts, defined as persons 16-24 years old and enrolled in grades two or more grades below those expected for their age, except those enrolled in the fourth year of high school. 4/

It would have been desirable to base the estimate of probable dropouts on information regarding the dropout rates of persons retarded in school, but such information is not available in the required detail. Although there is evidence that a substantial number of dropouts were retarded in school, there is no satisfactory information on the proportion of scholastically retarded youths who fail to graduate. It is reasonable to assume that a high proportion of youths 16 and 17 years old and enrolled at a level of two or more grades below that of most youths the same age will drop out of school rather than continue in school to graduate at age 20 or older. For those 18-24 years old, a contrary assumption would be difficult to justify. Any upward bias in the estimate of probable dropouts is compensated for by the fact that a proportion of youths not retarded in school will fail to graduate.

These estimates refer only to enrollment in regular schools, whether public or private. No estimate is made of the number of dropouts from regular school who may be enrolled in special schools, such as secretarial schools. (See Definitions and Explanations, pages 28-29.)

SCHOOL DROPOUTS AMONG 14-24-YEAR-OLDS: 1950 AND 1960 5/

Between 1950 and 1960, the actual dropout rate among youths 14-24 years old declined 29 percent (table 1). In 1950, 7.8 million youths (32 percent of all persons 14-24) had withdrawn from school before completing high school; in 1960, 6.1 million persons (23 percent of the total) had dropped out of school. In 1950, there was a substantial difference between urban and farm dropout rates (28 percent and 40 percent, respectively), but by 1960 the difference had been reduced to 21 and 23 percent, respectively. Within the rural population, however, the minor difference between nonfarm and farm dropout rates in 1950 had widened to the point where, in 1960, dropout rates were higher for rural-nonfarm youths in each sex-color category. As mentioned earlier, the effect of farm to nonfarm migration on these data is unknown.

The greatest differences in dropout rates are those between whites and nonwhites, and are substantially greater than differences between farm and nonfarm youths. In fact, nonwhite dropout rates in 1960 were higher than those for whites in 1950. In 1960, white-nonwhite differences were greatest for farm youth. Within the farm population, the decline in the drop out rate was greater for white than for nonwhites. For example, if the decline in dropout rates is measured as a percentage of the maximum decline possible, (a decline to zero) then dropout rates for nonfarm (urban and rural) youth declined 26 percent for whites and 28 percent for nonwhites. Among farm youth, however, white dropout rates declined 44 percent of the maximum possible compared with 31 percent for nonwhites. 6/ Insofar as this conservative measure of

4/ For an analysis of school retardation, see: James D. Cowhig, "Age-Grade School Progress of Farm and Nonfarm Youth: 1960." Agr. Econ. Rpt. No. 40, U. S. Dept. Agr. 1963.

5/ The discussion in this section refers only to estimates of actual dropouts--persons 14-24 years old with less than 12 years of school completed and not enrolled in school.

6/ The persistence of white-nonwhite differences within the farm population at about the same level in 1960 as in 1950 is similar to the pattern for a number of other socioeconomic differences between whites and nonwhites. See: James D. Cowhig and Calvin L. Beale, "Socioeconomic Differences Between White and Nonwhite Farm Populations in the South" in a forthcoming issue of Social Forces.

Table 1.--Total number of persons 14 to 24 years old and number and percent with less than 12 years of school completed and not enrolled in school, urban and rural, by color and sex, United States, 1950 and 1960

(Numbers in thousands and rounded without adjustment to totals. Percents independently rounded.)

Year, color, and sex	United States		Urban		Rural nonfarm		Rural farm	
	Total number	Percent dropouts	Total number	Percent dropouts	Total number	Percent dropouts	Total number	Percent dropouts
1950								
Total, 14-24 years	24,220	32.2	15,032	27.9	5,174	39.1	4,015	39.8
White	21,368	29.8	13,382	25.7	4,649	37.0	3,336	36.5
Nonwhite	2,852	50.8	1,649	46.4	525	57.7	679	56.1
Male	11,973	33.7	7,165	28.3	2,649	41.0	2,159	42.9
White	10,619	31.4	6,420	26.2	2,381	38.9	1,817	39.9
Nonwhite	1,354	51.9	745	46.2	268	58.9	342	58.9
Female	12,247	30.9	7,867	27.6	2,525	37.2	1,855	36.2
White	10,749	28.2	6,962	25.1	2,267	35.0	1,519	32.4
Nonwhite	1,498	49.8	905	46.6	257	56.5	336	53.2
1960								
Total, 14-24 years	26,838	22.8	18,274	21.0	6,420	27.8	2,144	23.0
White	23,542	21.0	16,031	19.3	5,684	26.2	1,826	20.3
Nonwhite	3,297	35.6	2,243	33.6	736	40.1	318	38.5
Male	13,385	23.1	8,815	20.8	3,404	28.3	1,165	24.8
White	11,777	21.3	7,770	19.1	3,008	26.6	999	22.1
Nonwhite	1,607	36.3	1,046	33.6	396	41.3	166	41.2
Female	13,454	22.5	9,459	21.2	3,016	27.2	979	20.8
White	11,764	20.8	8,262	19.4	2,676	25.7	827	18.1
Nonwhite	1,689	34.8	1,197	33.5	340	38.7	152	35.6

U. S. Bureau of the Census. U. S. Census of Population: 1950. Vol. II, Characteristics of the Population, Part 1, United States Summary, Chapter C. 1953. Tables 112 and 114; and U. S. Bureau of the Census. U. S. Census of Population: 1960. Detailed Characteristics. United States Summary. Final Report PC(1)-ID. 1963. Tables 168 and 172.

school dropouts is concerned, it is clear that the prevalence of dropouts is much greater among nonwhites than whites. In both 1950 and 1960, nonwhite youths accounted for about 1 in 8 of all youths 14 to 24 years old, but accounted for almost 1 in 5 of all dropouts.

Sex differences in dropout rates were negligible in nonfarm areas, but in both 1950 and 1960 farm males, particularly nonwhites, had higher dropout rates than farm females. The comparatively higher male dropout rates for farm males may be due in part to the greater availability of employment for them than for females.

There was considerable variation in the amount of schooling received by dropouts prior to leaving school (table 2). Among the 6.1 million persons 14 to 24 years old who had not completed high school and were not enrolled in school in 1960, 23 percent had completed 10 grades and 17 percent has completed 11 grades of school. On the other hand, 6 percent (about 385,000 persons) had completed fewer than 5 years of school and would be considered "functional illiterates." ^{7/} For the U. S. as a whole, the modal grade completed by school dropouts was the tenth. This was true of each age group except that of 14- and 15-year-olds, where the greatest proportion left school after completing the 8th grade--the equivalent of an elementary or grammar school education.

The data in table 2 raise some important questions concerning the relationship between retardation in school and failure to complete school, e.g., what proportion of those retarded in school fail to complete school. But data are not sufficient to answer questions raised, since information would also be required on the age at which the person left school. It is clear, however, that 13 percent of 16- and 17-year-old dropouts had completed 11 years of school and thus had made normal progress in school until they withdrew from school.

The low level of educational attainment of rural dropouts also is apparent, particularly among nonwhite males. About 7 percent of urban nonwhite dropouts, compared with 17 percent of rural-nonfarm and 24 percent of rural-farm nonwhite dropouts, had completed less than 5 years of school. In contrast, about 41 percent of all urban male dropouts, compared with 31 percent of rural-nonfarm and 21 percent of rural-farm male dropouts, had completed 10 or 11 years of school.

Within each residence-color category, male dropout rates increased with age. This probably reflected the cumulative effects of retardation in school and a longer exposure to the risk of dropping out once the legal requirements for school attendance no longer applied. In each residence category, dropout rates for nonwhite males were substantially higher than those for whites, and even at ages 14-15 the dropout rate for nonwhite farm males (13 percent) was double the rate for white farm boys. Among farm males 20-24 years old, about 40 percent of whites and 75 percent of nonwhites had dropped out of school. These high dropout rates for males 20-24 are affected by the heavy off-farm migration of persons in this age group. Information is not at hand to determine the degree to which migration varies with education, but the remaining farm population 20-24 years old may differ from the migrant population in many respects. This consideration should be kept in mind in all comparisons of farm-nonfarm dropout rates for the older age groups.

In 1960 about equal proportions of urban male dropouts aged 14-24 (one-fifth) had withdrawn from school after completing fewer than 8, 9, or 10 years of school. About 1 in 4 completed the 10th grade and 17 percent dropped out within a year of high school graduation. Among white farm male dropouts, 32 percent completed less than 8 years

^{7/} For a discussion of the origin and early use of the term "functional illiterate," see: James D. Cowhig, Education, Skill Level, and Earnings of the Hired Farm Working Force of 1961, Agr. Econ. Rpt. No. 26, U. S. Dept. Agr., March 1963, p. 20.

Table 2.--Highest grade of school completed by school dropouts 1/ 14 to 24 years old
by residence, age, sex, and color, United States, 1960

(Numbers in thousands and rounded without adjustment to totals. Percents
independently rounded and do not always equal 100.0)

