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THE VOCATIONAL COMMITMENT OF
STUDENT NURSES AND STUDENT TEACHERS

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VOLUME ONE

ABSTRACT

For an occupation to become a profession, it is often contended that its members must possess 'vocational commitment'. Yet, there has in fact been little research either in New Zealand or overseas on the whole question of vocational or professional commitment.

The present research was primarily concerned with the type and extent of commitment in those undergoing training for a profession. It consisted of a longitudinal study of a cohort of student nurses and student teachers who entered training in a provincial New Zealand city in 1973. A scale to measure expressed vocational commitment (EVC) at the time of entry was devised and was applied to the complete sample of trainee teachers and nurses on the first day of their training. Additional data were gathered early in the training course via standardised personality, psychological and attitude inventories, as well as background details on such variables as sex, socio-economic status and ethnicity.

The research then focussed on the direction of, and stated reasons for, changes in EVC during the course of training. To facilitate this, a subsample was selected from the two groups for regular interviewing and observation. As well, students leaving the course were interviewed, and where 'hunches' were formed from either subsample or leaver material, an endeavour to check these was made through discussion with a monitoring group and by gathering additional evidence from other members of the role set. At the end of their training period the surviving sample was post-tested with an adapted EVC scale.

The research demonstrated the complexity of abstract concepts such as vocational commitment, and confirmed that it is multi-dimensional in nature. Moreover, and perhaps most significantly, the findings showed that EVC was subject to considerable fluctuations over relatively short periods of time, which suggested that commitment itself has substantial situationally-specific components. The research also demonstrated that most students on entry to training were

extremely tentative in their career choice, and in some instances were merely trying out possibilities. In addition many had poorly formed perceptions of what the vocation they were to enter would require of them, both as students and as practitioners.

Although the analysis endeavoured to pinpoint reasons for changes in EVC, this task proved extraordinarily difficult. It brought out some of the shortcomings of the positivistic style of research, and much of the theorising associated with it. From a more practical viewpoint the research established the difficulties associated with predicting eventual success in a training programme, even when a wide range of entry variables is available for analysis.

Some important implications for teacher and nurse education can be adduced, particularly the value of deferring the final selection of applicants during training, thus drawing on an older more mature pool. The research findings also indicate that improved orientation programmes prior to entry to formal training are needed; that a diversified and flexible training course is required to cater for the wide range of the students' abilities, aptitudes and attitudes; and that improved guidance and counselling services for some 'at risk' students are highly desirable.

Overall, the conclusion was drawn that vocational commitment in the two groups studied was idiosyncratic in its development and influence. Although exceptions could be found, students were more reflective about their decision making and in their career planning than many previous researchers had suggested.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Leaders of what Etzioni (1969) terms the semiprofessions sometimes claim that the reason why their vocations have not been accepted as full professions is mainly related to the degree of vocational commitment exhibited by their members. This belief has been supported by Becker and Carper (1956), Blauner (1960) and Gerstl (1967) who have argued that a high degree of commitment to their particular career is a general characteristic of all professions. Thus it is claimed that before the semiprofessions of teaching and nursing with which the present study is concerned are to become professions, their members will need to develop a high degree of vocational commitment. Young people will need to come forward "... imbued with a natural desire to teach [or nurse] and with a lofty disregard for such things as salary and career line" (Grace, 1967, p.54).

There is considerable evidence to suggest that this is not yet the case in either teaching or nursing. Overseas research has shown that many recruits to the semiprofessions are not highly committed. Over thirty years ago, Tudhope observed that "some boys and girls drift into teaching without ever having wished to do so" (Tudhope, 1944, p.129). In a more recent English study, Smithers and Carlisle (1970) found that 53% of their College of Education sample would have preferred a career other than teaching. Watson's (1966) New Zealand findings were in the same vein; one-third of the men and one-fifth of the women in teacher training in 1957 expressed preferences for other vocations. Similarly, Whiteside of the University of Leicester (1972) in an unpublished study suggested that only 49% of his sample were totally committed to teaching as a career, while Rolls and Goble (1971) in their response to Ashley and his associates' (1970) study of motives for entering teaching, suggested that at least some trainee

teachers were committed to becoming students rather than teachers. Lortie (1968) in comparing college professors' and teachers' induction to their jobs, stated that the low commitment of the latter group could be explained partly by the fact it is possible to leave the teaching force for many other types of work without losing social esteem. And in Australia, Coulter (1972) showed that only 34% of his sample planned to stay in teaching for longer than five years.

On the other hand, not all research has found low levels of commitment to teaching as a career. For example, Shipman (1966) working at a small English College of Education, found only 3% of his sample prepared to admit doubts about teaching as a chosen and continuing vocation. Shipman's data are, however, out of line with the majority of findings, which seem to suggest a range of commitment amongst entrants to teaching.

In nursing the evidence is similar to the majority view in teaching. McGuire (1964), using a three-dimensional index (age at which the career was first considered, length of time after a definite decision was made, and other occupations seriously considered) has demonstrated that a wide range of commitment existed on entry, and that only 22% of her sample possessed 'high' commitment. In an important English study, Barr (1959) has pointed out that many students who were both educationally and physically suited for nursing, and who were in those terms 'committed', did not complete the training programme. Birch (1975) in his study of nursing wastage, detected a high level of dissatisfaction with the training programme which caused a drop in vocational commitment. This resulted in a decline in the motivation of students in his sample. Singh (1970), who surveyed all students enrolled in experimental nurse training programmes in the United Kingdom, found that over half his sample believed other jobs would satisfy them more than nursing, and seven-tenths had given serious consideration to another career. A general conclusion to be drawn from these studies is that a considerable number of entrants to nursing and teaching begin with low vocational commitment.

If it is desirable to produce committed practitioners at the end of training, and if, as is probable, a wide range of attitudes towards their career exists amongst entrants (Altman, 1970), then the training institutions face a serious challenge. There is evidence to suggest that teachers' colleges and nurse training institutions have failed to

meet this challenge. Indeed, some researchers have noted a decline in the commitment of nurses and teachers in training (Marsland 1970; Whiteside 1972; Birch 1975); the training programme in these cases thus appears to be 'dysfunctional' (Gottlieb, 1961). Nevertheless, one investigation (Watson, 1966) has indicated that some reluctant entrants to college may become more committed during training.

The present research set out to investigate some of the problems raised by the writers just mentioned. In particular it focussed on the level and type of expressed vocational commitment (EVC) of a group of student nurses and student teachers on entry to their training institutions. The research also endeavoured to monitor changes in EVC, and to ascertain reasons for such changes. It is appropriate at this point, before describing the present investigation in detail, to review those studies which are closest in aim, methodology and content to it.

COMMITMENT TO TEACHING

Of all the overseas studies, the closest to the present in aim and design has been reported by David Marsland (1970). Basing his work on a model of professional socialisation, Marsland researched the development of a variety of teacher role attitudes amongst a cohort of teacher trainees over a three year period. His findings are significant for the present research insofar as he was able to demonstrate clear and significant changes across a variety of dimensions, including career commitment. In particular he found that the commitment of students in his sample towards the goals of their institutions decreased, in that they became less career oriented and more vocationally oriented, and that their commitment to teaching as a career declined in the three year period.

Marsland endeavoured to relate these findings to a variety of demographic and personality characteristics. He found that age did not appear to be a crucial variable in attitude change, whereas sex was. Male students tended to remain more academic in their orientation than female students and were less inclined to change towards the teacher role model deemed appropriate by the training institution. While socio-economic status did not appear as a major factor associated with change, it is interesting to note that working class students in

Marsland's sample tended to become more favourably disposed to the prospect of teaching as a career than students from other backgrounds. Personality variables were found to be significantly related to change; in particular, extraversion correlated positively with an increased educational (pedagogic) orientation, as opposed to an academic orientation. Even more importantly, as Cohen has noted, Marsland established

... a strong association between informal staff-student interaction and student attitude change. Both increasingly favourable commitment to teaching and growing educational professionalism on the part of students [was] substantially associated with greater contact with the academic staff of the college. A second finding [was] concerned with the association between student peer group interaction and attitude change. Marsland [showed] that greater involvement among the students in discussions of teaching [was] associated with increasing career commitment and progressive attitudes.

(Cohen, 1972, p.409)

Marsland measured the dimension of career commitment by using a scale devised by Evans (1965). It should be noted that this scale was designed for use with schoolchildren, and was focussed on the possible liking for teaching as a career rather than commitment to the career. Additionally, the scale had a low reliability coefficient (.53 test, retest), and it contained items not really appropriate as indicators of commitment. For example it included statements of a quasi-factual nature (e.g. "plenty of grants" for students), and others which require demonstrable evidence of their relationship to commitment (e.g. too much of a teacher's job is done indoors). Thus, one of Marsland's major conclusions, viz., that students' commitment decreased significantly and substantially during their training, must be treated with caution (Marsland, 1971, p.409).

Furthermore, as Marsland himself notes (1970, p.52) the research design precluded positive identification of sources of influence on attitude change. By adopting a classical pre-post test design Marsland was able to suggest movements in attitudes, but not reasons for the movements. This failure, in part, must be related to his overemphasis on the structural-functional approach and systems analysis.

Another piece of research somewhat akin to the present study is an American study by Mason (1961). He investigated the career

orientations of 7,200 beginning teachers in the United States via a postal questionnaire. In Chapters X and XI of his report he analysed 'career commitment' and 'factors influencing career commitment'. He defined career commitment as a "generic term referring to a variety of items dealing with the decision to enter teaching and the plans and contingencies indicative of the likelihood of remaining in the profession" (Mason, 1961, p.96).

In working towards his conclusions Mason discussed "career decision", "a typology of career decision", and "career plans". He then related a number of these factors to demographic data, to salaries, and significantly, for the present research, to preparation for teaching. In respect of the last-mentioned item Mason commented "... it is important to determine whether the best prepared teachers are also the most committed" (Mason, 1961, p.116). He goes on to suggest that this is highly likely since "... those who are best prepared have the biggest investment in a teaching career and thus the most likely to lose by changing their minds" (Mason, 1961, p.16). This appears to be a restatement of Becker's (1960) "investment hypothesis".

Like other researchers, however, Mason found that the least qualified — namely the non-certificated, non-graduate group — were consistently the most strongly committed to teaching. This led Mason to comment:

... it seems disturbing that those who have pursued a teacher education programme and qualified themselves for the professions are not in the forefront of those dedicated to a teaching career.

(Mason, 1961, p.119)

Although it may be disturbing, the present writer finds this unsurprising. One may argue that a "critical event", such as obtaining a teachers' certificate or a bachelor's degree, may serve to open as well as to close career opportunities. Indeed there is some research to indicate that the higher the level of academic qualification the lower the career commitment (Coulter, 1972). Furthermore, the group Mason identified as most committed may have contained a majority of those referred to by Park (1928) as "marginal men". If this was the case, and if the proposition put forward by Box and Ford (1967) — that commitment and marginality are strongly related — then Mason's conclusions become suspect. At the very least a more sophisticated analysis of the data seemed to be called for.

