1955


Tarr, John W
Boston University

http://hdl.handle.net/2144/11339
Boston University
Boston University
School of Education

Thesis
An Evaluation of a Group of Counseled Veterans
Attending School Under P. L. 550

Submitted by
John W. Tarr
(A. B., Colby College, Maine, 1939)

In partial fulfillment of requirements for the
degree of Master of Education

1955
Readers

First Reader:

Dugald S. Arbuckle, Ph. D.
Professor of Education

Second Reader:

James F. Baker, Ed. D.
Associate Professor of Education
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I Statement of the Problem and Purpose of the Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of the Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purposes of the Study</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope of the Study</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II Review of the Literature and Previous Studies</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey of Previous Studies</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The New G. I. Bill</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III Methods of Procedure and Sources of Data</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting the Groups</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics of the Groups</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Schools Represented</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling the Variables</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phases of the Evaluation</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV Summary and Conclusion</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age Level of Counseled and Non-Counseled Groups</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Education Completed Prior to Entrance into School under P. L. 550</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Dependency Status at Time of Entrance into School</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Distribution of Students in the Schools Represented</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Training Status of Counseled Group</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Training Status of Non-Counseled Group</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Comparison Between Groups of Those Who Remained in and Those Who Withdrew from School</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Tabulated Results of the Questionnaire</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter I

Statement of the Problem and Purpose of the Study

1. Background of the Study

History of the Veterans Administration Counseling Program — On March 24, 1943 when the 78th Congress passed Public Law 16 and later on June 22, 1944 when the same Congress approved Public Law 346, the U. S. Government initiated one of the largest organized counseling and guidance programs ever to be attempted in its history. These laws became the responsibility of the Veterans Administration to administer specifically for the rehabilitation and readjustment of a deserving group of our citizens - the veterans of World War II.

Public Law 16, referred to as the Disabled Veterans Vocational Rehabilitation Act, was enacted for the purpose of aiding disabled veterans in becoming retrained or re-skilled in some suitable occupation. This law was set-up in such a manner that disabled veterans applying for rehabilitation were furnished vocational counseling in order for them to get a better appraisal of themselves. Those found to be in need of rehabilitation were given assistance in locating a suitable educational or training opportunity. In other words, all veterans entering training under Public Law 16 received vocational counseling.
Public Law 346, which was commonly referred to as the G. I. Bill, was passed with the intention of allowing veterans to pursue education and training in order to achieve what they might have achieved had they not been in the military service. This law did not make counseling mandatory but the opportunity to apply for vocational guidance was available on a voluntary basis. Later amendments to this law made counseling mandatory in certain cases where veterans requested more than one change of course or made unsatisfactory progress in training. Although there were thousands of eligible veterans who did apply for and receive counseling under the provisions of the G. I. Bill there were many more who entered training without first requesting the counseling services. Concerning this Nelson states:

"There has never been any concerted effort on the part of either the VA or of other agencies to encourage veterans to take advantage of available guidance services. There are thousands of ill placed veterans in our colleges, professional and technical schools, and in business establishments, who should be directed to other places of training."

Even though there has been no "concerted" effort on the part of the VA or other agencies to encourage counseling, it appears that within the past few years there has been more awareness of the guidance program especially since the enactment of the "Korean G. I. Bill".

The New Educational and Vocational Assistance Act

On June 27, 1950 the United States became officially involved in hostilities which have been politely referred to as the "Korean Conflict". With the entry of U. S. troops in the fighting, many more young men were selected for military service. In order to follow a pattern similar to the help given World War II veterans, Congress extended Public Law 16 to the disabled veterans of the Korean Conflict and also passed a new G. I. Bill. This new bill, which provides educational and vocational assistance, is known as Public Law 550. It became a law in July 1952 and was designed to be put into effect on August 20, 1952. Again counseling was made voluntary for eligible applicants but they were made more aware of the service by finding this question on their application blanks:

"Do you wish to have educational or vocational counseling from the VA before you decide on your program?  
Yes ( )  No ( )

---

The Counseling Program at the Veterans Administration Center, Togus, Maine. - - In many states the V. A. counseling program is carried out both by counselors in the regional offices and the appraisers in the guidance centers. Supervision of procedures comes from regional office personnel but certain educational institutions and other agencies contract with the V. A. to furnish counseling to eligible veterans on a fee basis. The regional office at the V. A. Center, Togus, Maine has been one of the very few in the country to handle all cases of counseling within its jurisdiction entirely by the regional office counseling personnel. In the past some of the guidance work was done in the outlying districts in the subregional offices. At the present time, however, all V. A. counseling under the above-mentioned public laws is the responsibility of the personnel in the Counseling Section, Vocational Rehabilitation and Education Division at Togus.

The professional staff presently consists of three counselors. They have all had over nine years experience in the V. A. Counseling Program. Each counselor handles all types of cases, that is, both the disabled veterans applying for rehabilitation and the non-disabled clients who are seeking counseling in connection with their G. I. Bill. One counselor has earned a Ph. D. in psychology and the other two counselors are currently
participating in the graduate study program for counseling personnel. In addition to maintaining close cooperation with adjunct services in the V. A. such as Medical Services, Social Service, Education and Training and Educational Benefits Section, the staff personnel of the counseling program work with cooperating agencies outside the V. A. who are interested in the welfare of veterans.

2. Purposes of the Study

Statement of the Problem -- This is a follow-up study of a group of 100 veterans who have received counseling prior to entering school and a group of 100 veteran students who have not received counseling before initiating their education. The two groups are compared with respect to their ability to remain in training after once initiating a course and their success in their respective educational programs. The purpose of the study is to determine to what extent the V. A. Counseling Program aids veterans in their success in training as compared with those who do not receive counseling before initiating their courses.
Values of the Study -- The merits of the study are reflected in the following statement:

"The greatest weakness of most agencies is the failure to follow up the results of the service. Guidance practices will always be questioned until sufficient objective evidence of their value is on record". 1

In keeping with the recommendation set forth in this statement, this study is an evaluation of the effectiveness of a veterans' guidance program. It may also serve to identify guidance and counseling problems for further research and study.

3. Scope of the Study

The Study Group -- By random sampling a group of 200 veterans was chosen who had entered educational institutions at least six months prior to the initiation of this study. In many cases they had been in training a year or more. Only those veterans in training under the "New G. I. Bill", P. L. 550, were selected. The group was divided equally into (1) those who had not received counseling prior to entering training and (2) those who had received counseling prior to entering a program of training.