Residence, age, sex, and color	Total		Highest grade of school completed							
	Number	Percent dropouts	Total	0-4	5-7	8	9	10	11	
	Thou.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	
United States										
Total, 14-24 years	26,838	22.8	100.0	6.3	15.2	18.9	19.6	23.2	16.8	
14-15	5,550	5.8	100.0	15.5	27.3	25.9	20.0	9.4	1.9	
16-17	5,711	16.3	100.0	6.1	16.8	19.7	21.7	22.6	13.0	
18-19	4,775	26.8	100.0	5.0	13.3	17.3	20.0	24.8	19.4	
20-24	10,803	33.2	100.0	6.0	14.4	18.7	18.9	24.0	18.2	
Male, 14-24	13,385	23.1	100.0	7.4	17.4	20.2	19.2	20.9	14.9	
14-15	2,838	5.7	100.0	18.1	29.6	24.7	17.6	8.3	1.6	
16-17	2,906	16.4	100.0	7.0	20.0	21.4	21.1	19.3	11.1	
18-19	2,357	27.4	100.0	5.7	15.6	18.9	20.0	22.6	17.2	
20-24	5,283	34.2	100.0	7.1	16.2	20.0	18.6	21.8	16.3	
White, 14-24	11,777	21.3	100.0	6.3	15.8	21.1	20.0	21.6	15.2	
14-15	2,482	5.1	100.0	16.4	27.7	26.4	19.0	8.8	1.6	
16-17	2,563	15.4	100.0	5.9	18.1	22.1	21.9	20.3	11.7	
18-19	2,074	25.4	100.0	4.8	14.0	19.3	20.6	23.4	17.9	
20-24	4,657	31.3	100.0	6.0	14.7	21.0	19.4	22.4	16.4	
Nonwhite, 14-24	1,607	36.3	100.0	12.1	24.3	16.6	15.8	17.8	13.4	
14-15	355	9.5	100.0	24.3	36.8	18.4	12.2	6.6	1.7	
16-17	343	24.0	100.0	12.4	29.1	18.1	17.5	14.8	8.1	
18-19	283	42.4	100.0	9.8	22.8	16.7	17.3	19.3	14.2	
20-24	626	55.5	100.0	11.7	22.5	16.0	15.1	19.1	15.5	
Female, 14-24	13,454	22.5	100.0	5.2	13.0	17.6	20.0	25.5	18.8	
14-15	2,712	5.9	100.0	13.0	25.0	27.1	22.3	10.5	2.1	
16-17	2,804	16.2	100.0	5.0	13.4	18.0	22.3	26.1	15.1	
18-19	2,417	26.1	100.0	4.4	10.9	15.8	20.1	27.1	21.7	
20-24	5,520	32.3	100.0	4.8	12.5	17.2	19.2	26.1	20.1	
White, 14-24	11,764	20.8	100.0	4.7	11.5	17.8	20.6	26.4	19.0	
14-15	2,360	5.3	100.0	12.4	22.8	28.2	23.6	11.0	2.0	
16-17	2,466	15.1	100.0	4.6	12.0	17.9	22.7	27.2	15.7	
18-19	2,116	24.2	100.0	4.0	9.7	15.9	20.5	27.8	22.2	
20-24	4,822	29.7	100.0	4.3	11.1	17.6	19.8	27.0	20.2	

Continued-

Table 2.--Highest grade of school completed by school dropouts 1/ 14 to 24 years old
by residence, age, sex, and color, United States, 1960 (Continued)

(Numbers in thousands and rounded without adjustment to totals. Percents
independently rounded and do not always equal 100.0)

Residence, age, sex, and color	Total		Highest grade of school completed						
	Number	Percent dropouts	Total	0-4	5-7	8	9	10	11
	Thou.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
Nonwhite, 14-24	1,689	34.8	100.0	7.2	18.9	16.5	17.7	21.9	17.8
14-15	352	9.6	100.0	15.1	33.0	23.1	17.6	8.5	2.7
16-17	339	23.6	100.0	7.0	20.3	18.5	20.7	21.1	12.4
18-19	301	39.6	100.0	6.3	16.3	15.3	18.2	24.1	19.9
20-24	698	50.8	100.0	6.8	18.1	15.9	16.9	22.7	19.7
Urban									
Total, 14-24 years	3,842	21.0	100.0	4.9	12.6	17.8	20.4	25.4	18.9
14-15	177	5.0	100.0	12.5	23.6	26.7	23.2	11.5	2.5
16-17	550	14.9	100.0	4.5	13.2	18.5	23.1	25.4	15.2
18-19	785	23.8	100.0	3.9	10.7	16.6	20.7	27.0	21.6
20-24	2,329	30.1	100.0	4.7	12.2	17.6	19.5	25.9	20.1
Nonwhite, 14-24	2,243	33.6	100.0	5.9	16.7	16.6	18.4	23.4	19.0
14-15	447	8.1	100.0	12.4	30.0	24.9	19.1	10.4	3.2
16-17	434	21.8	100.0	5.6	18.2	18.7	21.9	22.4	13.2
18-19	389	38.0	100.0	4.7	14.4	15.6	19.5	25.4	20.5
20-24	973	48.8	100.0	5.8	16.1	15.9	17.3	24.0	20.9
Male, 14-24	1,837	20.8	100.0	5.4	14.3	19.2	20.4	23.5	17.2
14-15	84	4.7	100.0	14.4	25.5	26.0	21.4	10.5	2.2
16-17	262	14.3	100.0	5.1	15.7	20.3	23.1	22.3	13.4
18-19	366	23.8	100.0	4.2	12.6	17.6	21.0	25.0	19.5
20-24	1,125	30.9	100.0	5.3	13.6	18.9	19.5	24.2	18.4
White, 14-24	1,485	19.1	100.0	5.0	13.1	19.7	21.0	23.9	17.3
14-15	68	4.3	100.0	14.1	23.9	26.7	22.4	10.7	2.1
16-17	218	13.4	100.0	4.7	14.5	20.6	23.4	22.8	13.9
18-19	298	21.9	100.0	4.0	11.6	17.8	21.3	25.4	20.0
20-24	902	28.1	100.0	4.7	12.5	19.5	20.2	24.6	18.3
Nonwhite, 14-24	352	33.6	100.0	7.3	19.1	17.0	17.9	21.8	16.9
14-15	16	7.4	100.0	15.6	32.0	22.8	17.0	9.9	2.7
16-17	44	20.8	100.0	7.0	21.7	18.9	21.5	19.8	11.1
18-19	68	38.5	100.0	5.4	17.2	16.8	19.7	23.3	17.7
20-24	223	51.2	100.0	7.3	18.2	16.3	16.7	22.6	18.9

Continued-

Table 2.--Highest grade of school completed by school dropouts 1/ 14 to 24 years old
by residence, age, sex, and color, United States, 1960 (Continued)

(Numbers in thousands and rounded without adjustment to totals. Percents
independently rounded and do not always equal 100.0)

Residence, age, sex, and color	Total		Highest grade of school completed						
	Number	Percent dropouts	Total	0-4	5-7	8	9	10	11
	Thou.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
Rural nonfarm									
Total, 14-24 years	1,784	27.8	100.0	7.9	18.6	20.1	18.9	20.5	14.0
14-15	102	7.3	100.0	19.8	32.0	24.3	16.1	6.6	1.2
16-17	283	19.9	100.0	7.9	21.2	20.8	20.6	19.4	10.2
18-19	385	34.6	100.0	6.3	16.1	18.6	19.7	22.6	16.7
20-24	1,015	40.8	100.0	7.3	17.4	20.1	18.5	21.3	15.4
Nonwhite, 14-24	736	40.1	100.0	14.9	28.5	16.6	14.6	14.8	10.5
14-15	172	12.1	100.0	26.6	40.4	17.1	10.6	4.3	1.0
16-17	164	27.6	100.0	14.2	31.6	18.7	16.3	12.6	6.7
18-19	136	46.9	100.0	11.9	25.8	16.7	15.9	17.1	12.7
20-24	264	62.6	100.0	14.8	27.2	16.0	14.1	15.9	12.0
Male, 14-24	965	28.3	100.0	9.2	20.9	21.1	18.2	18.2	12.4
14-15	54	7.4	100.0	23.0	34.5	22.3	13.4	5.8	1.0
16-17	156	20.9	100.0	8.9	24.6	22.0	19.6	16.5	8.5
18-19	216	35.2	100.0	6.9	18.1	19.5	19.4	20.9	15.2
20-24	540	40.9	100.0	8.8	19.5	21.3	17.8	18.9	13.6
White, 14-24	801	26.6	100.0	7.5	19.0	22.1	19.2	19.2	13.1
14-15	42	6.6	100.0	20.8	32.6	24.3	14.8	6.4	1.1
16-17	130	19.8	100.0	7.3	22.6	22.6	20.6	17.7	9.2
18-19	179	33.3	100.0	5.6	16.2	20.1	20.3	21.9	15.9
20-24	449	38.2	100.0	7.0	17.7	22.5	18.8	19.8	14.2
Nonwhite, 14-24	164	41.3	100.0	17.4	30.2	16.2	13.4	13.4	9.4
14-15	12	13.0	100.0	30.8	41.6	15.2	8.1	3.5	0.8
16-17	25	29.0	100.0	16.9	35.0	18.5	14.2	10.0	5.3
18-19	36	48.5	100.0	13.4	27.5	16.6	15.1	15.9	11.6
20-24	90	62.3	100.0	17.5	28.4	15.6	13.2	14.6	10.7

Continued-

Table 2.--Highest grade of school completed by school dropouts 1/ 14 to 24 years old by residence, age, sex, and color, United States, 1960 - Continued

(Numbers in thousands and rounded without adjustment to totals. Percents independently rounded and do not always equal 100.0.)

Residence, age, sex, and color	Total		Highest grade of school completed						
	Number	Percent dropouts	Total	0-4	5-7	8	9	10	11
	Thou.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
Rural farm									
Total, 14-24 years	493	23.0	100.0	11.7	23.3	23.4	15.7	15.5	10.4
14-15	41	6.9	100.0	17.9	31.8	26.8	15.6	7.0	1.0
16-17	97	16.1	100.0	9.6	24.2	23.8	17.1	16.4	8.9
18-19	108	29.8	100.0	9.3	21.9	22.5	16.5	16.7	13.1
20-24	247	42.3	100.0	12.7	22.2	23.0	14.8	16.0	11.3
Nonwhite, 14-24	318	38.5	100.0	20.3	34.8	15.9	11.7	10.4	6.8
14-15	89	11.9	100.0	30.8	40.7	14.1	9.3	4.2	0.9
16-17	83	26.8	100.0	18.4	38.6	16.0	12.7	9.6	4.7
18-19	59	46.7	100.0	17.0	33.0	16.6	12.8	12.4	8.3
20-24	87	71.5	100.0	20.8	33.1	16.0	11.3	10.9	7.9
Male, 14-24	289	24.8	100.0	13.6	25.4	24.3	15.1	13.2	8.3
14-15	23	7.3	100.0	20.0	33.5	26.0	13.8	6.1	0.7
16-17	59	18.2	100.0	10.8	26.9	24.8	16.5	13.8	7.2
18-19	65	31.2	100.0	10.3	24.2	23.6	16.5	14.7	10.7
20-24	142	44.6	100.0	15.3	24.0	24.1	14.1	13.5	9.0
White, 14-24	221	22.1	100.0	10.3	21.8	27.1	16.6	14.8	9.4
14-15	17	6.4	100.0	14.6	31.1	30.5	16.1	6.9	0.8
16-17	46	16.5	100.0	7.8	22.5	27.6	18.1	15.7	8.3
18-19	49	27.9	100.0	7.1	20.4	25.9	17.9	16.4	12.3
20-24	108	39.5	100.0	12.2	20.6	26.9	15.4	14.9	9.1
Nonwhite, 14-24	68	41.2	100.0	24.4	37.2	15.1	10.3	8.1	4.9
14-15	6	12.6	100.0	36.1	40.7	12.5	6.9	3.4	0.4
16-17	13	29.4	100.0	22.0	43.1	14.7	10.4	6.7	3.1
18-19	16	50.2	100.0	20.5	36.0	16.5	11.9	9.5	5.5
20-24	34	74.9	100.0	25.0	34.9	15.1	10.0	8.8	6.1

1/ "School dropouts" refers to persons 14 to 24 years old with fewer than 12 years of school completed and not enrolled in school.

of school, and 41 percent had completed 9 or more years. In contrast, 62 percent of nonwhite farm dropouts did not complete grammar school; 23 percent completed 9 or more grades of school.