There are a number of important differences between Mason's investigation and the present study. First, Mason worked with beginning teachers; thus his data on the development of commitment during training are retrospective. Secondly, his research method was limited to a postal questionnaire approach. As with Marsland's study, this meant that discussions about reasons for the development of commitment had to be limited to relatively unsophisticated analyses of demographic data and details collected subsequent to training.

Mason's study remains significant, nonetheless, insofar as he is one of the few researchers to recognise the multidimensionality of work commitment. He has identified successfully the parameters of the problem; a series of longitudinal studies now appears necessary to complete the tapestry.

A further study related to the present research seems to have been based on Mason's work, and as yet remains unpublished. It was conducted by Leonard Watson, under the auspices of the New Zealand Council for Educational Research in 1971. Working with a limited sample of beginning teachers (23 women) and choosing an indepth interview technique rather than a questionnaire, Watson paid considerable attention to the development of commitment. He found that the probationary [beginning] year for many young teachers was characterised by their wrestling with problems of status and identification. Career commitment was amongst the more important of these problems. Watson noted that, while commitment can be measured by the length of time a person remains a teacher, it is more realistic to examine commitment in terms of the extent to which a set of values is accepted. For women, the relevant values centred primarily about children and their development. Watson also suggested that New Zealand women managed to harmonise this concern with the dominant societal expectation of having a family, by viewing teaching experiences as preparation for child rearing activities, as well as considering motherhood itself as an additional qualification for further teaching. This is consonant with Mason, Dressell and Bain's (1963) proposition that for many women the choice of teaching as a career is contingent on their rearing a family.

Watson's study, however, throws little light on the development of commitment during the training period, apart from the occasional retrospective comment — for example, "College hardly prepared me for

the realities of the classroom". It is reported here since it represents one of the few New Zealand attempts to research this field.

Of greater significance though is John E. Watson's (1958a, 1958b, 1966) longitudinal study of 1957 entrants to New Zealand teachers' colleges. Watson, who was endeavouring to ascertain which students became permanent teachers, administered a variety of tests, including the Australian Council for Educational Research AL and AQ Tests of General Ability, a New Zealand version of the Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory, and the 1956 revision of Cattell's 16 P.F. Test of Personality. In addition, primary trainees completed the ACER T.C. English and Mathematics Test and the NZCER Social Studies T.C. 57 Test (Watson, 1958a).

Watson was also concerned with 'commitment' and in his biographical questionnaire included items on (a) the taking of the decision to become a teacher; (b) those who influenced decisions; (c) views on the advantages and disadvantages of teaching as an occupation; (d) preferences for other occupations; and, (e) specific reasons for the choice. Although the manner of derivation is not specified, Watson has obviously gleaned some idea of the level of the individual's commitment from these factors. Writing in the *New Zealand Teachers' College Association Journal* in 1966 Watson commented that a large proportion of the young people who had accepted a studentship were still weighing up their abilities, values and life chances. He went on to say,

Each year we require young people in the middle of this exploratory phase to be interviewed, selected and bonded some years before they have had an opportunity to assess their capacity for teaching, let alone their liking for it.

(Watson, 1966, p.9)

Watson's other major findings relating to commitment also have significance for the present study:

1. Five per cent of the intake admitted they were preparing for another occupation, usually mission work, religious ministry or one of the arts. Most of these people had acted on their intentions some years later.

2. The group who had the highest rate of retention were woodwork and metalwork teachers. Eighty per cent of these were men, and significantly were drawn from an older age group and hence were past the 'exploratory phase'.
3. Of the primary trainees entering in 1957, 60% of the men and 16% of the women were still teaching in 1965.
4. Nearly half of the younger recruits suggested that they had not been well informed about teaching as a career at the time of their acceptance of a studentship. Nor did they possess strong commitment to the career on entry to teachers' college.
5. One in three of the male entrants and one-fifth of the women preferred another career.
6. The women had formed a desire to teach at an earlier age than the men, but their commitment was contingent on marriage.
7. A "preliminary sorting and classification" revealed that, in terms of commitment, those individuals continuing to teach were not appreciably different from those who had resigned.

Thus Watson concluded;

There seems to be no reason to suppose that those who drift into teaching are any more likely to resign or withdraw from the classroom than those who have clear and well-informed explanations for the choice at the point of recruitment.

(Watson, 1966, p.10)

The importance of Watson's work is to be found in the implicit suggestions it contains. For example, his conclusion implied that some students who were waverers on entry, appear later to have become committed. This seems to differ from Marsland's suggestion that commitment declined in training; however, it is important to note that Watson's sample had experienced everyday classroom practice, whereas Marsland's were post-tested at college. Thus Becker's "investment" proposition may have influenced Watson's group (Becker, 1960). It appears to be necessary to consider reasons for staying on the job, as

well as conducting *post hoc* analyses of the Watson type.

COMMITMENT TO NURSING

A search of the relevant literature revealed very few studies of commitment to nursing. Most concentrated on the phenomenon of 'wastage' from nurse training and mentioned commitment only in passing. However, one major study was completed recently in England by Birch (1975). He investigated the part played by the hospital in modifying students' attitudes, and as well monitored changes in the students' aspirations and their level of persistence in continuing training. Birch administered a series of personality, mental ability and attitude tests to a complete cohort of student nurses on their entry to training. In addition he administered the Kirk 'Attitude to Nursing' test after 6 and 18 months. He also interviewed a "reasonable proportion" of those students who were still in training after 18 months (the "stayers") as well as most of those who withdrew from the course.

Birch's investigation, while being one of the most thorough in the area, and certainly an advance on much of the completed research, contained some serious shortcomings. First, the post-testing was completed after 18 months of training of a three-year training programme in the case of "students", and a two-year programme in the case of "pupils". Second, Birch gives no indication of attrition rates in the post-tests which were conducted by a postal questionnaire, using terms such as "reasonable proportions". As the initial sample ($N = 136$) was small, and as he admits to losing one "large cohort" in the early stages of testing, this may be a serious defect (Birch, 1975, p.30). On the other hand, Birch appears to have succeeded in interviewing the great majority of the leavers; hence data relating to that group is more valid than either his comparative material or the evidence relating to motivational or attitudinal changes. Indeed, some case studies cited are of major significance.

Third, Birch gives far too much credence to pencil and paper attitude and personality inventories, particularly the Rotter Incomplete Sentences Blank — which has difficulties in both administration and assessment — and the relatively unknown Kirk Attitudes to Nursing Test. In the latter instance details of scoring are not given,

nor are measures of reliability and validity indicated.

Despite these methodological faults, Birch's findings are worth careful consideration, even if only on a tentative basis. Of most significance to the present study is his conclusion that student nurses "lose some degree of motivation as training progresses" (Birch, 1975, p.52). He claimed that this diminution was revealed in one or more of three ways: (a) Students no longer placed nursing as first in rank order of interest; (b) they no longer possessed a drive to pass examinations with distinction; and (c) social life was no longer sacrificed to the demands of training.

Birch found relatively little difference between leavers and stayers in the categories of mental ability, school achievement, social class, and most of the personality variables (the exception here being items N and O of the 16 P.F. Questionnaire, and the Rotter Incomplete Sentences Blank). Of particular interest is Birch's conclusion that leavers were, in Rotter's terms, 'maladjusted' in comparison with stayers, and that stayers experienced much less conflict than leavers.

Birch's comments relating to the student stayers' attitudes towards the hospital are also of major interest. They may be summarised as follows:

1. The student stayers frequently expressed dissatisfaction with the system of training and conditions of service. Educational and administrative divisions of the service were called into question equally.
2. Conditions in nurses' residences attracted considerable criticism, the atmosphere being described as "unfriendly", "impersonal" and "very lonely". The nurses' home was described by at least one person as "a female prison".
3. Most felt that although some sacrifice was necessary and acceptable during training, better management techniques would go a long way to preserve social life outside the hospital.
4. Frustration was often experienced because on one day students would be credited with little ability, and on the next would be expected to assume full charge on night duty.
5. Two-thirds of the sample admitted experiencing fear,

the most common cause of which was night duty. Several students expressed a fear of death and worried about the presence of a body in the ward. One girl stated "each ward brings with it another experience of fear because of the unknown". Other causes of fear were lack of preparation for practical and academic responsibilities, "specializing patients" and emergency situations.

6. The majority of students stated that they were satisfied with their wage rate.
7. "Off duty" ranked high as a cause of dissatisfaction; in the hospitals studied, off duty was almost invariably announced on a Friday for the following week. Two-thirds of the sample believed efficient rota systems were possible if senior staff had the will to implement them.
8. Students reacted adversely to "cramming in blocks".
9. The perennial problem of procedures recommended in the classroom differing from those used in the ward was identified by almost every student. Conflict in this area appeared to be one of the greatest undermining influences in training.
10. Half of the students interviewed were critical of the fact that teaching was rarely carried out on the wards.
11. In the field of personal relationships with nurses and doctors, the students were scathing in their comments.
12. The sample was considerably less critical of ward sisters than it was of tutors, but it appeared that a traumatic encounter with a ward sister early in training was often a factor resulting in withdrawal.
13. Relationships with patients were always described with accompanying looks of deep satisfaction and delight.
14. The curriculum of the training course was frequently seen by the trainees to be deficient in psychology (Birch, 1975, pp.74-75).

In his leaver interviews Birch identified 24 reasons for withdrawal. These are summarised, in rank of order, in Table 1.1 which

appears in Volume II of this thesis.

Birch also outlined 10 case studies in which he endeavoured to pinpoint the "critical incidents" leading to resignation. However he made no generalisations about these, probably because of the small sample, apart from commenting on the necessity for training staff and ward personnel to relate to each student personally and to gear the programme of instruction to allow for discussion of individual problems.

SUMMARY

In the five major studies reviewed several interesting similarities and differences may be observed. Most researchers for example, suggested that the age group entering teaching and nursing are in the exploratory phase, and consequently it may be inferred that a range of commitment is likely amongst entrants. Second, with the exception of Watson, the researchers suggested that commitment declined overall while the students were in training. Third, several of the researchers drew attention to factors which may create changes in commitment, but their research design precluded the drawing of any definitive conclusions in this area. Nonetheless, their observations, particularly those of Marsland and Birch who seem to get closer to the problem than most others, are important to this enquiry and provide a foundation for subsequent research.

THE PRESENT RESEARCH

The question of the relationship between college training and attitude changes has been substantially reviewed overseas. Feldman (1969), for example, cites over 180 studies in which an attempt was made to ascertain the effect of colleges and universities on students' attitudes and behaviours, while in the United Kingdom Cohen and Toomey (1973) have summarised the results of numerous research projects in this area. This enquiry re-examines the question for two particular reasons. First, vocational commitment is likely to be specific to given communities, and there have been no specific studies in New Zealand in either nurse or teacher training.

Second, as will be argued in more detail below, most current methods of ascertaining degree and type of commitment have been defective on both definitional and methodological grounds. This study endeavours, therefore, to remedy the omissions and to utilise improved methodology.