---

The sample has been further limited to those clients who received counseling at the V. A. Center, Togus, Maine and to those who have entered training within that regional territory.
Chapter II

Review of the Literature and Previous Studies

1. Survey of Previous Studies

Lack of Studies on a National Scale - - At the end of World War II with so many thousands of veterans going through a counseling program and entering some form of education or training, there was an opportunity for a large scale study evaluating veterans' guidance that had never before existed. A careful survey of the literature in the field fails to reveal the results of any such research. However, the reason for this has been explained by Ward when he comments on a proposed study which never materialized:

"These proposed studies were ready, scheduled for the first six months of 1947, but the research program for evaluation of counseling through special studies had to be abandoned because it would require too much time to complete them. - - - - This means that no one is making an evaluation of the counseling of veterans on a national scale." 1

Concerning this failure to make these proposed studies, Long laments:

"Here was an unprecedented opportunity to obtain an evaluation of counseling methods. A few studies have been made, but there probably will never be a full scale appraisal. It is somewhat discouraging to consider how much valuable information, which might have been made generally available, has perhaps been lost because of failure to make a relatively small expenditure." ¹

Long further points out that up until January 1952 only two-tenths of 1 per cent of the total cost of the G. I. Training Program had been spent by the counseling service. He raised the question of how much more of the remaining 99.8 per cent might have been saved if more counseling had been utilized.

Along this same line Gaudet is quite critical of the lack of published research reports on the V. A. Guidance Program. He mentions several short reports published in individual localities. He concluded that the program has not only been a saving in dollars and cents but also has been a help to morale and human welfare.²

Probably one of the largest studies accomplished of a follow-up nature was that known as the Carmichael Study.

---


In a follow-up study of disabled veterans in the New England States, it was discovered that 84 per cent of the rehabilitated veterans expressed a belief that counseling had been of real benefit to them.¹

**Local and Small Scale Studies**

Although there have not been any large scale studies on a national basis, the literature revealed several evaluations and follow-up studies that have been carried on in regional areas, colleges and other guidance agencies.

In 1947 in the V. A. Regional Office, Philadelphia, a study was completed by Dech and Reeves which reported quite favorable findings. They compared a group of 125 counseled veterans with a group of 125 non-counseled veterans all of whom entered training under P. L. 346. It was discovered that the non-counseled group terminated (dropped out, discontinued or interrupted) their training by a ratio of 2 to 1 for the counseled group.²

A similar ratio was found in a study conducted by Long and Hill. In studying college freshmen "drop-outs" it


was discovered that a much smaller percentage of veterans left school than did the non-veteran group (20 per cent vs 34 per cent). The veterans had received vocational advisement in the V. A. Counseling Program.¹

A study including a fairly large sampling of veterans was made by Gideonse. He made a follow-up of 2396 veterans who attended Brooklyn College from 1946 - 1949. His study indicated a slight superiority in the achievement of veterans over non-veterans. He concluded that significant reasons for this difference were:

(1) Veterans were slightly older and more mature
(2) Special counseling services were available to veterans ²

Along this same idea of age and maturity being significant in scholastic achievement, Owens and Owens studied a group of World War II veterans and discovered a relationship between age and success in school. The older veterans were the better achievers.³

---


At the University of Georgia a study was made comparing disabled and non-disabled veterans attending college level courses. Among some of the facts revealed by the study are the following:

1. Disabled veterans were significantly older and a larger proportion were married.
2. The difference between the two groups in measured scholastic aptitude was inconsistent and not significant.
3. There was a slight but statistically unreliable tendency for disabled veterans to earn higher grades.

In this Georgia Study it appears that, although the measured scholastic aptitude of the two groups is the same, the disabled group seems to do slightly better in academic achievement. One might assume that it may be due to the more mature and settled characteristics of the older married group.

At Boston University in 1946 a study was made by Kvaraceus and Baker comparing the achievement of veterans with non-veterans in one particular required course. This comparison was made at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

---

levels. In summarizing the study they state:

"In both instances the trend of achievement scores favors the service-student groups. These data suggest that the veteran student at Boston University is doing work equivalent to and perhaps better than his nonveteran classmate." 1

It would have been very interesting if the authors of that study had gone a little further to determine whether or not either of the groups had received counseling prior to entering the course.

Attitudes Toward Guidance — Generally speaking there is an indication that there is a favorable attitude toward guidance and counseling. Although the layman and misinformed person often get confused and erroneous ideas concerning the functions of a guidance worker, there has been a rapid growth of these services in the past few years. Many public and private schools are adding guidance departments to their systems. Large businesses and industrial establishments have revamped their personnel departments to include counseling services for adjustment problems as well as for the purpose of selecting workers.

Actually not much had been done in the field of guidance and counseling on a large scale until World War II and more specifically until the V. A. set up its program near the end of the war.

Many of the V. A. Guidance Centers have been located in colleges and universities throughout the country. Some of these schools previously had administered a similar program of their own while others had no organized guidance program. That a rather healthy attitude exists toward these guidance offices is evidenced by the study conducted by Mitchell Dreese in February 1949. In sampling the attitude of colleges toward guidance it was found that 82 per cent (126 out of 154) planned to keep their guidance centers operating after the V. A. withdrew.¹

What about the client himself? How does he feel about a counseling program? In the previously mentioned Carmichael Study it was found that 84 per cent of a sampled group of disabled veterans felt that counseling definitely helped them.² In a study of questionnaires sent out in 1946-1947, Entwisle discovered that 70 per cent of the clients were in favor of counseling and the other 30 per cent felt that counseling had been of little or no help to them.³

---

² Carmichael, op. cit., p. 10.
At the Stevens Institute of Technology, Gaudet and others made a sampling of veterans' attitudes toward vocational guidance. Of the group they studied it was found that in answer to this question, "Do you feel that your guidance and counseling was a worthwhile experience?", there were 95 per cent who answered in the affirmative and the remaining 5 per cent answered "no" or "doubtful". In their summary the authors say:

"The Stevens study suggests that in spite of limitations in time and money the veterans believed that they had profited from the VA program of educational and vocational guidance."¹

Barnette found quite similar ratios in his study which is summarized in part by this statement.