SCHOOL DROPOUTS AMONG 16-24-YEAR-OLDS: 1950 AND 1960

Actual dropouts among the population 14-24 years old provide an estimate of the total number of persons in the age group who had failed to complete high school and who were not enrolled in school. Because the majority of 14-15 year olds are subject to State laws covering compulsory school attendance and therefore could not drop out, a more realistic estimate of dropout rates is that based on the experience of persons at an age when school attendance is no longer legally required--16 years old and over in most States -- and one that also takes into account the effect of retardation in school on eventual failure to complete high school.

This section contains estimates of the numbers and proportions of actual and probable dropouts. Data are shown for youths aged 16-24 years in 1950 and in 1960 (fig. 1). This inclusion in the estimated total number of school dropouts of the number of youths retarded two or more grades in school (except those enrolled in the fourth year of high school) increases the percentage of dropouts by about 4 percentage points for youths 16-24 years old (table 3). Since retardation rates are highest for 16- and 17-year-olds, the effect of including those retarded in school in the estimated total number of dropouts is most marked for 16-17 year olds. Even the inclusion of probable

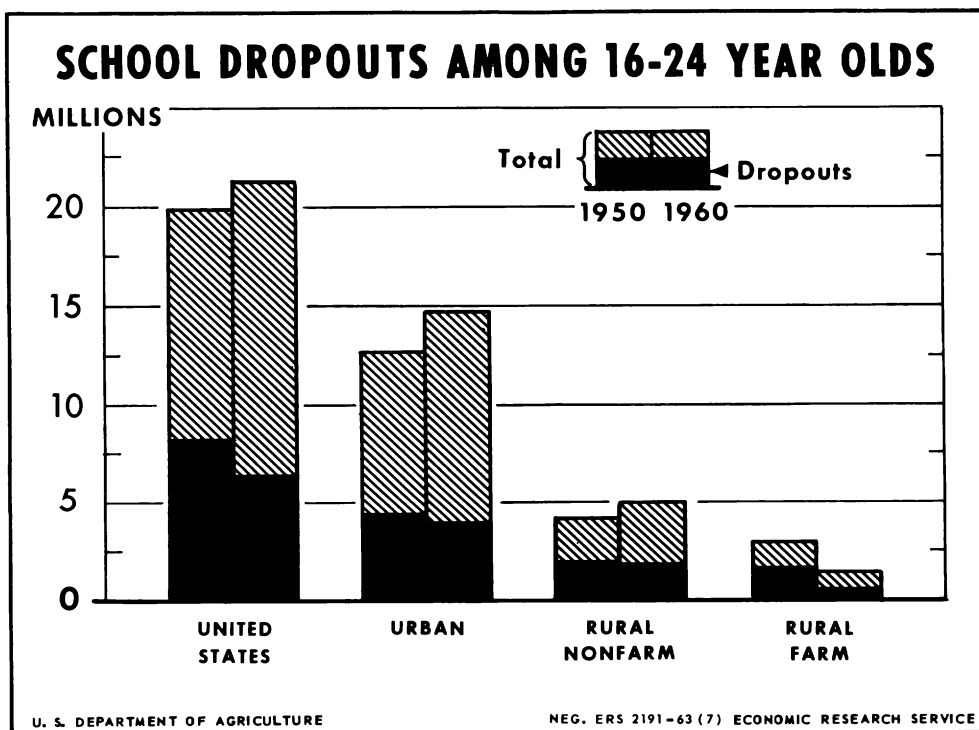


Figure 1

Table 3.--Estimates of school dropouts among persons 16-24 years old by residence, age, sex, and color, United States, 1950 and 1960

(Numbers in thousands and rounded without adjustment to group totals. Percents independently rounded.)

Residence, age, sex, and color	1950						1960					
	Total in age group		Dropouts				Total in age group		Dropouts			
			Actual 1/	Probable 2/	Estimated total	Actual 1/			Probable 2/	Estimated total		
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
United States												
Total, 16-24 years	19,953	100.0	37.7	3.7	8,260	41.4	21,288	100.0	27.2	3.2	6,477	30.4
16-17	4,174	100.0	22.0	8.9	1,287	30.8	5,711	100.0	16.3	5.3	1,231	21.6
18-19	4,341	100.0	36.6	3.6	1,748	40.3	4,775	100.0	26.8	4.4	1,490	31.2
20-24	11,437	100.0	43.9	1.8	5,225	45.7	10,803	100.0	33.2	1.5	3,756	34.8
Male, 16-24	9,804	100.0	39.7	4.7	4,353	44.4	10,547	100.0	27.8	3.9	3,345	31.7
16-17	2,109	100.0	23.1	10.7	711	33.7	2,906	100.0	16.4	6.4	664	22.8
18-19	2,136	100.0	39.0	4.5	927	43.4	2,357	100.0	27.4	5.4	773	32.8
20-24	5,559	100.0	46.3	2.5	2,714	48.8	5,283	100.0	34.2	1.9	1,908	36.1
White, 16-24	8,711	100.0	36.9	3.9	3,557	40.8	9,295	100.0	25.6	3.0	2,661	28.6
16-17	1,855	100.0	21.4	8.6	557	30.0	2,563	100.0	15.4	5.2	527	20.6
18-19	1,896	100.0	35.9	3.6	749	39.5	2,074	100.0	25.4	4.3	617	29.7
20-24	4,960	100.0	43.1	2.3	2,252	45.4	4,657	100.0	31.3	1.3	1,517	32.6
Nonwhite, 16-24	1,094	100.0	61.6	11.2	1,511	72.8	1,252	100.0	43.9	9.1	663	53.0
16-17	254	100.0	34.8	25.8	261	60.7	343	100.0	24.0	15.9	137	39.9
18-19	240	100.0	63.2	11.4	336	74.6	283	100.0	42.4	12.8	156	55.2
20-24	600	100.0	72.3	4.9	886	77.2	626	100.0	55.5	3.7	370	59.2
Female, 16-24	10,148	100.0	35.9	2.6	3,907	38.5	10,741	100.0	26.7	1.9	3,076	28.6
16-17	2,065	100.0	20.9	7.0	576	27.9	2,804	100.0	16.2	2.1	511	18.2
18-19	2,206	100.0	34.3	2.9	821	37.2	2,417	100.0	26.1	3.6	717	29.7
20-24	5,878	100.0	41.7	1.0	2,511	42.7	5,520	100.0	32.3	1.2	1,848	33.5
White, 16-24	8,919	100.0	32.8	2.1	3,106	34.8	9,404	100.0	24.6	2.0	2,501	26.6
16-17	1,800	100.0	19.2	5.3	442	24.5	2,466	100.0	15.1	3.3	453	18.4
18-19	1,940	100.0	31.1	2.1	645	33.2	2,116	100.0	24.2	2.8	571	27.0
20-24	5,178	100.0	38.1	0.9	2,019	39.0	4,822	100.0	29.7	0.9	1,477	30.6
Nonwhite, 16-24	1,230	100.0	58.4	6.8	802	65.2	1,337	100.0	41.4	5.8	631	47.2
16-17	265	100.0	32.5	18.4	135	50.9	339	100.0	23.6	10.1	114	33.7
18-19	265	100.0	58.2	8.1	176	66.3	301	100.0	39.6	8.9	146	48.5
20-24	700	100.0	68.2	2.0	491	70.2	698	100.0	50.8	2.4	371	53.2
Urban												
Total, 16-24 years	12,697	100.0	32.2	2.9	4,450	35.0	14,718	100.0	24.9	2.7	4,056	27.6
16-17	2,333	100.0	17.1	6.9	559	24.0	3,687	100.0	14.9	4.3	708	19.2
18-19	2,685	100.0	29.4	2.9	866	32.3	3,302	100.0	23.8	3.7	908	27.5
20-24	7,679	100.0	37.7	1.7	3,025	39.4	7,730	100.0	30.1	1.4	2,439	31.6

Continued-

Table 3.--Estimates of school dropouts among persons 16-24 years old by residence, age, sex, and color, United States, 1950 and 1960 - Continued

(Numbers in thousands and rounded without adjustment to group totals. Percents independently rounded.)