The present enquiry, accordingly, took the form of a longitudinal investigation of the development of vocational commitment among prospective entrants to teaching and nursing in one New Zealand city. The research was planned to focus on:

1. the degree and type of expressed vocational commitment (EVC) held by the sample on entry to training;
2. the direction of, and stated reasons for, changes in the degree and type of EVC in the course of three years of training;
3. an analysis of both entry EVC and changes of EVC in connection with certain entry variables (e.g. sex, socio-economic status etc.); and to a lesser extent, because of the research limitations discussed below,
4. a tentative consideration of how EVC was related to behaviours, such as staying on or leaving the course, and success or failure in the training programme.

One difficulty in interpreting research reports in this area is the inability of researchers to agree on the characteristics of commitment, and, even within their reports to use the concepts consistently. In a seminal article Becker (1960) has stated that the term has been used in some instances to describe attitudes, in others to mark out forms of action characteristic of particular groups, in yet others as an independent variable to account for certain kinds of behaviour of individuals or groups, and finally as a 'mode of analysis' of a wide range of phenomena such as power, religion or occupational commitment. This diversity obliges this enquiry to state explicitly the notions or content of the concept of commitment. The first part of Chapter 2 is devoted, therefore, to an analysis of the characteristics appropriately associated with the term. This is followed by an application of the notions discussed to the concept of 'vocational commitment'.

A detailed description of the methodology and research design

appears in Chapter 3. The overall plan of the research, which differs from many others insofar as it endeavours to marry a classical pre-post test design with an interview-discussion-observational study of representative sub-samples, is outlined in this chapter. Additionally, the chapter contains details of the construction of the scales designed to measure EVC, an account of how the interview schedules were formulated, an explication of the observational-group discussion section of the study and a description of other instruments used and background data collected.

Chapter 4 concentrates upon some of the results of the enterprise. The sample is described, and the sub-sample related to it. The characteristics of the EVC scale are discussed, and then related to a number of variables. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the potentialities of EVC as a predictor of certain behaviours. In Chapter 5 attention is directed to a consideration of changes in EVC, and possible reasons are given for such changes. Most of the data in this chapter is derived from the sub-sample transcripts, observational records and personal files. Chapter 6 further analyses some of the methodological and theoretical issues which emerged from the study, and reviews the concept of commitment developed in Chapter 2. Discussion then turns to theoretical and practical implications of the research, and relevant sociological issues are examined in the context of Giddens (1976) framework. Additionally career choice theories such as those of Ginzberg and his colleagues (1951) and Super (1957) are reconsidered. In conclusion, some practical issues for nurse education and teacher education are discussed in the light of such recent commentaries as the James Committee (Department of Education and Science 1972) and the Carpenter Report (1971).

CHAPTER 2

TOWARDS A CLARIFICATION OF THE CONCEPTS OF COMMITMENT AND VOCATIONAL COMMITMENT

OVERVIEW: The chapter commences with a conceptual clarification of the term 'commitment', drawing on relevant sociological and psychological sources. Criteria on which commitment may be based are discussed, and strength of commitment is distinguished from type of commitment. These criteria are then considered in the vocational context. It is concluded that the concept is multidimensional, and may be measured by a self report scale involving five dimensions. Consideration then turns to a critical appraisal of how vocational commitment might develop. This discussion notes that the theoretical bases for the study were derived from the sociological principles of role and socialisation, as well as career choice theories. The chapter concludes with an outline of the research questions.

The decision to undertake a conceptual clarification rather than simply to discuss definitions arrived at by others reflects the position taken by Becker (1960), namely that a term is better explored by analysing the characteristics involved — or the 'images' it evokes — rather than by eliminating a series of possibilities and arriving at a narrower statement. Conceptual clarification is a necessary foundation for building any hypothetical construct which is itself later subjected to empirical testing.

COMMITMENT — THE TERM

Dictionary definitions often emphasise the negative aspect of commitment, that is of a person's course of action being restricted — as in the case of commitment to a mental hospital or prison. However, some social scientists would want to emphasise a more positive aspect of the term. For example, Stebbins (1971, p.35) argues that the term can imply a "... positive, personal attraction to a cognitive state". Moore (1969, p.868) has gone a step further in suggesting that commitment entails "... the enthusiastic acceptance of pleasurable duties". Stebbins and Moore are stressing that a person may become committed to

a line of action because of his or her personal desires or beliefs. This may occur with or without any institutional directive.

The more positive sense of commitment is well illustrated by Krathwohl and his colleagues (1964) in their *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* (Affective Domain). They make it clear that in their view commitment is an attitude, or more specifically, a "belief ... [which] involves a high degree of certainty". In describing the notion further they utilise such terms as "conviction", "certainty beyond a shadow of doubt", "bordering on faith" and "loyalty to a position or cause" (Krathwohl et al., 1964, p.149). It is in this sense that one can best understand a person's 'commitment' to a religious ideal, to an ideology, or to a particular set of moral values.

What is common to these contrasting aspects of commitment is that they both involve an adoption by the individual of a clear line of action. In the case of involuntary commitment a person's behaviour would be influenced mainly by institutional requirements. On the other hand, it can be argued that a person who becomes voluntarily committed is more influenced by personal discipline. This voluntary, personal aspect would be subject to similar situational and temporal oscillation or changes as occurs with other kinds of cognitively guided behaviour.

For example, Joan of Arc by refusing to "confess" even under torture, could be said to have revealed strong commitment to her cause. If, however, she had modified her views slightly then her position might have been judged as being less strong than previously. Moreover, if she had subsequently rejected her first position, except on relatively minor matters, then it could be argued that she was then weakly committed — or even uncommitted. What is being suggested here is that at any point of time the strength of a person's commitment to a given line of behaviour may be placed on a continuum ranging from strong at one end to weak — falling to zero — at the other. In other words, it is not a dichotomous characteristic.

The criteria of the strength of commitment

In pointing out the varying strengths of commitment an individual may hold towards certain beliefs or actions, at least two criteria for a person to be adjudged committed have been introduced in the discussion. First, a committed person is one who holds consistently to a given belief or line of action (Kiesler and Sakumura, 1966). This means that actions which show a valuing of an object or phenomenon

have been repeated. Moreover, a committed person is considered likely to retain such values over an extensive period of time. Thus, commitment is not demonstrated by a momentary enthusiasm or passion which is here today and gone tomorrow, but it shows in behaviour which endures over time (Krathwohl et al., 1964). Endurability as well as consistency is involved. Accordingly, a committed person will be one who has probably held the value for some considerable time in the past, and will also be likely to hold it well into the future.

But while consistency and endurability are necessary criteria there are other conditions in the commitment concept. Krathwohl and his colleagues (1964) have suggested that a committed person reveals considerable energy, drive and perseverance in the pursuance of goals associated with his belief. Thus commitment is an active and not a passive state; a committed person generally follows a line of action which, by its very nature, illustrates his commitment. Moreover, the committed person is rarely reluctant to disclose these feelings to others; or, put in another way, he demonstrates dedication to the task at hand (McNamara, 1972). This point may be illustrated by the actions of various people opposed to a sporting tour of South Africa by, say, a New Zealand representative rugby team. Person A, for example, may not wish to discuss the issue with supporters of the tour, but may be willing to write letters to the editors of newspapers using a *nom-de-plume*. Thus, if we accept public disclosure as a criterion Person A, whilst being committed to the cause of stopping the tour, would not be placed at the strong end of the continuum. Person B, on the other hand, may discuss the tour issue with anyone who is prepared to listen and will inevitably join the demonstration marches. He is prepared to support his words with public deeds and would therefore be closer to the strong end of the continuum than Person A, at least as far as this criterion is concerned. The important point to be derived from this example is that commitment is usually observable in the way people behave, as well as in their expression of feelings.

To sum up so far. Three major characteristics have been suggested as necessary criteria for a person to be termed committed:

1. Pursuing a line of action, or, in other words, repeating behaviour in similar situations (consistency);
2. Pursuing a line of action over a period of time (endurability);

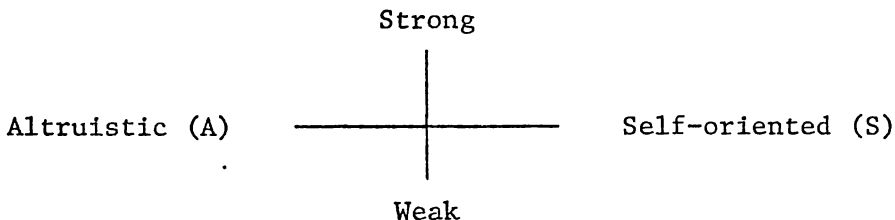
3. Willingness to disclose a set of beliefs (disclosure).

These criteria form a useful basis on which to proceed methodologically, and as such may serve as a basic set of characteristics to indicate a person's strength of commitment.

Types of commitment

However, there is another way of viewing commitment. It may be argued that people become committed to a course of action, or a set of values, for a number of different reasons. For example, some people, in supporting certain causes, do so because of altruistic beliefs; that is their actions are predicated upon a desire to help other people. At the other extreme some people's actions are motivated by self interest; in other words they are self-oriented. As with the discussion on the strong and weak forms of commitment, these types may be placed on a continuum, with the middle stages representing an admixture of the two types. This point will be developed further when we come to consider vocational commitment. For the moment it may be conjectured that the degrees and types of commitment set out in the figure below may be identified.

A bipolar model of commitment



VOCATIONAL COMMITMENT

The criteria of commitment (consistency, endurability and disclosure) and the bipolar model argued for above provide a useful means of analysis of vocational commitment. The qualified concept of 'vocational' commitment may also be dealt with by way of strength or weakness.

Strength of vocational commitment

First, to satisfy the consistency criterion a person will remain, or intend to remain, in his selected vocation for a fairly lengthy period. He will not see his job as a stepping-stone to some other

vocation, and moreover he will demonstrate his commitment through consistent lines of vocational behaviour (Becker, 1960, p.33).

Second, to satisfy the endurability criterion, he will maintain his commitment despite other attractions; in fact it has been argued that vocational commitment is at its highest when circumstances such as financial reward are held by the individual to be subservient to the importance of the occupation itself (Safilios-Rothschild, 1971). Also related to this is the view that a vocationally committed person is one who is likely to have held for a considerable length of time a desire to enter his chosen vocation (Sobol, 1963; Krathwohl et al., 1964; Fogarty, Rapoport and Rapoport, 1971). This point has been supported by considerable research evidence (Rogoff, 1957; Levin, Hilton and Leiderman, 1957; McNamara, 1972).

The order in which occupational preferences are expressed by an individual must also be taken into account here. For example, a person is more likely to be committed to a vocation which is his first preference than one which is his second. The highly committed individual will probably maintain that, all other things being equal, the occupation that he has selected is his first and only preference.

Consideration of the third condition, disclosure, brings to light points relating to both degree and type of commitment. Many researchers have argued that a person's motives, or his reasons for selecting a particular career are crucial to his future success and commitment in that vocation (Tudhope, 1944; Loftis, 1963). Hence much research has been directed towards ascertaining the reasons which individuals gave for selecting one occupation rather than another (Kelsall and Kelsall, 1969). While it has not been definitely established that 'desirable' motives are positively related either to success in an occupation or to a person's commitment, it does seem reasonable to assume that motivational factors may be at least a partial measure of the degree, and more particularly of the type, of vocational commitment.