"The reactions to counseling of 890 veterans were studied by means of replies to items on a mail questionnaire together with spontaneous comments. The counselor suggestions were found to be genuinely helpful by 75 per cent of the group; 91 per cent reported the staff attitude a sympathetic one. Counseling served to increase the self-confidence of many."²

---


2. The New G. I. Bill

Provisions -- In July 1952 when the 82nd Congress passed Public Law 550 a new G. I. Bill was handed to the Veterans Administration to put into effect. Although not drastically different from the World War II education and training program, this new law had some basic deviations. It is more strict in the sense that veterans are not allowed to change courses of training as many times. It also requires an applicant to name a definite program of training and/or a vocational objective before he can obtain a Certificate for Training. If the applicant is unable to arrive at a definite decision he may request counseling from the V. A. before committing himself to a program. As far as that goes any eligible veteran may apply for vocational counseling by answering "Yes" to Question 14 on V. A. Form 7-1990.1

In other words, when the younger, less mature veteran of the Korean Conflict is discharged from military service, counseling is available to him and he is made aware of it when he files an application for education or training.

---

1. V. A. Form, 7-1990, op. cit., p. 3.
Anderson feels that there is a need for this counseling program when he says,

"As veterans gradually return to civilian life and resume their education, counselors must be prepared to help them clarify their goals and select courses carefully".\(^1\)

When Anderson uses the term "counselors" he may not only have in mind those within the V. A. Program but also those in private agencies, industry and educational institutions. Concerning the problems faced by the counselors in the V. A. Program, the Director of Counseling Services for the entire Veterans Administration states,

"It will be recognized that the emphasis in the new law upon the veterans selecting a definite objective, and the limitation to only one change in objective and program, set the stage for an acid test of vocational counseling. Without doubt, both the assistance vocational counseling is able to provide and the necessary limitations of vocational counseling in terms of validity of prediction will be dramatized as never before. The V. A. is not unmindful of this".\(^2\)

The writer, being a member of the V. A. Counseling Staff, is also not unmindful of this fact. He feels a certain responsibility in aiding in the investigation of the problem of counseling effectiveness.

---


3. Summary

In reviewing the literature and research pertaining to studies of a follow-up nature concerning World War II veterans and non-veteran groups, the following points have been noted:

(1) There seems to be a very favorable attitude toward counseling programs.

(2) The older more mature student generally achieves at a higher level than the younger student.

(3) Veterans have a tendency to achieve as well, and somewhat better, than non-veteran students.

(4) A smaller proportion of veteran students leave college in the freshman year than do the non-veteran students.

(5) A comparison of counseled vs non-counseled World War II (P. L. 346) veterans showed that almost twice as many of the non-counseled group terminated (dropped out, discontinued or interrupted) their training than did the counseled group.

Knowing these results has helped to identify some of the problems in dealing with the Korean War Veterans now in training under P. L. 550. The following chapters will describe the procedures and techniques utilized in making a comparative study within that group and how the results relate to previous findings.
Chapter III

Methods of Procedure and Sources of Data

1. Selecting the Groups

The Control and Experimental Groups — For the past decade counselors and research workers in the field of guidance have been attempting to evaluate the effectiveness of their services. Some of the studies mentioned in Chapter II of this paper have dealt chiefly with veteran groups at the end of WWII. The psychological literature and guidance journals in recent years have carried articles concerning studies of both non-veteran and veteran groups who have received counseling. For the most part the techniques utilized in those studies have followed a similar pattern. A control group of non-counseled persons has been compared with the experimental group of counseled clients in respect to progress or ability to achieve in their selected goals. Generally speaking the studies have been more concerned with students than the job training or apprentice type cases.

This study has been styled along lines similar to those previously mentioned. Two groups of veteran students have been selected who entered school under P. L. 550, the new G. I. Bill. Each group consisted of one hundred persons. The veterans who voluntarily requested and received
counseling from the VA prior to enrolling in a school under P. L. 550 make up the experimental group. This group was matched by one hundred veterans who had entered educational institutions without receiving any counseling from the VA. This is known as the control group. The two groups were then compared with respect to certain characteristics described later in this chapter.

Method of Selection — Information was furnished to the Machine Tabulating Section so that IBM code cards could conveniently and quickly be used to report the number of cases available. On the first run through the machines only the code cards were dropped out (in other words, the ones that were desired) that were for veterans who had received counseling prior to enrolling in some school. Their counseling had been accomplished sometime between August 20, 1952, the inception of P. L. 550, and February 28, 1954 which is the cut-off date used in this study. They had also entered school sometime between those dates. This cut-off date was used so that all veterans would have had a chance to be in school at least six months prior to the initiation of this study. It was felt that a period of six months or more in school would give them a fair trial to determine their ability to remain in their selected courses.

On this run 133 cases were reported. Upon closer inspection of the records it was discovered that certain
types were included which should have been rejected. For example, students taking correspondence courses, flight training, part-time studies and secondary refresher courses were thrown out of the study. It was intended to utilize only full time resident students above the secondary school level. When the non-usable cases were discarded there remained a total of 101 students. Of these, 100 were male veterans and the other a female veteran student. In order to keep the group homogeneous, only the 100 male students were used in the study.

On the next run of code cards the machines picked out the group of non-counseled students who had entered school between the same dates. There were 905 of these cases of which 103 were in the non-usable category thereby leaving a total of 802 cases.

In order to select a control group randomly from these 802 non-counseled cases which would be equal in number to the counseled group it was decided to arrange the IBM code cards in numerical order according to claim number and draw every eighth case. In this manner it was possible to get a random sample yet obtain exactly 100 students so that they would match the counseled group in number. This method of random sampling is similar in
technique to other statistical studies made by the VA. By chance selection the 100 students drawn from the non-counseled group were all males.

2. Characteristics of the Groups

Age Level -- The ages of the counseled group ranged from 21 to 29 years old. In the non-counseled group the range of ages extended from 20 to 29 years. These ages were computed from the nearest birthday at the time the study was conducted. Using the Standard Error of the Difference\(^1\) to test the reliability of the difference between the two means it was found that there is not a significant difference in the mean ages of the two groups. The table below shows the mean age for each group.

**TABLE 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Level of Counseled and Non-Counseled Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Counseled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Educational Level — Both groups were analyzed according to the educational level which they had reached prior to entering training under P. L. 550. This information was obtained from inspection of their applications which were submitted at the time they requested a Certificate for Training under the G. I. Bill. In other words, information concerning the veterans' prior educational background was taken from their own statements.

In the counseled group it was found that the lowest level of school completed by any of the applicants was grade 7 and the highest level, a college degree, or grade 16. The mean year of school completed was 11.92. The non-counseled group had practically the same extremes with the educational backgrounds going from grade 8 to 16. The mean of this group was grade 12.42.