Residence, age, sex, and color	1950						1960					
	Total in age group		Dropouts			Total in age group		Dropouts				
			Actual 1/	Probable 2/	Estimated Total			Actual 1/	Probable 2/	Estimated total		
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Urban												
Nonwhite, 16-24	1,382	100.0	54.0	6.3	833	60.3	1,796	100.0	39.9	5.3	813	45.3
16-17	269	100.0	27.0	15.0	113	42.0	434	100.0	21.8	9.2	135	31.1
18-19	278	100.0	52.7	7.3	167	60.0	389	100.0	38.0	8.3	180	46.3
20-24	835	100.0	63.1	3.2	553	66.3	973	100.0	48.8	2.4	498	51.2
Male, 16-24	5,994	100.0	33.0	3.9	2,209	36.8	7,018	100.0	25.0	3.3	1,988	28.3
16-17	1,144	100.0	16.2	8.5	283	24.7	1,837	100.0	14.3	5.2	358	19.5
18-19	1,235	100.0	30.3	3.8	421	34.1	1,537	100.0	23.8	4.6	437	28.4
20-24	3,615	100.0	39.2	2.5	1,505	41.6	3,644	100.0	30.9	1.9	1,192	32.7
White, 16-24	5,379	100.0	30.5	3.3	1,817	33.8	6,193	100.0	22.9	2.9	1,597	25.8
16-17	1,018	100.0	15.1	7.2	226	22.2	1,624	100.0	13.4	4.4	289	17.8
18-19	1,112	100.0	27.7	3.0	342	30.8	1,360	100.0	21.9	3.9	351	25.8
20-24	3,249	100.0	36.2	2.2	1,249	38.4	3,209	100.0	28.1	1.7	956	29.8
Nonwhite, 16-24	615	100.0	54.6	9.0	391	63.6	825	100.0	40.6	6.8	391	47.4
16-17	127	100.0	25.5	19.1	56	44.6	213	100.0	20.8	11.5	69	32.3
18-19	123	100.0	53.5	10.2	78	63.7	177	100.0	38.5	10.2	86	48.7
20-24	366	100.0	65.0	5.1	265	70.1	435	100.0	51.2	3.0	23	54.3
Rural nonfarm												
Total, 16-24 years	4,211	100.0	46.3	4.0	2,121	50.4	5,022	100.0	33.5	4.1	1,887	37.6
16-17	925	100.0	26.7	9.9	339	36.6	1,422	100.0	19.9	7.0	383	26.9
18-19	932	100.0	46.7	3.9	472	50.6	1,111	100.0	34.6	5.6	447	40.3
20-24	2,354	100.0	53.9	1.8	1,311	55.7	2,489	100.0	40.8	1.7	1,057	42.5
Nonwhite, 16-24	427	100.0	67.9	9.4	330	77.3	564	100.0	48.6	10.5	334	59.1
16-17	96	100.0	39.1	24.7	61	63.8	164	100.0	27.6	17.8	75	45.4
18-19	98	100.0	68.4	9.4	76	77.7	136	100.0	46.9	14.0	83	60.9
20-24	234	100.0	79.4	3.2	193	82.6	264	100.0	62.6	4.1	176	66.7
Male, 16-24	2,159	100.0	48.6	5.1	1,159	53.7	2,677	100.0	34.0	4.8	1,039	38.8
16-17	472	100.0	28.0	12.0	189	40.1	745	100.0	20.9	8.2	219	29.1
18-19	497	100.0	48.5	4.6	264	53.1	613	100.0	35.2	6.3	255	41.5
20-24	1,190	100.0	56.8	2.5	705	59.3	1,320	100.0	40.9	2.0	565	42.8
White, 16-24	1,940	100.0	46.3	4.4	984	50.7	2,370	100.0	32.0	3.9	851	35.9
16-17	425	100.0	26.6	10.2	157	36.8	658	100.0	19.8	6.9	176	26.7
18-19	447	100.0	46.1	4.0	224	50.1	538	100.0	33.3	5.1	207	38.5
20-24	1,068	100.0	54.2	2.3	604	56.5	1,175	100.0	38.2	1.6	468	39.9

Table 3.—Estimates of school dropouts among persons 16-24 years old by residence, age, sex, and color, United States, 1950 and 1960 - Continued

(Numbers in thousands and rounded without adjustment to group totals. Percents independently rounded.)

Residence, age, sex, and color	1950						1960						
	Total in age group		Dropouts				Total in age group		Dropouts				
			Actual	Probable	Estimated				Actual	Probable	Estimated		
			1/	2/	total				1/	2/	total		
		No.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Nonwhite, 16-24	219	100.0	69.0	10.8	175	79.7	307	100.0	49.5	11.8	188	61.3	
16-17	47	100.0	40.6	28.5	33	69.1	87	100.0	29.0	21.1	43	50.1	
18-19	50	100.0	70.2	10.0	40	80.2	75	100.0	48.5	15.2	48	63.6	
20-24	122	100.0	79.5	4.2	102	83.7	145	100.0	62.3	4.5	97	66.8	
Rural farm													
Total, 16-24 years	3,044	100.0	49.1	6.4	1,689	55.5	1,548	100.0	29.2	5.3	535	34.5	
16-17	916	100.0	29.7	12.9	390	42.6	602	100.0	16.1	7.2	140	23.3	
18-19	724	100.0	50.3	6.2	410	56.6	362	100.0	29.8	7.3	134	37.1	
20-24	1,404	100.0	61.1	2.3	890	63.4	584	100.0	42.3	2.2	260	44.5	
Nonwhite, 16-24	514	100.0	69.1	15.3	434	84.4	229	100.0	48.8	15.7	148	64.5	
16-17	155	100.0	41.8	32.6	115	74.4	83	100.0	26.8	23.2	42	50.0	
18-19	129	100.0	71.4	15.0	112	86.4	59	100.0	46.7	19.9	39	66.6	
20-24	230	100.0	86.1	3.9	207	90.0	87	100.0	71.5	5.6	67	77.1	
Male, 16-24	1,651	100.0	52.5	7.2	985	59.7	852	100.0	31.3	6.1	318	37.4	
16-17	492	100.0	34.1	14.4	239	48.6	325	100.0	18.2	8.4	87	26.7	
18-19	404	100.0	53.7	6.4	243	60.1	207	100.0	31.2	7.9	81	39.2	
20-24	755	100.0	63.8	2.9	504	66.7	320	100.0	44.6	2.5	150	47.1	
White, 16-24	1,391	100.0	48.8	5.5	756	54.3	731	100.0	27.9	4.2	234	32.0	
16-17	412	100.0	31.8	10.5	174	42.2	281	100.0	16.5	5.5	62	22.0	
18-19	337	100.0	49.3	4.8	182	54.1	176	100.0	27.9	5.6	59	33.5	
20-24	643	100.0	59.5	2.6	399	62.1	274	100.0	39.5	1.9	113	41.4	
Nonwhite, 16-24	259	100.0	72.0	16.6	230	88.6	120	100.0	52.0	17.8	84	69.9	
16-17	80	100.0	46.1	34.9	65	81.1	43	100.0	29.4	27.4	25	56.8	
18-19	67	100.0	75.7	14.5	61	90.2	31	100.0	50.2	21.3	22	71.5	
20-24	112	100.0	88.3	4.8	104	93.1	46	100.0	74.9	6.4	37	81.3	

1/ Persons with less than 12 years of school completed and not enrolled in school.

2/ Persons two or more years retarded in school, except those enrolled in fourth year of high school.

See note to table 1.

dropouts, however, probably results in an underestimate of the dropout rates of 16-and-17-year-olds. This suggestion is consistent with the fact that, with minor exceptions, total dropout rates for 16-17-year-olds in both years were substantially lower than rates for 18-19-year-olds. It seems likely that the marked difference between the experience of persons 16-17 in 1960 and those 18-19 in 1960 -- who were 16-17 in 1958 -- is more the result of an underestimate of dropout rates for the younger age group than of a marked improvement over the short 2-year period.

Unless otherwise specified, the dropout rates discussed below are the estimated total rates. The estimated total number of school dropouts declined from 8.3 million persons 16-24 years old in 1950 (41 percent of all persons in the age group) to about 6.5 million in 1960 (30 percent of the total). For all youths 16-17 years old, dropout rates were reduced by about 30 percent of the maximum possible decline (a decline to zero), but because of population growth, the estimated number of 16-17-year-old dropouts was only about 56,000 less in 1960 than in 1950. In the two other age groups, both the number and proportion of school dropouts were substantially smaller in 1960 than in 1950.

There was a consistent relationship between age and dropout rates, due in part to the effect of retardation resulting in withdrawal from school and simply to the longer exposure to the risk of dropping out of school for persons 18-19 and 20-24 years old. Dropout rates were greater for males than for females in both years. Between 1950 and 1960, sex differences in dropout rates narrowed for white youths, but remained about the same for nonwhite.

As in the case of retardation in school, and the experience of all persons 14-24 years old, dropout rates for all rural-farm youth were lower than those for all rural-nonfarm youth in 1960, a reversal of the situation in 1950. The differences between rural youth (farm and nonfarm) were least at ages 20-24 where about 4 out of 10 had withdrawn from school. The more favorable position of farm youth in 1960 than in 1950 was due solely to the reduction in white farm dropout rates -- among nonwhites, farm youth had higher dropout rates than rural-nonfarm youths. In every age group, except urban males 16-17 years old, nonwhite dropout rates were higher than those for any age-residence category of white males in 1960. In 1960, nonwhite farm male dropout rates ranged from 57 percent for 16-17 year olds to 81 percent for those 20-24 years old. In contrast, the rates for nonwhite urban males ranged from 32 percent to 54 percent, respectively.

DROPOUT RATES FOR 19 YEAR OLDS: 1950 AND 1960

One source of confusion in discussions of school dropout rates is the failure to specify the age group and time period to which a given rate refers. For example, one recent estimate is that ". . . some 61 percent of farm boys do not finish high school." (13) If interpreted as referring to all farm boys 16-24 years old, this statement considerably overstates the seriousness of the situation.

For many purposes, it would be desirable to know age-specific rates of the incidence of withdrawal from school. But incidence rates require information on the year of withdrawal from school. Such information is not available from the decennial census, and it is not possible to determine from census data how many persons of a given age dropped out of school during 1960.

Although information on the incidence of dropouts in the farm and nonfarm school-age population is not available, it is possible to estimate the prevalence of dropouts. The estimate is based on the experience of youths old enough to have completed high school on the one hand, and young enough, on the other, to cause the possibility of migration away from the population group studies to be minimized. Normally, 19-year-olds are recent high school graduates and comparisons of dropout rates for 19-year-olds minimize the effect of migration in interpreting farm-nonfarm differences.

The decline in total dropout rates for 19-year-olds from 41 percent in 1950 to 33 percent in 1960 was accompanied by an increase in the proportion of 19-year-olds remaining in school, even though enrolled in grades two or more years below the level expected for the age. In each of the categories shown in table 4, the percentage of 19-year-olds retarded in school was higher in 1960 than in 1950. As with other ages, dropout rates for all farm youth in 1960 were lower than those for all rural-nonfarm youth -- a reversal of the situation a decade earlier, owing entirely to the lower dropout rates of white farm youths. In urban areas dropout rates for nonwhite males declined 21 percent of the maximum possible decline, compared with a 16-percent reduction for white males. Among rural youth, however, the rate of reduction in dropouts for nonwhites was lower than that for whites, particularly among farm males. For instance, dropout rates for white farm males 19 years old declined 34 percent of the maximum decline possible compared with an 18 percent reduction for nonwhite males, and the percentage-point difference between white-nonwhite rates was greater in 1960 than in 1950.

Although there were substantial reductions in nonwhite male dropout rates between 1950 and 1960, dropping out of school was the statistical norm for farm and nonfarm 19-year-old nonwhite males in both years.

REGIONAL AND STATE VARIATIONS: 1960

In 1960 almost half (48 percent) of all farm youths 16-24 years old and 94 percent of all farm nonwhite youths 16-24 years old were living in the South. Because of the concentration of nonwhite farm population in the South a separate treatment of school dropout rates for Southern youth is undertaken. White-nonwhite comparisons are limited to the South because census data on education by color and residence were not published for any region other than the South.