Finally, it can be argued that some indication of a person's commitment to an occupation may be derived from an individual's self estimate of his own degree of devotion for that job. This takes into account the notion that commitment is demonstrated by a feeling for, or dedication to, an occupation (McNamara, 1972, p.91).

The above argument suggests that a measure of an individual's

strength of commitment to a particular vocation could be derived from a self report scale encompassing five dimensions:

1. His (or her) ordinal career preference (O dimension).
2. The length of time he (or she) has held a desire for the career (T dimension).
3. The motivations held for selecting the career (M dimension).
4. The career plans of the individual (C dimension).
5. The self estimation of vocational commitment (S dimension).

Types of vocational commitment

It can also be argued that the types of commitment described earlier apply to vocational motivation. A person may be committed to his vocation for various kinds of reasons, such as self-interest, empathy or altruism. As far as teaching is concerned, it has been suggested that some individuals enter it because it is a career which gives them the opportunity to exercise authority over others, or because it allows them to fulfil what McClelland (1961) has termed the affiliation motive. Thus some persons may select their vocation in order to fulfil motives relating to power, authority, security or self interest. Such persons may be categorised as possessing a self-oriented commitment, and they may be contrasted with those who are devoted to their chosen vocation because it offers an opportunity to help others. Such people may be termed altruistically committed (Snizek, 1972).

This division is based partly on Holland's (1966) well known contentions, but receives empirical support from the work of Rosenberg and his colleagues (1957) who found that three distinct value orientations emerged in their sample group: people oriented, self expression oriented and extrinsic reward oriented. Rosenberg and his associates noted that different occupational groups placed different emphasis on these values. Architects, for example, sought for self expression, whereas social workers were found to be people oriented and real estate financiers placed most emphasis on extrinsic rewards. Similar findings have been recorded in recent work conducted by Smithers in the United Kingdom (Smithers, 1969, 1975).

A further type of commitment bears discussion in the vocational context. There are some people who demonstrate commitment of a kind by merely staying in the occupation; however they are not markedly committed, and would change occupation if the chance arose. Such people may remain because of reasons external to the job itself, such as bonding, pension schemes, societal pressures, or in Becker's terms, because their job represents the best 'side bet' (Becker, 1960). Their reasons are ones entirely extrinsic to the job itself. For these people, as Cotgrove and Fuller (1972) have commented, 'choice' is probably too strong a word regarding their selection of an occupation. Much of the research on occupational choice views an occupation as part of the search for self actualisation. However Cotgrove and Fuller point out that work will be an avenue for self actualisation for only a small minority whose jobs are expressive of themselves. As they put it

For most, a significant role must be sought elsewhere, perhaps in family life or leisure. In some cases, temporary and synthetic identities may serve as substitutes for the damage and stigmatised identities conferred by society on those who fail the 11-plus, fail at school, and are faced with the 'choice' of a range of menial jobs. For some of these individuals, a partial solution may be the temporary identity conferred by the ritualistic and symbolic behaviour of the youth culture; for others, it is the extreme solution of the synthetic identities of 'skin-head', 'mod' or 'rocker'. In such cases, occupation is not so much 'chosen' as 'entered', for instrumental reasons and without commitment. Indeed such individuals are characterized by the rapidity with which they change jobs. Meaning and self-concept must be sought elsewhere; they cannot be conferred by alienating work.

(Cotgrove and Fuller, 1972, p.60)

In terms of degree, these people would be termed weakly committed; in terms of type, as they are neither self-oriented nor altruistic it is proposed to call them non-committed. This suggests that types of vocational commitment are best illustrated in a triangular model rather than the linear representation in the figure on page 18, with the categories of self-oriented commitment, altruistic commitment and non-committed at each corner.

Having arrived at a provisional set of criterial attributes for commitment, and having applied these to vocations, it is now appropriate to turn to a consideration of a theory to explain the development of vocational commitment.

HOW DOES VOCATIONAL COMMITMENT DEVELOP?

Apart from Becker's analysis in 1960, Stebbin's (1971) application of commitment to deviant behaviour, and Kiesler's (1971) discussion of the psychology of commitment there has been little effort to construct a developmental theory of commitment. Moreover, Becker, Stebbins and Kiesler did not aim their work specifically at vocational commitment. In the absence of a systematic theory, it becomes necessary to derive hypotheses from currently-accepted sociological principles as well as from some of the better-known discussions about career development.

Role and socialisation

Two sociological constructs have played a major part in the formulation of this study: role and socialisation. Role concept is one of the best known theories — and most frequently abused — in sociology. The appeal of the explanations of those favouring role concept lies in the simplicity and orderliness of the ideas. Indeed such has been their attractiveness that major claims have been made for their application. Biddle and Thomas (1966), for example, have claimed that the role analyst can describe complex real-life phenomena with an exactness probably unsurpassed by any other single concept in the social sciences. While being a little more sceptical about its achievements to date, Banton (1965) has commented that most major sociological theories can be introduced by use of role-concept, and Merton (1964) has claimed that social statuses and social role comprise the major building blocks of social structure.

Despite these claims it is unwise to accept role-concept as the only key to explanations of behaviour and attitude formation. In the last two decades the principles of 'role' have come under consistent attack, first from the conflict theorists such as Dahrendorf (1958) and Rex (1961) and more recently by sociologists such as Giddens (1974) and those who may be termed 'reflexive or interpretative sociologists', most of whom derive their stimulus from the writings of Schutz (1967). Moreover, one strand of sociological thought, symbolic interactionism, deriving from the work of Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934), and developed by Blumer (1962; 1966) and Becker (1961; 1968) has consistently suggested an alternative to role concept. Nonetheless, even in this context, it is suggested that role behaviour usually involves the

assumption of some form of symbolic interaction (Neiman and Hughes, 1951). Role has, therefore, until recently been one of the corner-stones of sociological theory.

Thus, in spite of the often cogent arguments against the concept of role, it was felt that the present study required consideration of some such descriptive device to take account of what Coulsen (1972, p.127) has called the "structured network of expectations" which are involved in vocational activities such as teaching and nursing.

The writer's view, at the start of this investigation, was most influenced by the work of Popitz (1972), who, through the writings of Simmel, introduced a phenomenological element to role concept. A brief summary of Popitz's notions appears in Appendix N.

Theoretical and empirical work on professional socialisation also influenced the present writer in the early formulation of this study. Major influences in this area were Becker and Carper (1956), Geer (1966), Merton, Reader and Kendall (in Merton, 1957) with medical students, and Lortie (1959) with law students. More recently the work begun by these researchers has been developed by Gibson (1972) and Marsland (1970, 1971, 1973) in the United Kingdom. The last-named has been particularly influential on the present writer. The findings of his research were described in Chapter 1; an account and critique of his theoretical model is to be found in Appendix O.

Theories of occupational choice

1. Stage theories

The stage theory of occupational choice, as enunciated by Ginzberg and his colleagues (1951), has links with both role concept and socialisation theories. Ginzberg and his colleagues suggested that occupational choice results from a combination of the individual's growing self determination, and his increasingly realistic adjustment to the environment as he matures. Ginzberg and his colleagues postulated further that there are three major stages in this development: a period of fantasy, in which the individual is unable to assess his potentialities; a tentative period in which he weighs up various possibilities; and finally a realistic period in which he makes a choice based on his desires and the actual possibilities open to him. This developmental progression is lengthy, and according to Ginzberg and his associates the end result is a compromise between the

"dispositions of the individual and the reality of the environment in which his choice is made" (Ginzberg et al., 1951).

This "stage theory" of career choice has been adapted by a number of theorists and researchers. The psychologist Super, for example, has affirmed that each individual, in a long period of time leading up to job selection moves through a series of stages in which his experiences predispose him towards selecting some job whilst rejecting others (Super, 1949, 1957). Although Super's notions differ from Ginzberg's insofar as the former favours growing actualisation as the prime explanation of career choice, whereas the latter favours 'compromise' in the light of the given circumstances, the interesting point for the present study is that both believe that developmental stages exist. Nor are they alone with this view. Tiedman and O'Hara (1963), for example, have suggested a series of 'anticipatory stages', consisting of periods of exploration, crystallisation, choice and clarification.

In this type of theory a 'career' is viewed as a patterned series of adjustments made by an individual towards the network of institutions, formal organisations and informal characteristics of performance, in which the work of the occupation is carried out (Becker, 1960). Thus career choice involves each individual in recognising and interpreting his or her abilities and interests and developing these into a schema which relates to both past events and present contingencies and possibilities. This schema allows the individual to make decisions with some knowledge of their potential outcome since it affords him some pre-knowledge of how he will probably behave in certain situations. From the point of view of the present study, then, if stage theories have any validity the type and degree of an individual's commitment will be related to the stage he is currently within — a positivistic assertion which deserves the attention of empirical research.

For example, Super and his colleagues (1967) have argued that considerable trialling precedes establishment in an occupation, and further that this occurs after leaving high school. Thus from 1933, when Buckler suggested that the ages 15 to 25 were "exploratory", through Ginzberg and his associates in 1951 who termed the ages 17 to 20 as "tentative", to Super and his associates in 1967 who labelled a similar age group as "floundering", researchers appear to agree that the age span embracing the bulk of school leavers is one in which people are relatively undecided as to what their future occupation should or might

be. This position receives some support from Gordon (1972) who emphasised that the 16-20 age group was striving towards autonomy. However he was more tentative than many stage theorists, pointing out that regression can occur. Most members of the sample used in the present study fall into the "floundering" age group mentioned by Ginzberg, Super and other age-stage theorists.

2. The 'accident' theory

Stage theories of career choice are founded, at least implicitly, on a belief that decisions taken and plans made in advance will be rationally based. However, agreement on the extent of rationality and planning is not universal. Butler (1968) for example, has pointed out that a substantial number of investigators have discussed their results in terms which suggest a rejection of the processional nature of occupational choice. These writers favour a "single factor interpretation" whereby "jobs are seen to be chosen as the result of exposure to single unplanned influences which occur quite by chance..." (Butler, 1968, p.5).

Caplow (1954) and Rogoff (1953) are amongst the better known proponents of this 'accident' theory. An example of a study which falls into this general field, and which is of relevance here, was conducted by Katz and Martin in 1962. They found that few student nurses appeared to make specific decisions to take up nursing, but because of a series of decisions unrelated to future occupational choice, their actual choice was the outcome of 'delimitation' or attrition. Katz and Martin argued, as a consequence, that occupational choice may be based on a series of situational decisions which have no rational connection with the choice of a particular occupation, but which nevertheless signalled the commencement of a career.

While this view may have some validity, it is just as reasonable to argue, in line with the view put forward by Anderson and Western (1969; 1971), that people view vocational choice in relation to their own self concepts in a rational manner. The 'accident theory' appears to take too little cognizance of the predispositions developed by a person's total life experience — predispositions which may well be central to occupational choice (Butler, 1968). But the theory is at least consonant with an observation made earlier, namely that many entrants to vocations have not made a definite choice but, because of circumstances almost beyond their control, have drifted into the career.

In short, the situation may arise when their final choice may have been unplanned, but each position they have occupied in the meantime may have limited the range of new positions from which they may choose (Guba, Jackson and Bidwell, 1963). Moreover, there is considerable evidence to support the proposition that a strong relationship exists between the length of time a person spends in a particular job and his opportunities to change.