TABLE 2
Education Completed Prior to Entrance into School Under P. L. 550

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Range in Grade Level</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counseled</td>
<td>7-16</td>
<td>11.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Counseled</td>
<td>8-16</td>
<td>12.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using the Standard Error of the Difference¹ to test the reliability of the difference between these two means,

1. Ibid.
it is found that a significant difference exists in favor of the non-counseled group to the 99.4% level of confidence. By actual count it was discovered that where 23 per cent of the non-counseled group had completed education beyond the high school level prior to enrolling under P. L. 550, only 10 per cent of the counseled group had received education beyond the 12th grade before applying for the G. I. Bill. At the other end of the scale it was found that 9 per cent of the non-counseled group had less than a grade 11 education but in the counseled group there were 13 per cent who had not reached the eleventh grade.

Marital and Dependency Status - - At the time each veteran enters training under P. L. 550 he is required to submit evidence of his marital and dependency status. Since monetary benefits are paid to him on the basis of his dependency status it becomes quite obvious that in most cases the records will be accurate and up to date.

It was felt that a comparison of the counseled and non-counseled groups should be made with respect to their marital and dependency status. A survey of the literature shows that in previous studies married students, or those with dependents, usually achieved better in school. Even though the married students were no older than their fellow students who had no dependents, they seemed to have reached a higher level of motivation and better sense of responsibility.
For purposes of clarity the groups in this study were broken down into three categories with respect to their dependency status. The table below indicates the categories and the number of persons in each one.

**TABLE 3**

Dependency Status at Time of Entrance into School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>No Dependents</th>
<th>One Dependent</th>
<th>Two or More Dep.</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counseled</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Counseled</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information for this data was gathered from the veterans' records and represents their status at the time they entered school under P. L. 550. It is realized that this does not reflect an accurate picture of their status at the present time. On the other hand if we were to present figures as to their marital status now the effect of the dependency would be vague in some cases. For example, some of these students have long since terminated their education and if they were married since their termination it would not have any bearing on what they achieved prior to that time. Therefore, it was felt that the most practical solution was to record their status as of the time school was initiated.
Applying Chi-square to the figures in Table 3 it is found that the difference between the groups is significant to only a level of $P=.30$. Therefore, there is not a significant difference between the two groups with respect to their marital and dependency status.

3. Types of Schools Represented

Method of Grouping — Since this study was concerned with veteran students in one particular regional area of the VA, only the types of schools located in that area were represented. Institutions granting degrees at the bachelor's level and above include such schools as colleges, universities and teacher training schools. These were grouped under the general heading "colleges". Next down the scale were those schools described as junior colleges having either transfer or terminal programs. Also in this category were those schools offering the so-called "pre-college course". These were listed under the heading "Junior colleges". The third group comprised the business and commercial type schools offering courses in stenography, typing, bookkeeping, accounting, business administration and general business training. These are not degree granting schools but have courses varying from one to three school years in length. Schools of this nature are found
under the heading, "Business schools". Last on the list will be found the grouping "Vocational schools" which includes those institutions offering trade and technical training in a combination of classroom and shop work.

**Distribution of Students in Schools** - Of the 200 cases used in this study it was found that all of them could be classified as students in one of four general groupings of schools. The table below indicates the number in each type school.

**TABLE 4**

**Distribution of Students in the Schools Represented**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Colleges</th>
<th>Junior Colleges</th>
<th>Business Schools</th>
<th>Vocational Schools</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counseled</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Counseled</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using the Chi-square test it is found that the difference of the two groups in their choice of types of schools is significant to a level of less than .01. In other words with a P of less than .01 there is a real significant difference between these two groups in their tendency to select different types of schools. It may be noted by examining Table 4 that the greatest variance of their choices exists with respect to business schools. Although
no specific data have been collected to prove conclusively why a larger number of the counseled group chose business school training, a discussion of this phenomenon with the counseling staff resulted in the following speculations:

1. Some veterans, who are not high school graduates, discover during the counseling procedure that a high school diploma is not necessary for entrance into some business schools. If the testing program indicates probability of success in such a school they strive for a higher goal than they had originally expected to achieve and seek more education in a business school.

2. Other veterans reporting for counseling were found to have set their goals rather high and after completing the testing and counseling procedure decided to lower their aim. Instead of seeking admission to a regular college as they had originally planned they enrolled in a business school.

At any rate this difference does exist and there is reason to believe that the counseling recommendations influenced the experimental group to choose business school training more often than did the non-counseled group.

4. Controlling the Variables

The Ideal vs the Practical Situation -- In a research project of this nature it is realized that certain variables should be controlled in order for the results to be meaningful. Kaess and Long refer to these as "the
factors which, unless controlled, contaminate the results of an investigation and lead to the drawing of false conclu­sions".¹

In order to control all of these "contaminating factors" it would appear that an almost ideal situation would have to exist. For example if all of the cases used were of exactly the same age, had the same level of intelligence, had comparable personalities, attended the same school, took the same courses from the same instructors, had the same educational background and were of the same financial status then some of the variables could be controlled. To go even further one might say that the groups should be controlled with respect to their family backgrounds, dependency status, physical condition and service experiences. Speaking of the counseled group in particular it would seem that in order to control certain factors that each counselee should be exposed to the same counselor using the same technique in each case and the counseling be accomplished in the same setting. However, counseling never has and probably never will be carried on in a strictly laboratory controlled environment.

In a practical situation counselors deal with different types of individuals all having their unique problems. Counselees come from different backgrounds, have varying levels of ability and aspire to goals which require them to follow divergent pathways. The function of a counselor is to help each counselee recognize and accept his individual differences so that he may choose a goal most suitable to him. Therefore, in attempting to evaluate and measure the effectiveness of counseling, it appears that we must accept the fact that certain variables can not be controlled. It is also evident that while we can measure certain tangible results such as grades and progress reports there are intangible things such as morale and spiritual uplift which are not subject to the statistician's slide rule.

Attempts At Controlling Some Variables in this Study -- At the outset it is realized that this study contains certain factors which have not been controlled and may have a tendency to produce spurious results. For example, because of the relatively small number of students in one particular school it has been necessary to include cases in several different types of institutions. Another factor which may be subject to questioning is the comparison of the level of intelligence of the control group with that of the experimental group. Since during the counseling procedure the experimental group was subjected to testing it would be possible to determine their approximate IQ level. However,
the control group never received counseling from the V. A. and it would not be possible to compute their IQ's. On the other hand, when two groups of students, with 100 in each, are chosen randomly, it may be assumed that the mean levels of intelligence of the two groups will not vary significantly for practical purposes.

These variables listed below which have been controlled to some extent tend to produce a somewhat standardized situation.

1. There is not a significant difference in the mean age level of the two groups.

2. There is no significant difference in the marital and dependency status of the two groups.

3. All the students were attending school within the same regional territory.

4. The experimental group had all received counseling in the same VA Office where procedures and techniques are fairly standardized.