About 2.8 million (39 percent) of all Southern youths 16-24 years old in 1960 are estimated to be school dropouts (table 5). Dropout rates were highest for nonwhite males in the South, ranging from 46 percent of those 16-17 to 66 percent of those 20-24 years old. Among farm nonwhite males rates were 58 percent and 82 percent, respectively, in the indicated age brackets.

Dropout rates for white males 16-17 and 18-19 years old were lower for farm than for rural-nonfarm youths, but substantially higher than urban rates in the South in 1960. Nonwhite farm males had the highest dropout rates in each age group, and over 80 percent of those 20-24 years old were estimated to have dropped out of school.

As in the United States as a whole, dropout rates in the South increased with age, whereas retardation rates (as indicated by the estimate of probable dropouts) declined with age. These results are consistent with the assumption that a substantial proportion of persons retarded in school eventually drop out.

Dropout rates for 19-year-old males are shown in figure 2 and in table 6 by color and residence for the United States, the South, and the North and West combined. For both whites and nonwhites, dropout rates in the South were higher than in the North and West. There was little difference between actual dropout rates of urban whites, but the estimated total dropout rates were higher in the South because of the higher retardation rates of the Southern youth. Dropout rates for rural whites were substantially higher in the South than in the North and West. In the North and West, but not in the South, farm dropout rates were lower than those for rural-nonfarm youth.

In each broad region, dropout rates among nonwhite males 19 years old were substantially higher than those for whites. Although Southern nonwhite dropout rates were higher than those in the North and West, the gap between white and nonwhite

Table 5.--Estimates of school dropouts among persons 16-24 years old
by age, sex, color, and residence, South, 1960

(Numbers in thousands and rounded without adjustment to group totals.)

Age, sex, color, and residence	Total in age group		Dropouts			
	No.	Pct.	Actual	Probable	Estimated total	
			1/ Pct.	2/ Pct.	No.	Pct.
South						
Total, 16-24 years	7,089	100.0	34.2	4.8	2,764	39.0
16-17	1,895	100.0	21.8	8.7	579	30.5
18-19	1,642	100.0	33.8	6.5	662	40.3
20-24	3,552	100.0	41.0	1.9	1,524	42.9
Male, 16-24	3,583	100.0	34.4	5.8	1,442	40.2
16-17	970	100.0	22.1	10.7	318	32.8
18-19	836	100.0	34.1	7.7	350	41.8
20-24	1,777	100.0	41.3	2.3	774	43.6
White, 16-24	2,845	100.0	31.0	4.4	1,008	35.4
16-17	753	100.0	21.0	8.1	219	29.1
18-19	659	100.0	31.3	5.7	244	37.0
20-24	1,432	100.0	36.2	1.9	545	38.1
Nonwhite, 16-24	738	100.0	47.4	11.3	434	58.7
16-17	217	100.0	26.0	19.8	99	45.8
18-19	177	100.0	44.8	15.1	106	59.9
20-24	345	100.0	62.1	4.1	228	66.2
Female, 16-24	3,506	100.0	34.0	3.7	1,323	37.7
16-17	925	100.0	21.6	6.5	260	28.1
18-19	806	100.0	33.5	5.2	312	38.7
20-24	1,775	100.0	40.8	1.5	750	42.3
White, 16-24	2,743	100.0	31.1	2.7	928	33.8
16-17	715	100.0	20.5	4.9	181	25.4
18-19	626	100.0	31.1	3.7	218	34.8
20-24	1,403	100.0	36.5	1.2	529	37.7
Nonwhite, 16-24	763	100.0	44.4	7.3	395	51.7
16-17	211	100.0	25.1	12.4	79	37.5
18-19	180	100.0	41.6	10.7	94	52.3
20-24	372	100.0	56.7	2.8	221	59.5
Urban						
Total, 16-24 years	4,067	100.0	29.9	3.7	1,366	33.6
16-17	976	100.0	19.3	6.9	256	26.2
18-19	933	100.0	28.9	5.1	317	34.0
20-24	2,159	100.0	35.1	1.7	793	36.8
Nonwhite, 16-24	834	100.0	42.9	6.7	413	49.6
16-17	212	100.0	23.6	11.9	75	35.5
18-19	191	100.0	39.5	9.8	94	49.3
20-24	432	100.0	53.8	2.7	244	56.5
Male, 16-24	1,946	100.0	29.2	4.7	659	33.9
16-17	484	100.0	17.9	8.6	128	26.5
18-19	438	100.0	28.0	6.4	151	34.4
20-24	1,023	100.0	35.0	2.1	380	37.1
White, 16-24	1,558	100.0	25.6	3.8	457	29.4
16-17	380	100.0	16.7	6.8	89	23.5
18-19	350	100.0	25.0	5.0	105	30.0
20-24	828	100.0	30.0	1.7	263	31.7
Nonwhite, 16-24	388	100.0	43.4	8.6	201	52.0
16-17	104	100.0	22.2	15.1	39	37.3
18-19	88	100.0	39.7	12.2	46	51.9
20-24	195	100.0	56.4	3.4	117	59.8

Continued-

Table 5.--Estimates of school dropouts among persons 16-24 years old by age, sex, color, and residence, South, 1960 (Continued)

(Numbers in thousands and rounded without adjustment to group totals.)

Age, sex, color, and residence	Total in age group		Dropouts			
			Actual	Probable	Estimated total	
			1/ Pct.	2/ Pct.	No.	Pct.
Rural nonfarm						
Total, 16-24 years	2,281	100.0	40.5	5.6	1,050	46.1
16-17	636	100.0	25.6	10.1	227	35.7
18-19	527	100.0	41.0	7.4	255	48.4
20-24	1,118	100.0	48.6	2.2	568	50.8
Nonwhite, 16-24	452	100.0	49.8	11.0	275	60.8
16-17	137	100.0	27.7	18.4	63	46.1
18-19	110	100.0	47.6	14.6	69	62.2
20-24	205	100.0	65.7	4.2	143	69.9
Male, 16-24	1,233	100.0	40.5	6.4	579	46.9
16-17	334	100.0	27.0	12.3	131	39.3
18-19	295	100.0	41.0	8.2	145	49.2
20-24	604	100.0	47.6	2.4	302	50.0
White, 16-24	995	100.0	37.9	5.0	427	42.9
16-17	263	100.0	26.5	9.6	95	36.1
18-19	236	100.0	38.9	6.2	106	45.1
20-24	497	100.0	43.5	1.9	225	45.4
Nonwhite, 16-24	238	100.0	51.3	12.7	152	64.0
16-17	71	100.0	29.2	22.1	37	51.3
18-19	59	100.0	49.4	16.2	39	65.6
20-24	108	100.0	66.9	4.6	77	71.5
Rural farm						
Total, 16-24 years	742	100.0	38.7	8.3	348	47.0
16-17	283	100.0	22.0	11.7	96	33.7
18-19	183	100.0	38.7	10.6	90	49.3
20-24	275	100.0	55.9	3.2	163	59.1
Nonwhite, 16-24	215	100.0	49.3	15.9	140	65.2
16-17	79	100.0	27.1	23.6	40	50.7
18-19	56	100.0	47.3	19.9	37	67.2
20-24	81	100.0	72.3	5.6	63	77.9
Male, 16-24	404	100.0	41.1	9.5	204	50.6
16-17	152	100.0	24.7	13.8	59	38.5
18-19	102	100.0	40.9	11.6	54	52.5
20-24	149	100.0	57.9	3.6	92	61.5
White, 16-24	291	100.0	36.6	6.1	124	42.7
16-17	111	100.0	22.7	8.6	35	31.3
18-19	73	100.0	36.9	7.6	32	44.5
20-24	107	100.0	50.7	2.6	57	53.3
Nonwhite, 16-24	113	100.0	52.8	18.1	80	70.9
16-17	41	100.0	30.1	27.9	24	58.0
18-19	29	100.0	51.0	21.4	21	72.4
20-24	42	100.0	76.1	6.4	35	82.5

1/ Persons with less than 12 years of school completed and not enrolled in school.

2/ Persons two or more years retarded in school, except those enrolled in fourth year of high school.

Unpublished census data and source cited in note to table 1.

Table 6.--Estimated percent of school dropouts among 19 year-old males, South and North and West, by color and residence, 1960

Color and residence	Total		South		North and West	
	Actual ^{1/}	Total ^{2/}	Actual ^{1/}	Total ^{2/}	Actual ^{1/}	Total ^{2/}
Total males, 19 years	29.4	34.5	36.0	42.9	25.7	29.8
Urban	25.5	30.0	29.6	35.4	23.9	27.9
Rural nonfarm	37.3	43.0	42.6	49.7	32.3	36.7
Rural farm	35.4	42.3	45.6	56.9	25.3	29.7
White	27.1	31.3	32.4	37.5	24.5	28.3
Urban	23.4	27.2	23.6	30.4	22.4	26.1
Rural nonfarm	35.1	39.7	39.8	45.1	31.4	35.4
Rural farm	31.8	37.4	41.3	48.9	25.0	29.2
Nonwhite	46.5	58.2	49.8	63.4	41.4	49.8
Urban	42.3	51.8	44.6	55.6	40.1	48.0
Rural nonfarm	53.0	66.6	54.6	69.0	47.8	58.2
Rural farm	55.4	75.3	56.1	76.2	43.6	60.9

^{1/} Persons with less than 12 years of school completed and not enrolled in school.

^{2/} Actual dropouts plus persons two or more years retarded in school, except those enrolled in fourth year of high school.

Unpublished Census data and source cited in note to table 1.