3. The 'critical event' theory

As pointed out earlier it can be argued that occupational choice is usually a progressive process. For many people a series of 'critical events' will occur, which may involve an opening or closing of opportunities, depending on what is entailed by the particular event. This situation also applies at the time of actual career choice. For example, if a person chooses banking as a career, then a number of opportunities open up — accounting, public relations, investment and brokerage are all possibilities — while others, such as medicine, veterinary science or physics, may close off. As time passes, a funnelling effect occurs, resulting in an overall delimiting of alternatives. As Stebbins (1971, p.39) points out, "... the businessman who spends thousands of dollars and thousands of hours developing a corner grocery store is in no position, as a rule, to quit to take up medicine". Put in another way, occupational choice should be viewed as an ongoing process, rather than as a point in time. Furthermore, as Ginzberg and his associates (1951) state, it tends to be increasingly irreversible.

In developing this position further, Geer (1966) suggests a connection between vocational commitment and the status position of the job in society, the degree of respect awarded the job, and the length of rigour of training. Thus Geer suggests that for her sample of medical students 'valuables' were acquired in training which were unlikely to be given up easily. Furthermore, most institutions take steps to maintain staff stability; thus, in banking, superannuation schemes, and low interest housing loans serve as constraints against individuals leaving the occupation (Stebbins, 1971, pp.37-8). In line with Gross (1967), then, it can be suggested that choices may result from moving away from situations that are undesirable towards more preferable goals. Borow (1961) has referred to this as a kind of 'occupational foreclosure' in which many fields of work are progressively

eliminated.

Translating this idea into terms of vocational commitment, Becker's notion that an individual makes '...a series of side bets of such magnitude that he finds himself unwilling to lose them', is easily appreciated (Becker, 1960, p.38). Thus, one may hypothesise that the longer a person stays on the job, the more committed (either voluntarily or through force of circumstance) he becomes to it. These notions receive some support from the field of phenomenological sociology. Schutz (1967) has reminded us that an event often becomes meaningful only when it is interpreted in the light of subsequent events. Thus the successive events in a person's career development mentioned above need to be reinterpreted over a period of time and, from a methodological viewpoint, should be analysed by a researcher only in conjunction with the actors involved.

Summary

Three possible explanations of the development of vocational commitment are suggested by this discussion of career choice theories:

1. Vocational commitment may develop out of a planned sequence of events, with the decisions taken being primarily rational.
2. Vocational commitment may spring from a single unplanned event, which has occurred quite by chance.
3. Vocational commitment may develop as a result of a combination of planned and unplanned events, which creates a narrowing or funnelling effect.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Bearing in mind the points derived, first, from consideration of the theoretical issues discussed in this chapter and, second, from the practical research described in Chapter 1, it is now possible to formulate questions of a more specific nature than those raised earlier. Then it was stated simply that the research would focus, first, on the degree and type of expressed vocational commitment held by entrants to nurse and teacher education, and secondly, on the changes in commitment which developed during training.

A subsequent analysis of commitment brought out criterial attributes of (a) consistency (b) endurability and (c) disclosure. When these attributes were considered in the context of vocational commitment it was argued that the consistency attribute would be exemplified by a person's willingness to stay in a job. It was suggested further that the endurability attribute would be demonstrated, first, by a person's resistance to the attractions of other occupations (the C dimension); second by his having held a lengthy desire to enter the job (the T dimension); and third, by his stating that it was his first choice of career (the O dimension). The disclosure attribute, it was suggested, would appear in the person's expressed motives for wanting to enter the occupation (the M dimension) and in his self report of the strength of his commitment (the S dimension).

It was also suggested that a person's strength of Expressed Vocational Commitment (EVC) could be measured, and that the scores would lie on a continuum ranging from strong to weak. Similarly it was proposed that an assessment of the type of EVC could best be made according to a triangular model, with altruism, self orientation and non-commitment at each corner. Thus the first research problem to be tackled was whether or not a valid and reliable scale to measure EVC strength and type could be successfully developed. If it could, then it would be possible to explore the extent of vocational commitment of a sample of entrants to the nursing and teaching professions, together with the relationship of this commitment to their other personal characteristics.

Tied in with these issues are obviously a number of specific questions which relate to the developmental process. How important, for example, are "critical events" in the formation of EVC? Is there a delimiting of opportunity with the passing of time, and does this influence EVC? To what extent is an unclear perception of the future vocational role (or poor anticipatory socialisation) related to EVC?

The second focus proposed for the research concerned the direction of changes in EVC strength and type during the years of training and the possible reasons for such changes. Ascertaining the direction of change, which is at Weber's "level of description" is relatively simple. One can state with some certainty, from observations and from the subject's utterances, that he has changed in a particular way; however, it is much less easy to state why he has changed (Weber's

"level of understanding"). A person's statement of reasons cannot be accepted as a sufficient explanation, for he is probably unable himself to unravel the complicated interaction involved between, for example, his experiences and his personality.

As a starting point in tackling these problems, the major explanatory theories, and their derivations in the field of career choice, were first scanned. It was concluded from this analysis that the concept of role would need major modification in the light of the views of the interpretive sociologists if it were to form an adequate exploratory basis for changes in EVC. A compromise position, whereby attitude change was considered in relation both to the organisational structure and to individual factors and which was suitable for empirical testing was then put forward.

Against this background, the following specific questions regarding changes in EVC suggested themselves:

1. How influential are other people in the development of a person's EVC?
2. How influential are the rules and regulations (or the 'structure') of the institutions involved?
3. How influential are factors relating to a person's 'individuality'?

The final focus of the research, as outlined in the last chapter, was concerned with the relationship of the strength of EVC to subsequent behaviour. The proposal here was to explore the efficiency of EVC scores as a predictor of behaviour. Some questions posited were: Would a high EVC score on entry, either alone or in combination with other variables, be an indicator of subsequent success on the job? Would it be related to leaving or completing the training programme? What other factors are involved in decisions to complete or not complete training?

Finally it is clear from what has already been said that the research would need to be both eclectic and multidisciplinary. It had to be eclectic in the sense that there is no single clear-cut framework within which it could be devised. And it had to be multidisciplinary insofar as material and techniques had to be borrowed from both psychology and philosophy, as well as sociology, in its formulation.

At the back of this type of project must therefore lie the inevitable doubt: is such a broad approach viable?

With these points in mind, it is now appropriate to turn to a description of the research design and methodology.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

OVERVIEW: The methodological intentions of the researcher are outlined and research preliminaries described. A detailed account of how the EVC scales were developed follows. The pre-post section of the study is then outlined. This outline includes an account of the instruments used, and reasons for their choice. The interview, group discussion and observational sections of the study are each covered in turn; the chapter concludes with an account of the overall shape of the research design.

In developing the design and methodology for this research Trow's well known injunction, namely that "... research problem under investigation properly dictates the method of investigation" (Trow, 1957, p.33) was to the forefront. Every sociological research technique has its strengths and hazards which have been debated at length elsewhere (Becker and Geer, 1957; Trow, 1957; Becker and Geer, 1958; Mischel, 1968; Shipman, 1976). However, in following Trow's dictum, it was obvious that in order to answer the questions posed at the conclusion of the last chapter, scales had to be developed, interviews conducted, background data gathered and observations made. The intention of the researcher was, accordingly:

1. to develop and administer relevant questionnaires and scales at the beginning and the end of the training period;
2. to interview regularly a carefully selected portion of the sample at given checkpoints, and to encourage this 'sub-sample' to volunteer information at any time when they felt changes in vocational commitment were occurring;
3. to observe on and off the job behaviour, and to gather data relating to critical events from members of the role set; and

4. to conduct additional interviews, particularly of the leavers, and to hold group discussions with other members of the sample groups to check on trends.

Unfortunately, because of problems stemming from the Hawthorne effect (Mayo, 1949), the third intention was not fully implemented.

The overall design for the research accordingly involved a longitudinal study of a cohort entering each of two training institutions — a teachers' college and a school of nursing. It can be argued that cross-sectional studies, sampling successive cohorts at the one time, may (providing the independent variables are sufficiently well controlled) indicate the changes which take place over a period of time. This may occasionally be so, but it is doubtful whether surveys of a cross sectional nature can be sufficiently sensitive to all the dynamics of the situation to establish either trends or reasons for change. Furthermore, cross-sectional studies usually rely heavily on subjects endeavouring to remember what they did and why, and this reconstruction, too, may obscure reasons for change. Moreover, because of their very nature, being conducted over a limited period of time, cross-sectional studies cannot satisfactorily allow for observations of their subjects' extended interactions with the everyday world.

On the other hand, longitudinal studies have the disadvantage of being susceptible to current environmental influences, and are accordingly often idiosyncratic to the time of the investigation. Changes in economic circumstances and job availability may have profound effects on attitudes towards various careers; thus the attitudinal changes detected in longitudinal, cohort studies may be features of the particular groups under study at the time, and may not be extrapolable to other parallel cohorts or to later entrants. Nonetheless, a longitudinal study appeared to offer a much more reliable research tool than a cross-sectional study in the existing circumstances. Accordingly it was the preferred approach.

RESEARCH PRELIMINARIES

The researcher spent the first eight months of the investigation observing procedures in the training institutions, as well as inter-

viewing teaching staff and a cross section of students. Following a full review of the relevant sociological and psychological literature on commitment, a scale purporting to measure expressed vocational commitment was developed. It should be noted that before the scale and other questionnaires were developed, the researcher endeavoured to ascertain the "common sense structure" employed by the subjects, in an endeavour to ensure that the meanings assigned by the respondents were grasped by the researcher (Berger and Luckman, 1966). This is in line with the phenomenological position postulated by Cicourel (1968) wherein he suggested the development of "models" containing typical motives, unstated meanings, possible symbolic misinterpretations, and so on.

DEVELOPING THE EXPRESSED VOCATIONAL COMMITMENT (EVC) SCALES

The EVC scales were developed on the five dimensions outlined earlier (see page 20). Three techniques for developing attitude scales were considered. Thurstone's technique (Thurstone and Chave, 1929) was rejected because of the difficulty in recruiting sufficient judges, especially as such people were to be used elsewhere in Q sorts; Guttman's (1950) Scalogram technique appeared unsuitable as the items would be difficult to rank, and large numbers are needed for this method. Consequently the technique described by Likert (1932) was utilised.

An open ended questionnaire was administered to a random sample (N = 54) of students from the two institutions early in 1972. Form A for each vocation was developed on the basis of their responses and subsequent discussion with them. Items culled from other researchers, as well as the researcher's own ideas, were also included. In this connection the recent analytic work of Cohen (1971) who provided an item profile of prospective teachers, and Mori (1965, 1966) who has factor analysed motivations for teacher were of major interest. The resulting questionnaire was then presented to ten people involved in nursing and teaching who were invited to rate the items for clarity, validity and relevance. Suggestions were requested for additional items. On the basis of the ratings and comments Form B was developed. Items receiving a low rating, or attracting a wide range view were eliminated. Form B was presented in mid 1972 to a group of third year

student nurses and teachers (N = 28) who were asked for comments on clarity, validity and relevance. Modifications in the light of their advice were incorporated into Form C.