5. During the counseling sessions the clients in the experimental group had been exposed to counseling for practically the same amount of time. Also the average number of tests given each client is very similar.

6. Education and training allowances (sometimes referred to as subsistence allowances) are received by students the same length of time after initiating a course regardless of the type of school chosen. Similarly, the fact that they had or had not received counseling would have no effect on how soon their education allowances were mailed them.

7. Both groups include only male students.
It may be said then that from a purely scientific research viewpoint there are certain uncontrolled factors which may tend to contaminate the results. On the other hand some of the factors found to be significant in previous studies have been standardized to a certain degree.

5. Phases of the Evaluation

Selection of the Criteria -- Various criteria have been used in previous studies in an attempt to measure the effectiveness of counseling. Among these are found such factors as job satisfaction, school grades, attitudes toward counseling and satisfaction with a chosen educational program. In the study by Kaess and Long it was discovered that using the college grade-point index, no significant difference was found between the experimental and control groups. It was also found that a significant difference did not exist between the two groups with respect to job satisfaction.¹

For the most part, the cases involved in this study are still attending school and a measure of their job satisfaction would not be possible. Neither does it seem logical to attempt to measure the difference between the two groups with respect to school grades. In the first place one study has shown that there is no significant difference

¹. Ibid., p. 431
between the control and experimental groups using school grades as a criterion. Secondly, because the students in this study are attending various types of schools, the reported grades would not have much homogeneity and would therefore produce distorted values. For example, a grade-point index from a college could not very well be used with a grade from a vocational school in computing a scholastic average.

In attempting to evaluate the effectiveness of counseling in this study it was determined to utilize two criteria:

1. A comparison of the counseled and non-counseled groups with respect to their tendency to remain in training after initiating a course.

2. A questionnaire survey of the counseled group to obtain their evaluation of the counseling procedure.

Comparison of the Two Groups with Respect to their Tendency to Remain in Training — Tables 5 and 6 contain information concerning the training status of the counseled and non-counseled groups.
TABLE 5
Training Status of Counseled Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Status</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>Junior College</th>
<th>Business School</th>
<th>Vocational School</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Still in training</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed course satisfactorily</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrew, unsatisfactory progress</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrew voluntarily</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrew, financial reasons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrew to accept employment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Status</td>
<td>Type of School</td>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>College</td>
<td>Junior College</td>
<td>Business School</td>
<td>Vocational School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still in training</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed course satisfactorily</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrew, unsatisfactory progress</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrew voluntarily</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrew, financial reasons</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrew to accept employment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The categories listed under the heading "Training Status" are quite self-explanatory with the exception of "Withdraw Voluntarily". In examining the remarks in the records, both from the schools and the veterans, it was found in many cases that a specific reason was given for discontinuing training. For example, a school official would comment that "the student's progress was not satisfactory", or the student might comment on his notice of withdrawal that he "left for financial reasons" or "to accept a job". However, in the majority of cases of withdrawal the only reason given by both the school and the student was that he "voluntarily withdrew". Since both the school officials and the veterans used this term without further explanation, it has been necessary to accept and use it as a category in the training status.

It is strongly suspected that some of those who voluntarily withdrew did it for financial reasons or because their progress, although not actually unsatisfactory, was poor enough to influence them into making a change. On the other hand it is also assumed that many of those who voluntarily withdrew did just that because they had chosen the wrong educational program in the first place and had lost interest. Empirically speaking it has been found that many clients upon visiting the counseling office will state, "I started one
course on my own and found it was not the right field, now I'd like to have counseling”.

It is quite interesting to note that in both the non-counseled and counseled groups, exactly the same number had completed their courses satisfactorily. There is also a close agreement between the two groups in the number who were discontinued for unsatisfactory progress. The largest difference exists between the control and experimental groups with respect to those who are still in training and those who voluntarily withdrew.

For purposes of statistical comparison it was determined that those students still in training and those who have completed their courses should be placed in the same group. All the others who had left school were placed in a withdrawn category. Table 7 shows the consolidated figures.

**TABLE 7**

Comparison Between Groups of Those Who Remained In and Those Who Withdrew from School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Remained in School</th>
<th>Withdrew from School</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counseled</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Counseled</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Applying Chi-square to this set of figures, it is found that with a $P$ of less than .01 there is a significant difference between these two groups. Perhaps a clearer way
of expressing it is to state, "In less than 1 time in 100 will this difference exist because of chance factors or errors in the sampling". In many studies a $P$ of .02 is considered to establish a significant level of difference. Therefore, it would appear safe to state that in this study there is a real significance in the difference between a counseled group and a non-counseled group with respect to their tendency to remain in school once a program is initiated.

It has previously been shown that when the two groups were compared with respect to age level and dependency status the statistical treatment revealed no significant difference. On the other hand when they were compared in their educational level up to the time they started school under P. L. 550, it was found that the non-counseled group had a significantly higher level of schooling. However, after the two groups had enrolled in their educational programs under the G. I. Bill the counseled students had a tendency to remain in training longer. In other words, they didn't abandon training or voluntarily withdraw from school in such large numbers as the non-counseled group. The difference is statistically significant.

One might jump to the conclusion that this definitely proves that the counseling procedure is the force which aided one group make a better adjustment to their courses than another group. Perhaps it is wiser to be more cautious
and not draw such a hasty conclusion. There are certain unknown quantities and qualities about both groups which should be measured before making any conclusive statements. For example, why did the people in the experimental group seek counseling? Did they feel more dependent on seeking the encouragement and advice of the counselor? Had they read and heard more about vocational counseling and therefore were more "guidance minded"? On the other hand can we guess that the non-counseled group felt more independent in making their own choices? Did they feel it was not necessary to undergo counseling?

Of course there are many such questions which will perhaps never be answered. What serves as motivation for one person might not necessarily have any effect on another. It is also conceivable that where counseling might be a means of one person gaining relief from anxiety, his neighbor might find that such a procedure caused considerable emotional tension and therefore he wanted to avoid it. If one were content not to consider all these other variables such as personality differences and just look at the bare statistics it is quite evident that a counseled group of veterans tends to be more stable in their educational programs than a similar group of their non-counseled comrades. In support of the value of counseling Manbeck says,

"In analyzing the reasons given for canceling courses it is shown that counseling,
investigation and planning on the student's part would avoid many of the course cancelations. It is suggested that greater reliance be placed in the recommendations of advisers and counselors by the student when he registers. A greater utilization of the information and suggestions of advisers, counselors, and other students might have been made."