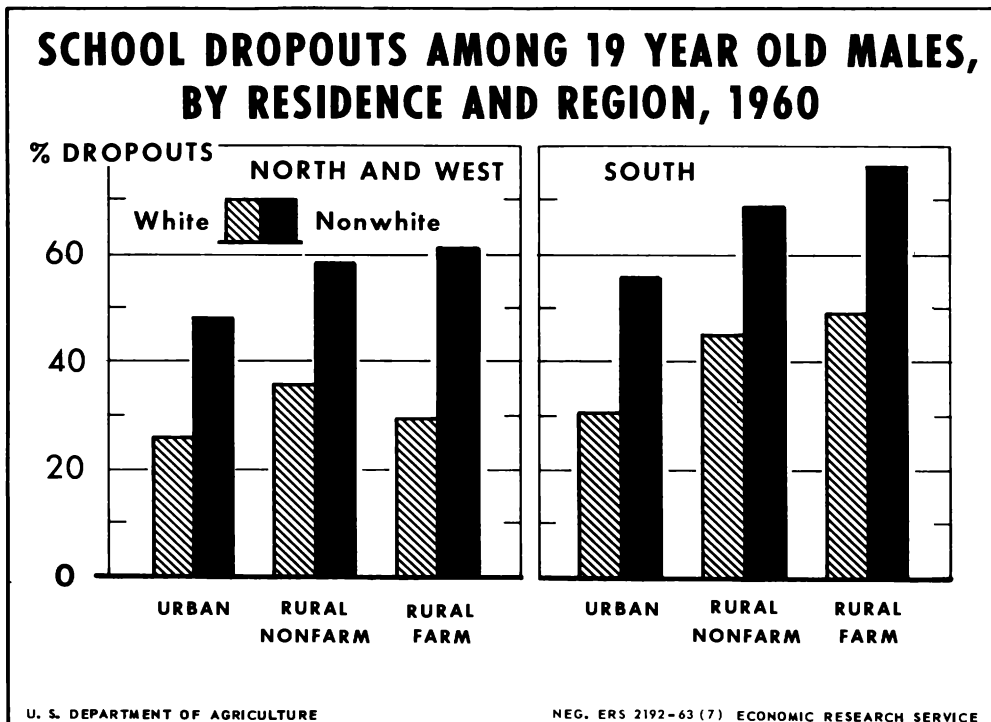


Figure 2

rates was about the same in these regions. For example, to lower nonwhite farm dropout rates to the level of those for whites would require a reduction of about 32 percentage points in the North and West and 27 percentage points in the South. This should not obscure differences between regions -- for instance, the dropout rate for urban nonwhites in the North and West was about the same as that of white rural-farm youths in the South -- 48 and 49 percent, respectively.

The data show that the prevalence of school dropouts is higher in the South than in the rest of the United States, particularly among rural youths and especially among rural nonwhites.

State Dropout Rates

To provide a summary of the prevalence of school dropouts in each State, dropout rates were computed for farm and nonfarm 19 years olds (table 7 and fig. 3). Time and cost considerations precluded the computation of dropout rates by other age groups for each State. Data for such computations are published by the Bureau of the Census for each State. 8/

States in the West North Central Division had lowest dropout rates for all 19-year-olds (23 percent) and States in the East South Central had the highest proportion of school dropouts among 19-year-olds (45 percent). Wide variations among States is shown by the range of dropout rates from a low of 18 percent in Nebraska to a high of 48 percent in South Carolina.

For the 46 States for which farm-nonfarm comparisons are possible, the most frequent pattern (in 23 States) was one in which farm rates were lower than rural-nonfarm but higher than urban dropout rates. In 17 States, farm dropout rates were higher than rural-nonfarm, which in turn were higher than urban rates. In six States (Kansas, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Nebraska, and Ohio) farm dropout rates were lower than either rural-nonfarm or urban.

The lowest dropout rate for 19-year-olds was that for urban youths in North Dakota (14 percent). In contrast, the dropout rates for farm nonwhites were 75 percent in South Carolina and 76 percent in Arizona, both of which have high proportions of nonwhites in the farm population.

Significant influences on high school completion are (1) the level of education received by parents of children and (2) the amount of money spent on education. To determine the relationship between these two factors and State dropout rates, two independent sets of data were used as approxiamte measures: (1) The proportion of the State population 25 years old and over in 1960 with at least a high school education, and (2) the average annual State expenditure per pupil for education in elementary and secondary schools in the school year 1959-60. 9/

The Pearsonian correlation between the complement of the dropout rate for 19-year-olds and the proportion of the adult population with at least a high school education was .647; between the complement of the dropout rate and average annual school expenditures, .447.

These statistical measures -- crude as they are -- lend additional support to the idea that rates of high school completion are associated with the general level of educational attainment and also with the amount of funds devoted to education.

8/ U. S. Bureau of the Census. U. S. Census of Population: 1960 Detailed Characteristics, Final Report PC (1)-(Each State) D, 1962. Tables 101 and 102.

9/ Contained in: Digest of Educational Statistics. Office of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1962. Table 38.

Table 7.--Estimates of school dropouts among persons 19 years old by residence, and color for the South, each State, 1960

(Numbers in thousands and rounded without adjustment to group totals.)

Division and State	Total 19 years old		Total		Urban		Rural nonfarm		Rural farm	
	Number	Percent	Actual 1/ dropouts	Estimated total dropouts	Actual 1/ dropouts	Estimated total dropouts 2/	Actual 1/ dropouts	Estimated total dropouts 2/	Actual 1/ dropouts	Estimated total dropouts 2/
			Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
United States	2,275	100.0	28.6	32.9	25.3	29.0	37.1	42.3	34.3	41.6
New England	129	100.0	23.8	27.4	22.2	25.7	29.9	33.9	34.8	40.4
Maine	12	100.0	30.3	34.7	25.3	28.7	35.9	41.3	42.5	49.9
New Hampshire	8	100.0	23.2	26.3	21.4	24.6	26.0	28.9	31.0	32.9
Vermont	6	100.0	22.3	26.5	14.1	18.1	27.1	31.0	37.4	44.0
Massachusetts	63	100.0	21.1	24.7	20.1	23.7	27.6	31.2	25.0	29.5
Rhode Island	13	100.0	29.6	33.0	29.3	32.9	31.7	33.8	NA	NA
Connecticut	27	100.0	25.1	28.6	23.8	27.1	30.9	35.6	32.8	38.7
Middle Atlantic	375	100.0	26.0	29.7	24.8	28.4	31.0	34.9	32.7	36.8
New York	183	100.0	26.5	30.4	25.7	29.5	31.1	35.6	32.7	38.4
New Jersey	62	100.0	27.0	31.2	26.4	30.6	33.2	37.9	22.7	27.2
Pennsylvania	130	100.0	24.7	27.8	22.3	25.3	30.5	33.9	33.6	36.5
East North Central	427	100.0	25.6	28.9	24.4	27.8	31.8	34.9	22.1	25.8
Ohio	115	100.0	27.3	30.8	25.6	29.2	34.5	37.5	22.7	26.9
Indiana	60	100.0	26.8	30.1	26.1	29.2	29.6	33.0	23.7	27.7
Illinois	116	100.0	26.7	30.2	26.3	29.9	31.8	34.8	21.4	24.7
Michigan	90	100.0	24.8	28.1	23.0	26.3	33.0	36.2	19.6	23.5
Wisconsin	46	100.0	18.6	21.0	16.5	18.7	24.3	26.6	22.7	25.8
West North Central	191	100.0	20.2	23.0	17.8	20.2	27.0	30.4	22.1	25.7
Minnesota	42	100.0	16.4	18.6	13.5	15.4	24.9	27.6	23.0	26.2
Iowa	34	100.0	16.7	19.1	15.0	17.0	24.1	27.2	16.3	19.6
Missouri	54	100.0	26.9	30.2	24.4	27.4	33.7	37.1	30.1	35.0
North Dakota	9	100.0	19.8	23.8	10.3	13.8	29.2	33.6	32.0	37.0
South Dakota	8	100.0	20.0	23.5	13.4	15.6	28.8	35.0	27.3	31.1
Nebraska	17	100.0	15.6	17.8	14.3	16.1	21.6	25.4	12.9	15.2
Kansas	28	100.0	20.1	22.8	20.1	22.8	21.8	24.5	14.9	17.8

Continued-

Table 7.--Estimates of school dropouts among persons 19 years old by residence, and color for the South, each State, 1960 (Continued)

(Numbers in thousands and rounded without adjustment to group totals.)

Division and State	Total 19 years old		Total		Urban		Rural nonfarm		Rural farm	
			Actual ^{1/} dropouts	Estimated total dropouts ^{2/}	Actual ^{1/} dropouts	Estimated total dropouts ^{2/}	Actual ^{1/} dropouts	Estimated total dropouts ^{2/}	Actual ^{1/} dropouts	Estimated total dropouts ^{2/}
			Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
South Atlantic	366	100.0	37.1	42.5	31.1	35.7	43.5	49.1	45.8	55.1
White	283	100.0	33.2	37.1	27.2	30.7	NA	NA	NA	NA
Nonwhite	83	100.0	50.3	60.9	45.4	54.0	NA	NA	NA	NA
Delaware	5	100.0	30.1	33.0	23.8	26.2	42.0	45.4	33.9	39.8
White	4	100.0	25.4	28.0	18.6	20.8	NA	NA	NA	NA
Nonwhite	1	100.0	56.4	60.8	59.5	62.9	NA	NA	NA	NA
Maryland	39	100.0	33.3	36.8	32.4	36.2	34.7	37.1	38.7	43.4
White	32	100.0	29.9	32.3	28.6	31.2	32.0	33.7	NA	NA
Nonwhite	7	100.0	48.7	56.9	48.4	57.3	49.1	55.1	NA	NA
District of Columbia	12	100.0	26.5	30.2	26.5	30.2	NA	NA	NA	NA
White	6	100.0	15.3	16.8	15.3	16.8	NA	NA	NA	NA
Nonwhite	5	100.0	39.9	47.1	39.9	47.1	NA	NA	NA	NA
Virginia	63	100.0	38.2	42.9	31.9	35.7	47.1	52.6	48.6	56.6
White	52	100.0	35.3	39.2	29.8	32.9	43.9	48.6	44.7	52.2
Nonwhite	12	100.0	50.8	59.2	42.9	50.8	58.7	67.4	59.3	68.6
West Virginia	24	100.0	35.3	40.8	22.0	26.2	44.6	51.2	40.9	46.0
White	23	100.0	35.4	40.7	21.9	26.1	44.6	50.8	NA	NA
Nonwhite	1	100.0	33.2	42.7	22.4	26.6	44.7	60.0	NA	NA
North Carolina	74	100.0	37.2	42.5	27.8	31.9	42.7	47.8	44.2	52.6
White	56	100.0	34.3	37.9	24.7	27.8	40.8	44.5	38.3	43.3
Nonwhite	18	100.0	46.2	56.4	37.2	44.3	50.3	61.4	53.5	67.1
South Carolina	41	100.0	40.8	47.9	34.4	39.8	43.1	50.3	52.1	63.9
White	27	100.0	34.6	38.8	29.3	33.6	38.1	42.0	42.9	48.3
Nonwhite	13	100.0	53.4	66.5	49.0	57.6	53.8	68.3	58.5	74.8
Georgia	58	100.0	38.9	45.8	32.6	38.4	45.9	52.7	46.4	59.6
White	41	100.0	33.5	37.9	27.3	31.3	41.4	45.6	35.4	43.2
Nonwhite	17	100.0	51.6	64.4	44.9	54.9	58.7	73.0	61.0	81.3

Continued-

Table 7.--Estimates of school dropouts among persons 19 years old by residence, and color for the South, each State, 1960 (Continued)

(Numbers in thousands and rounded without adjustment to group totals.)