Late in 1972 three lecturers in each of the institutions were requested to select twenty students from their third year classes, ten of whom were adjudged highly committed, ten lowly committed. Form C was administered to these students. A preliminary weighting was allotted to each item, based on the judgement of the experimenter as to its relative importance as well as the earlier ratings of the expert panel, and the tests marked accordingly. Each dimension to be measured was then analysed separately (using χ^2 and biserial correlation, where appropriate), to check on the discrimination level of each item.

The dimensions were then rescored according to the results of these item analyses, non-discriminating items were eliminated, and a fresh EVC score for the total scale arrived at. This was followed by a multiple regression analysis to determine the degree of influence of each dimension. The scale was then reweighted and a further regression analysis carried out (Cronbach, 1951). The multiple regression technique in fact simply confirmed the predictive efficiency of the original weightings.

The final form, Form D, was administered to the total 1973 intake of the teachers' college and school of nursing, which was to be the sample on which the investigation would be based. A number of non-discriminating items were left in the instrument for the purpose of providing background material for the structured interviews which were to follow. These items were not scored in the test *per se*.

Form E, the post-test which was administered at the completion of training, was an adaptation of Form D, the only changes being concerned with the time of administration; that is, all dimensions (except T) were reworded to gather expressions of present beliefs, not the beliefs that the sample held at the commencement of training.

In connection with the scoring of the EVC scale, it will be remembered that reference was made earlier (page 20) to the probable multidimensional nature of commitment. Although the five dimensions of EVC seem to be logically related, there could be a danger in reducing something basically multidimensional to a single score simply by adding the attribute scores together (Gardner, 1975). To discover

the relationship between separate dimensions in the present test, the five dimension scores achieved in the final piloting were inter-correlated. Coefficients ranging from 0.75 to 0.94 resulted. These relatively high inter-correlations, together with the result of the multiple regression analyses, supported the case for using a summated scale. Copies of the final forms of the EVC scale are included in Appendix A.

Scale reliability and validity

As the nature of the test was unsuited to the internal consistency method of establishing reliability, the test-retest method was used, acknowledging the weaknesses mentioned by Adams (1964, p.86). The retest took place four weeks after the original testing, which was regarded as sufficient time for subjects to have forgotten details of their original responses. Reliability coefficients of 0.94 for the teachers and 0.92 for the nurses were obtained. These were beyond the acceptable minimal level recommended by Kelley (1927).

The establishment of validity posed a difficult problem. A group of practitioners and colleagues were invited to comment on Form D prior to its administration, focussing on its relevance as a measure of EVC (reliability having been established). A check on validity by correlating the scale with other similar tests was considered (e.g. MTAI) but rejected on the grounds that their deficiencies would not rate them suitable criterion measures. Those tests purporting to cover the same grounds (e.g. Loftis, 1963, 1964; Evans, 1965) were also considered, but were judged to lack face validity. However, although the scale was not claimed to measure actual behaviour, but expressed intention, some indication of its validity was subsequently gained during the course of the investigation. For example, a comparison of the scores of stayers and voluntary leaves indicated a significant difference in EVC (e.g. nurses $t = 4.79$, $p < .001$; teachers $t = 3.27$, $p < .001$). Nevertheless, the validity of the scale must be inferred from its content rather than regarded as empirically demonstrated.

Identifying type of commitment

While strength of a subject's vocational commitment could be readily estimated from his total score on the EVC scale, identifying the nature (type) of his commitment was less clear-cut. Several items appeared to be possible type indicators. These items were submitted

to a group of practising teachers and nurses who were asked to grade each item on a 1-5 scale for altruism, self-orientation and degree of commitment. Under this technique ambiguous or irrelevant items tend to be given either a wide range of ratings or a fairly neutral medium rating. Items which revealed high correlations on the Kendall Coefficient of Concordance were retained as type indicators as follows:

1. Teachers

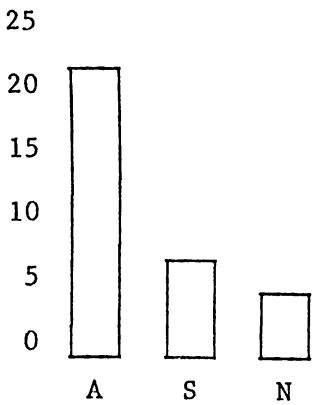
- (a) Altruism (A) v, x, ~~xv~~, xxi, xxviii.
- (b) Self-orientation (S) vii, ix, xxi, xxii, xxiv.
- (c) Non-committed (N) i, iii, iv, viii, xxv.

?

2. Nurses

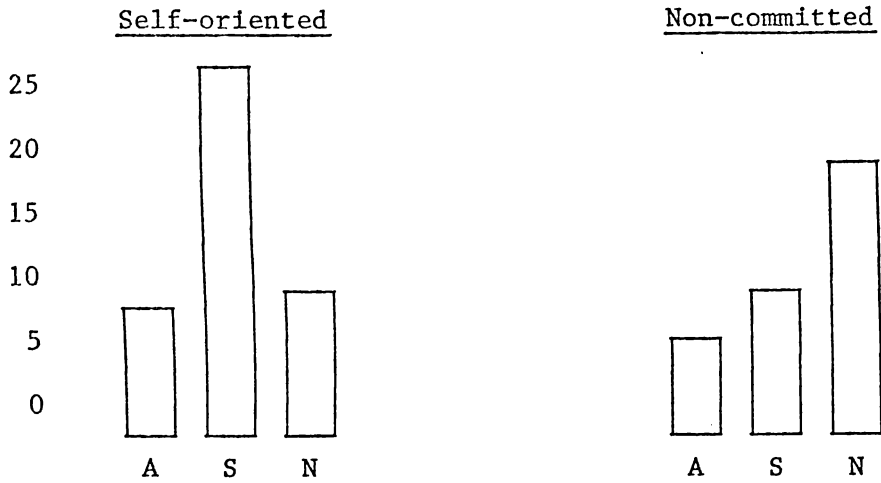
- (a) Altruism (A) i, xxi, iii, xvi, xiv.
- (b) Self-orientation (S) iv, vi, vii, ix, xv.
- (c) Non-committed (N) ii, iv, v, viii, xxiii.
(from Q 17 from Q)

In assessing type of commitment from the final scale, each respondent was marked on a five-point basis on each of his/her responses to the relevant items. Where the score for one category (e.g. altruism) was greater than the sum of the scores for the other two ($A > N + S$) it seemed reasonable to regard the first category as the primary factor in his motivation or as indicating his type of commitment. Thus a typical "altruistic" student revealed the following profile:

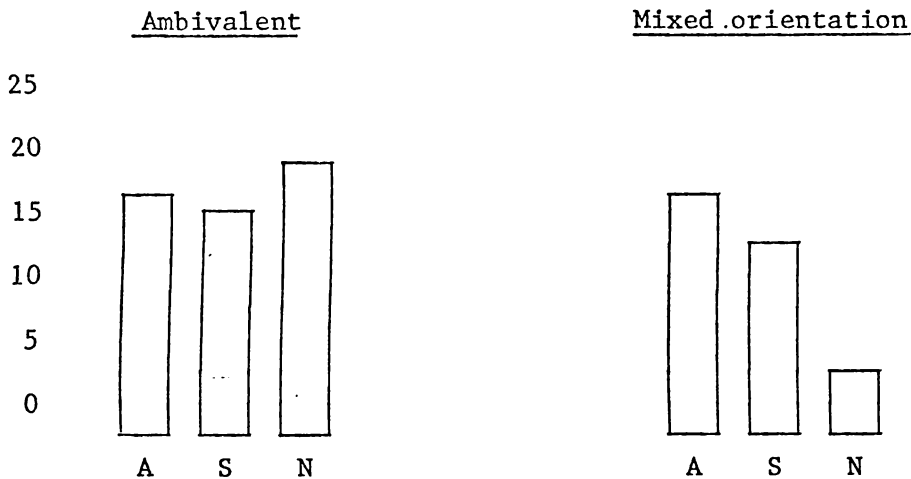


Similarly, "self-oriented" and "non-committed" students revealed

the following profiles:



In the process of analysing this data, it was found, however, that some students presented no clear-cut differentiation, for example,



It was necessary, therefore, to form two further groups. The first, Ambivalent (Am), took in those subjects whose three scores fell within the same five-point band. The other group was formed by those who had two scores within a five-point band, but whose third score was at least one band away. No students fell into the A/N or S/N possibilities; this final group was, accordingly, termed S/A (Self plus Altruistically oriented), or mixed.

For some kinds of analysis (e.g. in relation to nominal scale variables, such as educational qualifications on entry) it was thought desirable to look at the degree of commitment simply in three categories (high, moderate and low) by dividing the sample through collapsed stanines on the basis of EVC scores. When the degree and

type categories were jointly considered, the following possible groups resulted:

High Altruistic	HA
Moderate Altruistic	MA
Low Altruistic	LA
High Self-oriented	HS
Moderate Self-oriented	MS
Low Self-oriented	LS
High Ambivalent	HA _m
Moderate Ambivalent	MA _m
Low Ambivalent	LA _m
High Non-committed	HN
Moderate Non-committed	MN
Low Non-committed	LN
High Self Plus Altruistic	HSA
Moderate Self Plus Altruistic	MSA
Low Self Plus Altruistic	LSA

THE PRE-POST SECTION OF THE RESEARCH

At the beginning of 1973 all entrants to a New Zealand teachers' college (N = 352) and a school of nursing (N = 115) were administered the EVC scales, together with a battery of tests, including the following:

1. Personality measures -
 - (a) Wilson and Patterson Conservatism Scale.
 - (b) Eysenck Personality Inventory.
2. Intellectual ability measures -

Australian Council for Educational Research
AL and AQ Tests.
3. Role ambiguity measures -
 - (a) Isherwood Scale.
 - (b) Q sort technique.
4. Attitude measures (student teachers only) -

Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory.

In addition, demographic, educational and personal background data were collected through a questionnaire.

The EVC scale was completed during the first session at each institution, thus minimising the possibility of institutional influence. The remaining data were collected during the first fortnight of training.

The instruments used and reasons for their selection will now be briefly outlined.

1. Personality measures

Two standardised scales were utilised in this category - the Wilson and Patterson (1970) Conservatism Scale and the Eysenck Personality Inventory (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1964). The former scale was designed as a quick and efficient measure of conservatism. It consists of 50 items, which were selected by its authors on the following criteria:

- (i) positive correlations with the whole test scores;
- (ii) power to discriminate, i.e. divide the population so that a reasonable percentage of responses fell into each category;
- (iii) ease of understanding;
- (iv) avoidance of redundancy of meaning;
- (v) expected ability to maintain validity over several years and to withstand cultural transplantation.