The Questionnaire - The next step in the evaluation concerns the counseled group only. A follow-up study of the opinions and attitudes of the counseled group was accomplished by the use of a questionnaire. This is a very similar procedure to that utilized by others in the field who have measured the attitudes of counseled veterans in school programs. Before constructing a questionnaire, the ones used by Carmichael\(^2\), Prosser\(^3\), Pfau\(^4\) and Belding\(^5\) were studied to discover what types of questions had been used in

---


2. Carmichael, op. cit. p. 10

3. Prosser, Don, D., Veterans Guidance Center, University of Southern California, Follow Up Study.


previous research. It was found that as a general rule most of the questionnaires were seeking the reaction of the clients to the extent counseling had been of value and also gave the counselees an opportunity to express opinions and criticisms.

The writer feels that in a questionnaire study of this nature one of the prime requisites is that the format be brief. Most veterans have completed so many forms, answered so many questions and received so much correspondence by the time they have completed enrollment in a school, they would not be happy about filling out a long and cumbersome questionnaire. It is felt that a higher percentage of returns can be expected on a brief set of questions which usually requires placing a check mark after multiple choice items. After discussing the items with the other members of the counseling staff, it was decided to use a questionnaire with fourteen items. The first thirteen were in the form of questions and the fourteenth item provided a space for opinions, comments and criticisms. A sample copy of the questionnaire is listed in Appendix B.

In constructing a cover letter to accompany the questionnaire an attempt was made to leave the reader with the impression that his frank and honest answers were being solicited. In so far as possible the letter was worded so that each counselee would not feel "lead" or "influenced" to give certain types of responses. It may be noted that an
attempt was made to have the counselees feel that by taking part in the study they might be aiding their fellow veterans by suggesting improvements in the counseling service. It was hoped that this would motivate more of them to return the questionnaires thereby giving us a higher number of replies. Appendix A contains a sample of the cover letter.

In both the letter and the questionnaire it was made clear that the study did not attempt to identify any of the clients. It was purely anonymous if they wished to keep it that way. No secret codes or identifying symbols were used so that the clients, or the counselor involved with each case, could be known. However, it was quite interesting to note that in many cases the veterans did sign the questionnaires and seemed eager to have the source of the comments known.

Within ten days after the questionnaires had been originally mailed 42 per cent of them had been completed and returned. It was decided that a follow-up letter should be mailed to the clients even though some of the replies were trickling in each day. Going on the assumption that the group might be more amenable to answering the questions shortly after receiving them a short follow-up letter was mailed to the entire group. It served a dual purpose. Those who had returned the questionnaires were thanked for participating in the study and those who had not yet returned the forms were sincerely urged to get theirs in
before the deadline. A sample of this letter is included in Appendix C.

Within a few days after the follow-up letter had been mailed the completed questionnaires began to arrive again in fairly good sized lots. This spurt lasted a few days and then dwindled to nothing. A month after the questionnaires had initially been mailed to the students 75 per cent of them had been completed and returned. It was felt that a 75 per cent return was about all that could be reasonably expected in a study of this nature and no further attempts at follow-up were made.

The Responses — Listed in Table 8 are the first thirteen items on the questionnaire with a percentage breakdown of the responses given by the counseled group.
TABLE 8

Tabulated Results of the Questionnaire

1. How did you happen to request vocational counseling?  
   Was it (check one)  
   a. Recommended by a friend or relative  23  
   b. Suggested by some official or a school you desired to attend 16  
   c. Your own idea  43  
   d. Some other reason  18 (explain)

2. Do you feel that as a result of the counseling you were better able to reach a decision regarding your educational program?  
   Yes  88  No  12

3. If you feel that your counseling did help you, to what extent was it of value? (Check one)  
   a. A large amount of help  36  
   b. Some help  59  
   c. No help  5

4. As you remember the testing program do you feel that you were given  
   a. Too many tests  9  
   b. Just about the right amount  63  
   c. Not enough tests  28

5. Do you feel that you were given the right kinds of tests, that is, the ones that you wanted?  
   Yes  81  No  19

6. Did your counselor explain and interpret the test results clearly to you?  
   Yes  95  No  5

7. Were you given enough information about  
   a. Different occupations? Yes  59  No  41  
   b. Types of schools Yes  60  No  40

8. Did you feel at that time that you wanted more counseling?  
   Yes  33  No  67

9. Do you feel that you would like to have more counseling now?  
   Yes  36  No  64
### TABLE 8 Continued

10. Do you feel that you were hurried or pushed into selecting your program?  
   Yes 15  No 85

11. Do you feel that your counselor had a personal and sincere interest in your problem?  
   Yes 89  No 11

12. Were you given a good opportunity to express your own attitudes, feelings and thoughts concerning the choice of your program?  
   Yes 89  No 11

13. Considering the time and expense involved for you to report for counseling, do you feel that it was worthwhile in helping you select your educational program?  
   Yes 87  No 13
Although the replies to the various questions are quite self-explanatory it is felt that some of them should be discussed more fully.

In Question 1a it is not surprising to find that 23 per cent requested counseling because it was recommended by a friend or relative. Quite often when a veteran comes to the office for counseling he will state, "A buddy from my home town took this counseling and sold me on the idea". Another common remark is this, "My brother took these tests after World War II and recommended that I come down here after getting out of the service".

Under 1d some of the other reasons given for requesting counseling were found such statements as "Suggested by the VA Representative who helped me file my application for education". In most cases this probably refers to the VA Contact Representatives whose duties include helping veterans file claims. Other veterans commented that they were advised at the military separation center that they should see the VA for counseling.

It is quite interesting to note the similarity in the percentages of "Yes" and "No" responses to Question 2 and 13. It is quite natural for a person who feels that the counseling did not help him make a better decision regarding his educational program to also feel that it was not worth the
time and expense involved. On the other hand the majority, by far, did feel it was worthwhile.

A few of those who answered Question 2 in the negative went on to Question 3 stating that the counseling had helped them. It might be assumed, then, that even though the counseling did not aid them in making a decision about an educational program, it may have helped them with some personal problem or other solution peculiar to their own situations. At any rate in Question 3 there were 95 per cent who felt that counseling had helped to a certain extent.