Division and State	Total 19 years old:		Total		Urban		Rural nonfarm		Rural farm	
	Number	Percent	Actual 1/:	Estimated	Actual 1/:	Estimated	Actual 1/:	Estimated	Actual 1/:	Estimated
			dropouts	total	dropouts	total	dropouts	total	dropouts	total
		Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
South Atlantic (cont'd)										
Florida	61	100.0	35.3	40.5	32.1	37.3	43.7	48.9	38.2	45.1
White	48	100.0	30.7	34.9	26.6	30.7	40.5	44.6	NA	NA
Nonwhite	13	100.0	52.6	61.8	50.9	59.8	58.4	68.6	NA	NA
East South Central										
White	176	100.0	37.4	44.9	29.0	34.6	45.4	53.5	45.1	57.0
Nonwhite	136	100.0	46.1	62.3	41.1	53.2	51.0	68.2	NA	NA
Kentucky	45	100.0	41.7	47.3	30.3	34.7	50.9	57.1	49.0	56.0
White	42	100.0	41.3	46.7	29.0	32.8	50.8	57.2	NA	NA
Nonwhite	3	100.0	46.2	54.2	42.0	51.7	51.9	55.7	NA	NA
Tennessee	52	100.0	36.0	41.5	28.2	33.7	43.8	48.4	45.2	52.3
White	44	100.0	34.6	38.8	25.3	28.9	43.0	47.3	43.3	49.3
Nonwhite	8	100.0	44.0	56.1	39.1	51.7	53.5	62.1	57.7	71.9
Alabama	46	100.0	37.2	44.3	30.5	35.8	47.1	56.6	42.8	52.6
White	32	100.0	33.3	38.2	26.1	29.6	44.4	51.6	38.7	44.3
Nonwhite	15	100.0	45.7	57.6	40.4	49.6	53.2	67.7	50.3	67.7
Mississippi	34	100.0	34.1	47.8	25.8	33.9	37.6	51.5	43.2	66.0
White	20	100.0	24.2	29.9	17.4	21.1	30.1	36.8	32.0	41.6
Nonwhite	14	100.0	47.8	72.5	44.7	62.8	48.1	72.2	50.1	81.1
West South Central										
White	235	100.0	32.8	38.3	29.9	34.4	40.7	48.2	37.0	47.1
Nonwhite	195	100.0	30.4	34.7	27.8	31.5	38.5	44.1	NA	NA
Arkansas	41	100.0	43.9	55.3	41.4	50.4	48.3	62.2	NA	NA
White	24	100.0	35.0	41.8	27.5	31.5	43.1	51.9	41.0	51.8
Nonwhite	18	100.0	31.2	35.9	23.5	25.8	39.3	46.6	38.3	45.3
Nonwhite	5	100.0	48.9	63.0	43.6	54.4	55.7	69.8	48.6	70.0

Continued-

Table 7.--Estimates of school dropouts among persons 19 years old by residence, and color for the South, each State, 1960 (Continued)

(Numbers in thousands and rounded without adjustment to group totals.)

Division and State	Total 19 years old:		Actual ^{1/} dropouts:		Estimated total:		Actual ^{1/} dropouts:		Estimated total:		Actual ^{2/} dropouts:		Estimated total:	
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Louisiana	45	100.0	35.3	43.3	30.0	36.3	45.8	56.2	43.3	57.5				
White	30	100.0	29.5	34.2	24.6	28.6	41.4	47.2	34.5	42.0				
Nonwhite	16	100.0	46.2	60.4	41.7	52.8	53.1	71.1	52.3	73.4				
Oklahoma	32	100.0	24.1	28.0	21.1	23.6	31.9	37.9	22.5	30.6				
White	29	100.0	22.9	26.3	19.8	22.1	31.5	36.4	NA	NA				
Nonwhite	3	100.0	35.5	44.9	36.6	42.6	34.0	46.9	NA	NA				
Texas	135	100.0	33.6	38.5	31.9	36.3	40.3	46.2	37.2	45.7				
White	118	100.0	32.4	36.8	30.6	34.6	39.8	45.1	36.9	44.2				
Nonwhite	17	100.0	41.6	50.0	41.4	49.0	42.9	51.7	39.2	55.8				
Mountain	92	100.0	25.3	30.0	22.3	25.7	33.8	41.5	28.5	36.6				
Montana	8	100.0	21.1	25.1	16.8	19.6	29.2	34.4	23.7	30.9				
Idaho	9	100.0	21.1	25.3	17.7	20.8	29.9	35.7	18.2	23.9				
Wyoming	4	100.0	23.9	28.0	21.0	23.5	29.0	36.7	26.7	30.7				
Colorado	24	100.0	21.7	25.3	19.1	22.4	31.9	36.7	22.3	25.4				
New Mexico	13	100.0	34.5	41.7	30.8	35.4	41.4	53.1	37.5	49.1				
Arizona	18	100.0	33.7	40.5	30.6	35.0	40.8	52.6	52.7	76.4				
Utah	14	100.0	16.8	19.6	15.2	17.8	23.0	27.2	26.3	29.3				
Nevada	3	100.0	29.2	32.6	27.1	29.4	32.4	37.9	NA	NA				
Pacific	272	100.0	25.8	28.9	23.6	26.7	34.4	37.7	26.8	29.9				
Washington	35	100.0	21.7	24.7	18.3	21.0	30.0	33.9	22.0	25.6				
Oregon	21	100.0	19.0	21.1	14.7	16.6	30.1	32.8	19.9	22.5				
California	200	100.0	26.8	30.0	25.0	28.2	35.6	38.7	31.1	34.2				
Alaska	5	100.0	37.6	42.2	34.6	39.4	38.4	43.0	NA	NA				
Hawaii	12	100.0	28.1	31.4	23.3	26.6	38.1	41.4	NA	NA				

NA Not computed where color detail not shown or base is less than 200. District of Columbia completely urban in 1960.

^{1/} Persons with less than 12 years of school completed and not enrolled in school.

^{2/} Includes persons two or more years retarded in school, except those enrolled in fourth year of high school, plus actual dropouts.

U. S. Bureau of Census. U. S. Census of Population: 1960. Detailed Characteristics. (Each State). Final Report Pc (1)-D. Tables 101 and 102.

PERCENT OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS AMONG 19 YEAR OLDS, BY STATE, 1960

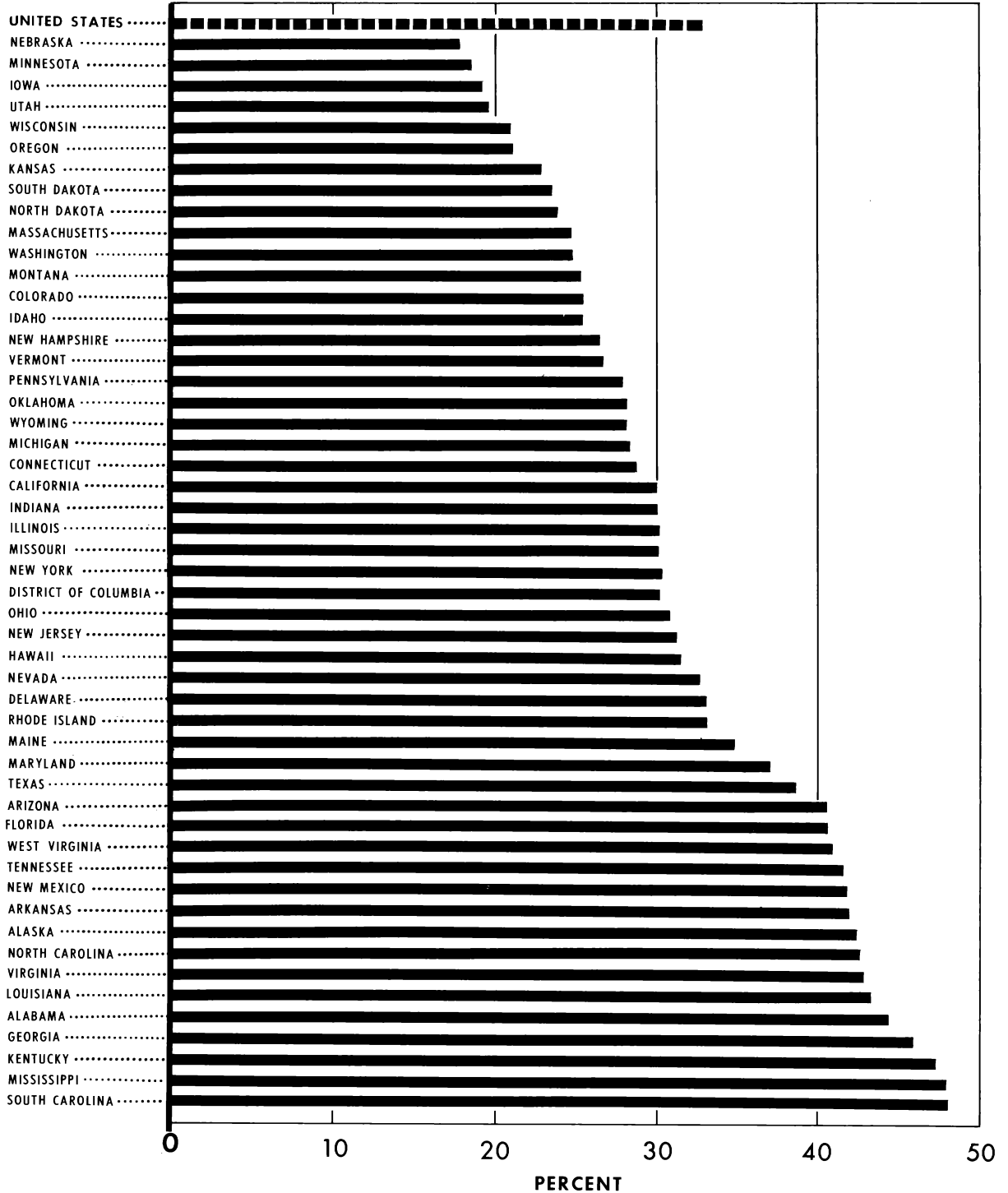


Figure 3

SOME IMPLICATIONS

In assessing the implications of this report, the limitations of the data should be kept in mind.