(Wilson and Patterson, 1970, p.5)

The test has been standardised for a variety of New Zealand, American, Dutch, German and British populations. Reliability, using the split-half technique was established at 0.94 with an occupational quota sample in New Zealand. The authors argued for the validity of their scale from three angles. First, it was shown that the scale scores increased significantly with age, and that they were slightly higher for females than males. These relationships, the authors claimed, are consistent with what is known about the construct of conservatism. Second, the "known groups" validation technique was applied and here the scale was found to discriminate clearly between members of the New Left Club and the Junior National Party, between scientists and between children attending state and Catholic schools. Third, the scale was correlated with three other similar measures. Although the correlations were not high (ranging from 0.39 to 0.68) the authors conclude that in view of the lack of concurrent validity of the other scales, the results are probably not very meaningful.

There were four main reasons for using the Wilson and Patterson scale. First, it seemed important to gain an assessment of students'

attitudes towards certain social issues, as well as a more global indication of their degree of conservatism, at the commencement of the study. Second, it was preferred to other similar scales as it had already had wide application in New Zealand, one of the authors being resident in a local university. Third, Thomas, Shea and Rigby (1971) have demonstrated its reliability in a number of settings. Finally, its ease of administration and scoring was appealing!

The Eysenck Personality Inventory provides scores for two major areas of personality — neuroticism and extraversion. It also incorporates a Lie Scale which is used to eliminate subjects showing "desirability response set" (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1964, p.5). The inventory was tested for reliability using both the repeat (test-retest) and split half techniques. In the former case coefficients ranging from 0.80 and 0.97 were achieved and for the latter 0.74 and 0.91. Validity was established via nominated groups, whereby it was shown that individuals who impressed others as being introverted or extraverted, or as being stable or unstable were identified as such on the inventory. The Lie Factor is an important adjunct to this scale. It involves 18 items, designed to identify individuals who "fake good" (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1964, p.14). The scale was standardised with a widely cross-sectional group, consisting of 2,000 people. In addition, it was also standardised with an abnormal sample consisting of groups of neurotic, psychotic and alcoholic groups.

Although the EPI — along with most other personality scales — has been heavily criticised, it was included in the present study mainly because many overseas researchers had also used it. The original intent was, therefore, to provide cross-cultural data in order to make the present work comparable with that of, for example, Marsland (1970) or Shipman (1966). Of equal importance was the Lie Factor. It was hoped that this would identify those students who "fake good" not only on the EPI but also on the EVC scale. In addition, a considerable amount of research has been devoted to the "nursing or teaching personality". Much of this research is premised on the belief that certain personality types were correlated with success or failure in a given profession. The prediction of success or failure in the training programme was a concern of this study; hence variables such as level of introversion and extraversion were deemed necessary in the overall analysis.

2. Intellectual Ability measures

Intellectual ability was measured by the Australian Council for Educational Research's AL and AQ Advanced tests (Manual, A.C.E.R., no date, b). These tests are designed to meet a need for high level intelligence tests suitable for students in the 15-19 age groups. The test is in two sections, the AL which concentrates on verbal reasoning questions, and the AQ which comprises the number reasoning section. Its authors have argued, though, that the test is aimed at measuring general ability, and that there should be a reasonable degree of correlation between the AL and AQ sections (Manual, p.1). The scale was originally developed in Melbourne, and was later standardised against another Australian test using students at a teachers' college and a large country high school. Although designed for Australian purposes, it should be noted that the test has been used widely in New Zealand. Reliability was established by the split half technique with reliability coefficients corrected ranging from 0.79 to 0.88. Validity using (a) correlation with achievement tests in mathematics and English, and (b) correlation with other Australian intelligence tests recorded coefficients of between 0.38 and 0.78. It should be noted that the low coefficients were almost always between the linguistic and quantitative sections of the tests.

The AL and AQ tests have been widely used to measure the intellectual ability of students entering New Zealand teachers' colleges; hence their selection for the present study. Moreover, as the sample group were of above average scholastic ability (as measured by their success rate in the New Zealand School Certificate examination) the tests seemed to fulfil the requirement of measuring the intellectual ability of such a group.

3. Role ambiguity measures

An assessment of potential role ambiguity was gained from two sources. First, the Isherwood Scale (see Appendix F), originally devised for teachers and adapted for nurses by the present researcher, was administered in order to gain insights into the individual's expectations of the training institution. Scores derived from this scale were measured against the scores of a sample of teachers' college lecturers (Isherwood, 1971) and registered nurses, mainly drawn from the tutoring staff. In this way the sample was able to be divided into High, Moderate and Low potential ambiguity groups in

terms of institutional pressures.

Secondly, as part of the Personal Data Record (see below) students were asked to indicate — whichever was relevant — what the role of a teacher or nurse actually entailed. The actuality was emphasised during administration to lessen the is/ought gap (Hospers, 1963). Each student's response was submitted to a panel of five practising teachers, or five nurses, who were asked to allocate the response to one of the following categories:

- (i) an exact account of the job;
- (ii) close to exact, but with minor misconceptions;
- (iii) moderate knowledge of the job;
- (iv) a large number of misconceptions;
- (v) complete misconception of the job.

The assessments made on each student by the five judges were then averaged giving a potential role ambiguity score. The procedure thus followed the standard Q sort technique as described by Stephenson (1953), except that it did not demand normal distribution of scores. As with the Isherwood Scale, the teaching and nursing samples were then subdivided into High, Moderate and Low.

A correlation between the Isherwood scale and the Q sort revealed a surprisingly high coefficient of 0.92. Consequently, the researcher amalgamated the two tests, deriving three groups — High, Moderate and Low on role ambiguity.

4. Attitude measures

Several scales were considered in this respect, but were rejected because of lack of face validity. However, since the Minnesota Attitude Inventory (Cook, Leeds and Callis, 1951) has been widely used in a variety of contexts, and since it might provide some useful insights into movements of attitudes, it was administered to the student teacher sample on both entry and exit. This test is designed to "measure those attitudes of a teacher which predict how well he gets along with pupils in interpersonal relationships, and indirectly how well he will be satisfied with teaching as a vocation" (Cook, Leeds and Callis, 1951, p.3). The MTAI has been normed in the United States by its authors and in Australia by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER, no date, a). The validity of the scale in Australia was

established by correlating the MTAI with three outside criteria of pupil rapport, and the reliability was determined by the split half technique which gave a coefficient of 0.87. The scale has not been standardised for use in New Zealand, but an adapted form for use in this country was produced in 1951.

The MTAI has been subjected to considerable criticism both from the viewpoint of validity and its susceptibility to faking (Borland, 1957; Evans, 1966). However, it was used in this research as an instrument which might be able to reveal shifts in stated attitudes towards teaching, not as an instrument to predict successful teachers.

5. Personal data

Demographic data was collected through a Personal Data Record (Appendix F). This included details on age, sex, type of secondary school attended, ethnicity, extent of geographical mobility, size of family, degree of kin contact, number of relations in the chosen occupation, the distance of the training institution from the respondent's home and socio-economic group. In the last named the Elley and Irving Scale (1972) which is based on occupation, education and level of income was used.

In addition, a measure of each student's scholastic attainment was gained from his New Zealand School Certificate Examination results. This national examination is taken usually after three years of secondary schooling, when most of the pupils are 15-16 years old. The student's average mark over four subject areas was calculated, and his mark in English was also included. Where available, the biology results for nurse entrants, and the mathematics results for teacher entrants, were recorded also.

Each entrant's highest educational qualifications were also noted. These ranged from School Certificate, through the Sixth Form Certificate and University Entrance to possession of some university partial degree passes.

The post-training data

A post-test was administered close to the conclusion of training of both teachers and nurses. It consisted of Form E (Appendices B and D) and the Wilson and Patterson Conservatism Scale. The latter was intended to gather further evidence on a hypothesis formulated during the research concerning the change of attitudes of surviving students,

and did not form part of the original research design. The MTAI was also administered at the end of the training period to the student teachers.

A very low attrition rate was recorded. All, bar 17, of the survivors of the teaching sample attended the final testing session. Post data were successfully gathered on all of the nurses. The background variables of the seventeen non-responding teachers were studied, and as they were not markedly different from the rest of the sample, they were dropped from the final analysis thus giving a teacher sample of 335.

Data analysis

The information thus gathered provided the data for the statistical section of the study. To assist in this analysis, and to facilitate group comparisons, the following data were recorded in both normalised stanine and raw group form: scholastic attainment, extraversion, neuroticism, intellectual ability, MTAI scores, conservatism levels, EVC scores, EVC type.

The data was coded, where necessary, and then assembled in a format suitable for printing on IBM cards for subsequent computer analysis using, mainly, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

THE INTERVIEW SECTION OF THE STUDY

On the basis of data obtained from the initial testing a small sub-sample (representing not less than 10% of the group) was selected for regular interviewing and observation over the three and a half years of the study. Selection for the sub-sample was determined by the characteristics of the total sample. Thus in making his selections, the researcher endeavoured to match the profile of the sub-sample with the total sample. Accordingly, as there were approximately 5-6% Maoris in the total sample, so too were there 5-6% Maoris in the sub-sample. Obviously, given the wide range of variables, and a 10% sampling only, some disparity between the sub-sample's profile and the total sample's profile occurred. However, by adopting the selection procedures outlined above, a closer match was achieved than may have reasonably been expected from random sampling techniques.

Each member of the teaching sub-sample was interviewed on six occasions, the student nurses on seven. The length of each interview varied from twenty minutes to one and three-quarter hours depending on the nature of the discussions. Although some structure was placed on the interview situation, particularly in order to gain some indication of expressed vocational commitment at each meeting, the discussions were informal and consequently contained material sometimes tangential to the main thrust of the research. Interview schedules appear in Appendix H.

Students in the sub-sample were also encouraged to contact the researcher with problems relating to their job and/or personal life, so that the relationship became much more than a casual one. The student nurse sample co-operated well in this respect, 47 voluntary interviews taking place in the three years, compared with 22 voluntary interviews with the student teachers.

In addition, because of the availability of the sample and the fact that the researcher was 'on vacation' from his full-time teaching position, the total student nurse sample was interviewed two months after entry. The interviews, which were limited to fifteen minutes were designed (a) to test the validity and accuracy of responses to the EVC scales, and (b) to give the researcher a 'feel' for the hospital environment, so as to give direction to later interviews with the sub-sample. One of the 'rapport' questions in this interview (which has no formal schedule) concerned the formation of friendships. The responses allowed the researcher at a later stage to construct a sociogram which proved very helpful in considering reasons for leaving as well as changes in EVC.

As the phenomenon of leaving a vocation probably represents a change in commitment to that vocation, it was planned to interview all leavers, or to ask them to fill in a questionnaire. This did not always prove possible, but data were gathered from 91.4% of the nurse leavers and 71.6% of the teacher leavers.

In developing this section of the study attention was paid to the interpretative field of sociology. Writers in this area have emphasised the differences between the natural and the social world, with the latter being the result of the skilled accomplishment of active, human subjects. They have emphasised the importance of language in making this world meaningful, and have suggested that researchers need

to penetrate the frames of meaning which people use in constituting their social world.