The responses to Question 4 would seem to indicate that 28 per cent of the group feel that they were not given enough tests. This figure alone is somewhat misleading and it is felt that more of the facts should be explained. Several of the counselees who responded that they had not been given enough tests qualified the remark by stating, "Not enough specific tests to pin point an objective". It may very well be that some of the 28 per cent are those counselees who dislike assuming the responsibility for selecting their own programs and feel that perhaps a greater number of tests would have pin pointed an objective thereby alleviating them of making a wrong choice.
It should also be realized that there is a discrepancy between how a person feels when he is taking a battery of tests and what his attitude will be months later when in retrospect he is reviewing his counseling procedure. When the clients are in the office for testing they are given the opportunity to take as many tests as they desire. However, usually after they have taken five or six different tests they will begin to feel saturated and decline further testing unless necessary. A year or more later during which time they have been in school and become accustomed to examinations they might look back over their counseling experience and feel that further testing would have proven valuable. It should be remembered that the group comprising this questionnaire study was counseled at least a year previous to the time the questionnaires were mailed.

On the other hand, of course, it is very possible that not enough tests were given to that 28 per cent who responded in that manner. It is an interesting fact which has caused discussion among the counselors.

It is the writer's opinion that in the matter of selecting tests the client should have some freedom in choosing the ones that he feels most appropriate in his particular problem. This idea is pretty much in line with the suggestions of Bordin and Bixler who describe a typical counseling session in this manner:
"At this point it is not unusual for counselors to assume complete responsibility for selecting a set of tests which, from the information they have obtained, appear to be appropriate. Many times, in order to select appropriate tests, it is necessary for the counselor to ask a series of probing questions, thus reinforcing in a subtle yet effective way the impression that he is taking the responsibility for action and decision. This procedure appears to have merit, since the counselor is skilled in prediction and test selection. Yet, to yield to this temptation to exercise his skill will be to run the danger of depriving the client of the possibilities of self-expression which may lead to a revision of his view of his problem. It will probably make him more dependent on the counselor, not only by emphasizing a prescriptive role but also by limiting the client's readiness to make use of test information for the development of better self-understanding and the initiation and execution of programs of action. To state it another way, by placing too much emphasis upon efficient and comprehensive collection of test data as a means of solving human problems, the counselor assumes the risk of not achieving this end of counseling. As an alternative, we suggest that the process of selecting tests be a cooperative one shared by the client and the counselor."

When the results of Question 5 are examined it appears, for the most part, that the counseled veterans were given the types of tests that they desired. It is hoped that this was the result, in part at least, of their participation in the selection of the tests.

---

The counseling staff was happy with the responses to Question 6. Explaining the test scores in non-technical language, drawing diagrams and giving home-made comparisons evidently paid off. There is little practical value in giving a battery of tests if the client doesn't have a full understanding of the implication of the test scores. He is much more likely to accept the test scores if an adequate interpretation is made.

The responses to Question 7 indicate that a weak spot in the counseling program in this particular office seems to be in the imparting of occupational information and describing course content in various schools. If these figures mean exactly what appears on the surface, then certainly the counselors should appraise their techniques and take an inventory of the time that is being spent in discussing occupations and schools. If a weakness is found to exist, the counselors would be the first ones to want to remedy this situation by group discussions and in-service training.

On the other hand it is felt that again a discrepancy might exist between the way the veteran feels when he is being counseled and his attitude several months or a year later. At the time the counseling is being carried on the clients are given an opportunity to read school booklets, occupational outlook series, job descriptions and
employment reviews. In many cases, even though this information is made available to them, only a brief amount of time is spent by the clients in reading the literature. After making a few mental notes and perhaps jotting down a few salient points on paper, they will seem satisfied with the information they have gained. It is very likely that at a later date the clients discover that they obtained rather meager information about the various schools and jobs which are available.

Perhaps at this point it is advisable to explain the geographical situation which exists at the Counseling Section, VA Center, Togus, Maine. It is located in the south-central part of the state approximately one hundred miles from the southern boundary and at least two hundred and fifty miles from the extreme northern portion of the state. All VA Counseling is done in the one office at Togus. Therefore, many clients have to travel up to two hundred miles or more one way to receive counseling. Under Public Law 550 the travel is performed at their own expense. The counseling itself is, of course, at no expense to the veteran.

Keeping that picture in mind it is quite understandable that even though in Questions 8 and 9 one-third of the students indicated a desire for more counseling, they probably don't want it badly enough to travel the
distance involved. It is a common practice for the counselors to make the clients feel welcome to return for further interviews at times convenient for the client. In some cases those living nearby return for several visits but one would hardly expect a client to travel several hundred miles each week for counseling interviews. For that reason, quite often an attempt is made to give them a concentrated dose in one sitting.

During the past several years, in keeping with the current trend of raising standards for various professions, the VA Counselors have returned to graduate schools throughout the country for more training. The guidance and counseling theory, as well as the practicum, seems to lean toward the permissive, client centered approach. It would appear in examining the responses to Questions 10, 11 and 12 that the counselors in this office were creating that type of an atmosphere and allowing the clients to assume some responsibility in the interviews.

Question 13 is quite self-explanatory. However, the amusing part of it is this, several of the students who answered "No" to this question went on to comment, "However, I'd recommend it to other veterans".

The Comments and Criticisms - - Item 14 on the questionnaire provided an opportunity for the counseled
veterans to offer suggestions, criticisms and comments concerning their feeling toward the counseling procedure in general. As might be expected these comments ran the gamut from those indicating the counseling had been of no particular value to the other end of the scale which ex-horted the experience as a tremendous help. Actually not one of the comments was derogatory in nature toward either the counselors or the procedure utilized. In a study of this nature it is not uncommon to find "wisecracks" or rather cynical remarks. None of these were found even though several clients had indicated that they did not consider the counseling worthwhile in helping them.

In many cases suggestions were made which were considered to be very well formulated plans to help the VA improve the counseling service. For example one veteran stated:

"Each veteran should be given some sort of a check list or summary sheet with the test scores and other information. In later years he could look at this and refresh his memory about the counseling."

The writer has long felt that some such provision should be made so that each counselee would have something more tangible to take away from the final interview. Understanding what is explained to them at the time of counseling and remembering this information months or years later are two different situations.
Perhaps one of the most common criticisms found in Item 14 is the fact that the tests did not pinpoint an objective closely enough to suit the clients. They apparently came to the counseling office thinking that a battery of tests would discriminate their interests and aptitudes so finely that one and only one course of action would stand before them. Typical of such feelings is this remark:

"In a brief resume, I would like to say that I think they need tests, if such tests are possible, to more closely pinpoint a fellow's objective".

Along a very similar line this veteran says:

"I think that tests should be given to isolate the one thing a person can do best".

Even though at the time of the counseling it is usually explained that tests alone do not answer all the problems the client has, the general feeling is that the tests should do more for them. Many think that a test should be as accurate as the machinist's micrometer gauge.