It was not possible to consider systematically factors such as the quality, course content, adequacy of staff and facilities, and school policies which influence a young person's educational career. These vary widely throughout the United States. Neither was it possible to consider factors such as the social and economic position of the youth's family or other influences on educational attainment.

Included among school dropouts are some youths who will return to school to complete their education; some who lack the ability to complete a high school education; and some whose abilities may not be developed in a traditional school environment, e.g., the exceptionally talented pupil who can benefit little from the usual high school curriculum. Also included are youths who have never attended school, those who left school after only a few years, and those who completed 11 years of school. Many of the latter are as able as those who completed an additional year of high school. In short, school dropouts form a heterogeneous category and make hazardous any unqualified generalizations.

These comments are not meant to deny the importance to most youths of a level of education equal to that of most persons their own age -- or at least the possession of a diploma attesting to their educational attainment. They are intended only to call attention to some of the factors which a statistical description cannot reveal, but which may be of considerable importance to the individual student. These limitations should be kept in mind when considering the following implications.

1. The growth in the size of the school-age population has important implications for the future number of school dropouts. By 1970, there will be about 56.4 million persons 14-24 years old in the United States. If the dropout rate for 14-24-year-olds remains at the 1960 level, about 12.9 million of these persons will fail to complete high school-- and this estimate does not include the number retarded in school who will fail to complete high school. If the 14-24-year-old dropout rate declines as much between 1960 and 1970 as between 1950 and 1960 (29 percent), then the number of actual dropouts would be about 9 million. The total number of young adults in the Nation is growing rapidly. As a result, if the number of dropouts is not to increase over the 1960 level, the dropout rate would have to be reduced to 10.8 percent -- a reduction of more than 50 percent.

2. The implications of high nonwhite dropout rates assume added significance when the relationship between educational attainment and income is considered. Census data show that nonwhite incomes are consistently lower than white incomes within each educational category. ^{10/} For example, incomes of nonwhite males with a year or more of college were about equal to those of white males with a grade school education -- about \$4,000 in 1959. Among persons with some college education, nonwhite incomes were about two-thirds as high as those of whites. In the farm population, the median income of nonwhite males who had completed 1-3 years of college was about the same (\$2,000) as whites who had completed

^{10/} U. S. Bureau of the Census, U. S. Census of Population: 1960, Detailed Characteristics, United States Summary, Final Report PC (1)-ID, Table 223.

between 5-7 years of school. Thus, even nonwhites with a college background receive comparatively low incomes. It would appear then that lack of education is a greater handicap to the nonwhite dropout than to the white dropout.

3. Most discussions of school dropout rates emphasize the economic loss resulting from the failure of young persons to complete their secondary education. To provide dropouts with additional years of school would require a substantial expenditure. To illustrate: A conservative estimate of the cost of providing a high school education to school dropouts is one that assumes that only those dropouts 14-19 years old and with at least one year of high school completed are to be provided with the additional schooling required for high school graduation. Presumably, these youths have demonstrated some ability to do high school level work and are at an age when return to school is a realistic possibility. In 1960, there were about 1.5 million youths in this category. At the average annual per pupil expenditure in the United States in 1960 (about \$472), about \$1.4 billion would be required to provide such additional schooling; about 55,000 additional classrooms would be required if the average size of class in the United States (28.2 pupils per room) were to be maintained. 11/

Even though the assumption that the average cost of a year's schooling would be spent for each student may be unrealistic (due to economies of scale, for example), the illustration is suggestive of the resources required to provide additional schooling for the dropouts. The cost of providing additional schooling may be more than offset by the benefits of education to the individual and society in the form of higher incomes, increased knowledge and skill of the labor force, and reductions in rates of unemployment and dependency.

4. The high nonwhite dropout rates of 1950 -- and probably of earlier years as well -- have had an important effect on the employment situation of nonwhite workers today. Almost all of the 2.7 million nonwhite male dropouts who were 20-24 in 1950 are now in the labor force. The comparatively high rates of unemployment among nonwhites may be due, in part, to the fact that such a high proportion of nonwhites failed to complete high school and thus are at a competitive disadvantage in a labor market where the number of unskilled jobs is declining.

If the goal of education in the United States is to assure that youths capable of benefiting from high school experience actually receive it, then much remains to be accomplished. Despite substantial reductions in dropout rates, rates remain high in the rural and nonwhite segments of the population. Education in the United States represents a substantial enterprise requiring a physical plant, adequate facilities, trained and competent staff, efficient administration, and a program for continued improvement. The costs of providing these resources to a large population are substantial; costs of failure to provide them may be much greater.

11/ For data on school expenditures, see Digest of Educational Statistics, op. cit., table 38. Average number of pupils per room estimated from tables 17 and 29.

DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

Age of person is age on his last birthday.

Color refers to white and nonwhite groups. Persons designated as nonwhite include Negroes, Indians, Japanese, Chinese, Filipino and other nonwhite races. In 1960, 92 percent of all nonwhites were Negroes.

Residence is designated as urban, rural-farm, or rural-nonfarm. In general, the urban population comprises all persons living in urbanized areas and in places of 2,500 inhabitants or more outside urbanized areas. In the 1960 Census, the urban population comprised all persons living in (a) places of 2,500 inhabitants or more incorporated as cities, boroughs, villages, and towns (except towns in New England, New York, and Wisconsin); (b) the densely settled urban fringe, whether incorporated or unincorporated, of urbanized areas; (c) towns in New England and townships in New Jersey and Pennsylvania which contained no incorporated municipalities as subdivisions and had either 25,000 inhabitants or more or a population of 2,500 to 25,000 and a density of 1,500 persons or more per square mile; (d) counties in States other than the New England States, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania that had no incorporated municipalities within their boundaries and had a density of 1,500 persons or more per square mile; and (e) unincorporated places of 2,500 inhabitants or more.

This definition of urban is substantially the same as that used in 1950; the major difference is the designation in 1960 of urban towns in New England and of urban townships in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

The rural population is divided into the rural-farm and the rural-nonfarm. In 1960, places of 10 or more acres were counted as farms if sales of farm products amounted to \$50 or more in 1959. Places of less than 10 acres were counted as farms if sales of farm products amounted to at least \$250 in 1959. In 1950, the respondent's answer to the question "Is this house on a farm or ranch?" determined whether the residents would be classified as rural-farm or rural-nonfarm.

In both 1950 and 1960 persons living in group quarters on institutional grounds, in summer camps or motels were classified as nonfarm residents; persons in households paying cash rent for a house and yard only which did not include land used for farming were counted as nonfarm. In 1960, contrary to the practice in 1950, no effort was made to identify farm population in urban areas.

The more restrictive definition of farm residence was adopted in 1960 to make it more consistent with the definition used in the 1959 Census of Agriculture. It excludes persons living on places considered farms by the occupants but from which agricultural products are not sold or the sales are below the specified minimum.

It was not possible to assess the effects on educational data which may have resulted from the use of a more restrictive definition of farm residence in 1960 than in 1950. In general, the people removed from the farm population by the change in definition had little or no dependence on agriculture.

Region refers to the South (Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas and the District of Columbia) and North and West (all other States). In 1960, but not in 1950, Alaska and Hawaii were included in the North and West.

Educational attainment and school enrollment. Information on highest grade of school completed and on school enrollment was obtained for a 25 percent sample of the population 5-34 years old in 1960 and for a 20 percent sample of persons 5-29 years old in 1950. In both censuses, the questions referred to progress or enrollment in regular schools, defined as those public, private, or parochial schools which offer

formal education that may advance a persons toward an elementary school certificate or a high school diploma. Nursery schools, specialized vocational, trade, or business schools were not regarded as regular schools.

The number of persons in each category of highest grade of school completed for 1950 and 1960 is the total of persons who reported that they had attended and finished the indicated grade and those who had attended the next higher grade but had not finished the grade.

Persons were counted as enrolled in school in 1960 if they were reported as attending or as being enrolled in a regular school at any time between February 1, 1960, and the time of the enumeration in April, 1960. Persons who had enrolled but had not actually attended were counted as enrolled in school. The same definition applied in 1950.

Actual dropouts are persons not enrolled in school who had completed less than 12 years of school or its equivalent.

Probable dropouts are persons enrolled in school in a grade two or more years below the level expected for their age. Estimates of probable dropouts were computed only for persons 16-24 years old and exclude persons enrolled in the 12th year of school even though they were scholastically retarded two or more years. Included among the probable dropouts are 16-year-olds in grades 1-8; 17-year-olds in grades 1-9; 18-year-olds in grades 1-10; and 19-24-year-olds in grades 1-11.

Estimated total dropouts is the total of actual dropouts and probable dropouts. Thus, all persons not enrolled in school and not high school graduates and persons enrolled in a grade (other than the 12th grade in high school) which was two or more grades below the level expected for their age are considered as school dropouts.

Numbers shown in this report were rounded to the nearest thousand without adjustment to group totals. Percentages were rounded independently and do not always add to 100.0 percent.

Comparability with other estimates. Estimates of school dropouts most nearly comparable to the estimates in this report are those based on the October, 1960, Current Population Survey (CPS) in which estimates of actual dropouts (persons who had not completed high school and were not enrolled in school) are limited to males 16-24 and 20-24 years old. According to the CPS (12) about 32 percent of males in each age group were school dropouts. Data in this report show that 28 percent of males 16-24 and 34 percent of males 20-24 years old were actual dropouts. Differences between estimates based on the CPS and those based on the decennial census are due, in part, to sampling variability, to the exclusion from the CPS of military and institutional populations (included in the decennial census), and to differences in the reference period of the CPS (October, 1960) and the Census (April, 1960). Although the two estimates are at about the same level, census data consistently show higher dropout rates for persons 20-24 than for persons 16-24, whereas the CPS estimate is about the same for both age groups. It is not known whether this discrepancy arises from differences in concepts and methods cited above or from other sources.

Estimates of school retention rates published by the Office of Education comprise the major source of related but not strictly comparable data. These estimates are based on the number of persons enrolled in successive grades in successive years beginning with enrollment in the ninth grade. The information is reported by public school systems and is adjusted by the U. S. Office of Education to include estimates of enrollment in nonpublic schools.

Because of differences in concepts and reporting, estimates of school retention rates are not comparable with estimates of dropouts shown in this report. The Office of Education estimates do provide, however, an approximation of the proportion of persons in the ninth grade graduating from high school in the year expected.

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