On the other hand, it is apparent by the comments, that many of the young men did arrive at a very satisfactory solution as a result of their visits to the counseling office. One rather happy student stated:
"Before I visited Togus I was terribly confused about what to do. Now I know exactly what my goal is and I'm well on the way to reaching it. My visit was a tremendous help and a very wonderful experience".

Another satisfied customer reflects his attitude this way:

"I don't remember my counselor's name but if they are all like him the veterans have nothing to worry about".

This client felt rather exhilarated that he had been scheduled for counseling through some mistake. He commented:

"Through some error the VA scheduled me for counseling. To avoid confusion I kept the appointment. Although I had started to take on the job training as an auto mechanic I found that I was qualified to be an engineer. I am now well on my way through school and to a professional career. I almost wasted my life as a mechanic if it hadn't been for your counseling".

One student was apparently carried away with the idea when he said:

"I think the VA counseling should be compulsory for all veterans".

One of his comrades, more client centered in his approach, suggested that:

"One of the first things about counseling is that it should be voluntary on the part of the veteran".

Many comments along these same ideas were made. There were also some who offered constructive criticisms which indicated seriousness on the part of the clients.
Others made no remarks at all under this section of the questionnaire. Of course the unknown quantity is the group of 25 per cent who failed to return their questionnaires. We will never know whether their comments might have been favorable or their criticisms so bitter that they just refrained from participating.
Chapter IV

Summary and Conclusion

In an effort to determine the effectiveness of a counseling program a group of counseled veteran students attending school under P. L. 550 was evaluated. In the first phase of the evaluation this counseled group (experimental group) was compared with a non-counseled group (control group) of equal number with respect to certain characteristics. It was found that although the two groups were very similar with respect to age, educational level prior to training and dependency status there was a significant difference with respect to their tendency to remain in a selected program once it was initiated. There was a greater percentage of the counseled group who remained in school in their chosen courses than the non-counseled group. Conversely there were more of the control (non-counseled) group who withdrew from training for no apparent reason. Applying the Chi-square test to these sets of data it is found that there is a statistically significant difference with a P of less than .01.

The second phase of the study involved sending questionnaires to the counseled group in order to get their reactions to the counseling program. Of those who responded 88 per cent felt that as a result of counseling
they were better able to reach a decision regarding an educational program. Only 5 per cent felt that counseling had been of no help at all. It was discovered however that 41 per cent felt that they had not been given enough occupational information and 40 per cent would liked to have had more information about types of schools. The general comments and criticisms were friendly and favorable.

In a small scale study of this nature, with certain uncontrolled variables, it has not been possible to definitely prove or disprove the effectiveness of counseling. Yet the findings do tend to lean favorably toward there being some value to the counseling procedure. At least the clients feel it is effective.

The study may provide information which will be useful to a staff of counselors in one particular regional office for the purpose of in-service training, self-evaluation and appraisal of techniques. For after all, it is not what we think of our clients but what they think of us that counts!
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Prosser, Don, D., Veterans Guidance Center, University of Southern California, Follow Up Study.


Appendix

Cover Letter for Questionnaire . . . . . . . A
Copy of Questionnaire . . . . . . . . . . . . . B
Follow-Up Letter . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . C
APPENDIX A

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION
CENTER
TOGUS, MAINE

April 5, 1955

YOUR FILE REFERENCE:

IN REPLY REFER TO:

We are conducting a study to determine in what ways the VA Counseling Section at Togus, Maine succeeded in being of benefit to you.

You will recall that you visited the Counseling Section for the purpose of aptitude testing and vocational counseling to help you plan your education and training under the GI Bill. As one of these counselors, you have been selected to take part in this study.

Attached to this letter you will find a brief questionnaire which will take only a few minutes to complete. We sincerely ask that you give us your frank and honest opinions. At the end of the questionnaire is a space for any comments or criticisms that you desire to add. You are not asked to sign your name or identify yourself. By taking part in this study and giving us your ideas, you may help us improve our services to other veterans who like yourself are seeking counseling.

When you have finished the items, please return the questionnaire in the enclosed self-addressed envelope which requires no postage. It will be appreciated if you return your completed questionnaire promptly.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]

JOHN W. TARR
Vocational Counselor
APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COUNSELED VETERANS

In completing this questionnaire, please keep in mind we are interested in your reaction to the counseling you received from the VA only.

1. How did you happen to request vocational counseling? (Was it (check one)
   a. Recommended by a friend or relative ______
   b. Suggested by some official of a school you desired to attend______
   c. Your own idea______
   d. Some other reason______ (explain)

2. Do you feel that as a result of the counseling you were better able to reach a decision regarding your educational program?
   Yes______ No______

3. If you feel that your counseling did help you, to what extent was it of value? (Check one)
   a. A large amount of help ______
   b. Some help______
   c. No help______

4. As you remember the testing program do you feel that you were given
   a. Too many tests ______
   b. Just about the right amount ______
   c. Not enough tests______

5. Do you feel that you were given the right kinds of tests, that is, the ones that you wanted?
   Yes______ No______

6. Did your counselor explain and interpret the test results clearly to you?
   Yes______ No______

7. Were you given enough information about
   a. Different occupations? Yes______ No______
   b. Types of schools Yes______ No______

8. Did you feel at that time that you wanted more counseling?
   Yes______ No______

9. Do you feel that you would like to have more counseling now?
   Yes______ No______

10. Do you feel that you were hurried or pushed into selecting your program?
    Yes______ No______
11. Do you feel that your counselor had a personal and sincere interest in your problem? Yes ____ No ____

12. Were you given a good opportunity to express your own attitudes, feelings and thoughts concerning the choice of your program? Yes ____ No ____

13. Considering the time and expense involved for you to report for counseling, do you feel that it was worthwhile in helping you select your educational program? Yes ____ No ____

14. Your comments or suggestions:
APPENDIX C
VETERANS ADMINISTRATION

CENTER
Togus, Maine

YOUR FILE REFERENCE:

IN REPLY REFER TO: 4002-7

April 15, 1955

Recently you were mailed a questionnaire in connection with a survey being made of veterans who have received vocational counseling from the VA. If you are one of those veterans who have so promptly completed and returned the questionnaire, we wish to thank you sincerely for your cooperation.

If you have not yet mailed yours to us, won't you please do this so that your answers and suggestions will become a part of the study? Our closing date for the project will be April 30, 1955.

Very truly yours,

JOHN W. TARR
Vocational Counselor

An inquiry by or concerning an ex-service man or woman should, if possible, give veteran's name and file number, whether C, XC, K, N, or V. If such file number is unknown, service or serial number should be given.