The interpretative sociologists have been criticised for over-emphasising the search for meaning to the virtual exclusion of considerations of man's practical relationship with his environment. They have also been accused of under-estimating causal conditions of action; as well, it has been suggested that they have not examined social norms as related to larger issues of power (Giddens, 1976; Smart, 1976). However, the methodological implications of their stance for a study such as the present one are clear. There is little question that the development of vocational commitment should be considered in terms of the everyday world of the subjects, and should also pay particular attention to the subject's own interpretations of events, their interactions and the symbols they employ for communication. Hence the need for an in-depth approach to some aspects of the study, at the very least.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

The researcher held group discussions with 5-7 different student nurses and teachers on six occasions respectively. The purpose of these discussions was to check out hunches formed by the researcher in the interviews and during observations. These proved to be extremely valuable. Like Shipman (1966, p.40) the researcher found that opinions expressed by the groups were very frank. Frequently the researcher was able to withdraw from the discussion, such was its intensity. Again, this was especially the case amongst the nurses.

THE OBSERVATIONAL SECTION OF THE STUDY

The original intention of the researcher was to spend a considerable amount of time observing directly the on-the-job behaviour of the sub-sample. The major reasons for this intention have been discussed above. However, it is worth noting in addition that the researcher was somewhat sceptical of pencil and paper procedures, and was by no means convinced that all respondents would answer questionnaires or scales honestly or indeed carefully or accurately

(Shipman, 1966, 1967; Mischel, 1968). Furthermore, as Stephen Corey has pointed out, even when the subjects are sincere in the expression of their verbal opinions, it does not follow that such expressions are indicative of overt behaviour (Corey, 1937, p.523).

The follow-up interviews were, in part, designed to test the validity of the scales, while the observational section was aimed at ascertaining whether the expressed intent was carried into action. Moreover, it was argued that continual contact with the sub-sample would enable the researcher to identify movements or changes in commitment with greater precision. There appeared to be a need for him to be close at hand, if not on-the-spot when critical events occurred. The methodological principles which such procedures incorporate are derived from the ethnographic approach which is founded in the work of Malinowski (1922) and Radcliffe-Brown (1935). The advantages of such techniques have been well documented in recent years (Robinson, 1974; Lacey, 1976) and its application to nursing has been mooted by Ragucci (1972).

However, proponents of participant observation have tended to under-estimate some serious disadvantages. As has been noted above, the most important of these and the one which caused most difficulty in this study, concerns the researcher becoming an artifact in the research situations. Shipman (1966, p.32) has noted there are instances when the involvement of an outsider would completely distort behaviour. Such proved to be the case in this study. From the very first observation, it was apparent that the members of the sub-sample altered their behaviours when the researcher was present. This was especially the case with the teaching sample. The researcher's suspicions in this respect were confirmed by discussions with other members of the role set (e.g. associate teachers, tutors, etc.). The following extract from the field notes illustrates this point:

ST 208 observed on first placement, 1973

After observation period discussed ST 208's performance with her associate teacher Mrs X. She immediately offered the following comment. "Jane became much more involved with the children while you were here than at any other time. She's hung back a bit, kept them at arm's length — a little cold isn't she? They're a fairly bright lot, she seemed to have problems with them. I had her summed up as a bit of an introvert — she certainly changed when you walked in!"

Researcher's note: Jane had high EC score on entry (87): shy in initial interview, but later became most talkative, largely because of her academic problems. Professed love of children her main inspiration. Having given me this role expectation she may have felt obliged to live up to it whilst I was present in the observational role.

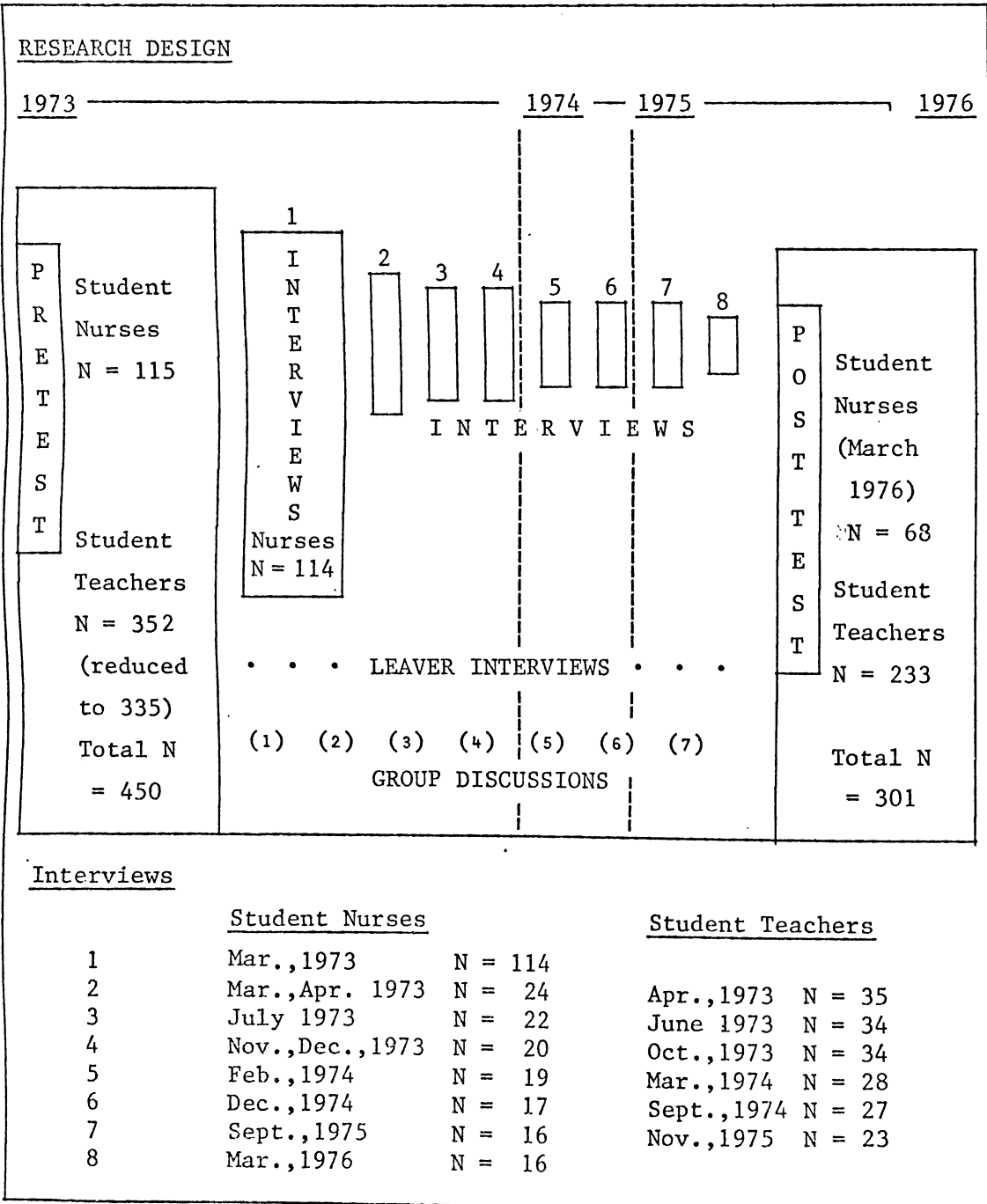
These incidents were repeated frequently in the early stages of the research. The difficulty was exacerbated by the fact that, unlike some phenomenological or ethnographic studies, the researcher's intention was, in part at least, obvious to the sub-sample. Further, by developing an *a priori* theoretical framework, and seeking empirical justification, the researcher had broken one of the fundamental rules of the phenomenological approach. Thus, whilst 'facts' may have been generated by the formal and informal relationships of the researcher and the researched, the theoretical framework may have acted as a limiting force.

Having been forced to play down direct observation of the nature employed by Sullivan, Queen and Patrick (1958), Shipman (1966) and Mercurio (1975) on the grounds mentioned above, the researcher then considered a second technique, namely, working in partnership with other members of the role set. This had been pioneered in educational research by Smith and Geoffrey (1968) in their work in an urban school classroom, with Smith operating as a researcher participant and Geoffrey as a teacher/researcher. Whilst such an approach has weaknesses (see Robinson, 1974) it has obvious advantages for research of the nature of the present one. Thus informal links were established with other members of the role set and, with the acquiescence of the authorities, access was gained to the confidential reports made on the sample during their training. Combined with the formal and informal interview data, the researcher was able to piece together a reasonably accurate reconstruction of critical events, as well as the more mundane day-to-day activities of the sample. Nor was direct observation abandoned entirely. Whenever the opportunity arose, the researcher involved himself in the social activities of the sample, such as morning teas, forums and discussions with staff and student union members.

THE OVERALL SHAPE OF THE RESEARCH

The overall shape of the research can now be summarised. Basically, it consists of a classical pre-post test situation, combined with an intensive longitudinal study of a selected sub-sample. The design can be set out in diagrammatic form as follows:

FIGURE 3.1



The results obtained from the investigation will now be outlined in two sections, those related to expressed vocational commitment itself (Chapter 4) and those relating to reasons for changes in commitment during training (Chapter 5).

CHAPTER 4

EXPRESSED VOCATIONAL COMMITMENT : AN ANALYSIS

OVERVIEW: The nature of the student teacher and student nurse subsamples are described in detail in this chapter. Discussion then turns to the characteristics of the EVC scale and to its relationship with the independent variables. The efficiency of the scale as a predictor of subsequent behaviours is examined, and finally, a preliminary survey is made of changes in EVC during training.

THE RESEARCH SAMPLES

As was noted in the last chapter, the research samples consisted of the complete 1973 intakes to a New Zealand provincial city teachers' college and a school of nursing in the same city. The teachers' college sample (N = 335) comprised 28% men and 72% women; all bar two of the nursing sample were female. Ages ranged from 16.2 years to 35.9 years. The great bulk of the student teachers on entry were in the 17 or 18 year old age group which constituted 72% of the student teacher sample. There were, however, 9% in both the 16 year old and 19 year old categories. The student nurses were, overall, slightly younger with 19% in the 16 year old group and 63% in the 17 or 18 year old age group.

Some 77% of both samples came from the Pakeha (white New Zealanders) ethnic group. However, there were significant minorities of Maoris — 6% of the student teachers and 5% of the student nurses. Although these figures are well below the proportion of Maoris in the given age group on a national basis, they are almost certainly greater than the proportions entering other teachers' colleges and schools of nursing in New Zealand.

As far as socio-economic status was concerned the distribution was similar in both samples (as measured by the Elley and Irving Scale). The majority in both instances came from the middle groups (45% in the case of student teachers, and 42% in the case of student nurses) but

significant numbers also came from the lower groupings (34% and 28% respectively). Twenty per cent of the student teachers and 29% of the student nurses were farmers' children. In relation to the national student nurse and teacher intakes this also probably represents a higher than usual proportion of students from such backgrounds when one considers that only 13% of the total New Zealand labour force are farmers.

Most of the sample were single (94% teachers, 98% nurses) on entry, but on exit 20% of the student teachers and 37% of the student nurses were either engaged to be married, or married.

Geographical mobility of the group was reflected by the fact that 60% of the student teacher sample, and 58% of the nursing sample had experienced at least one major geographical shift within this country, or from overseas, in the last decade. Although no comparative figures are available, these are probably similar to overall New Zealand trends (Ramsay, 1975b). Most of the student nurses and teachers had received a minimum of four years secondary schooling and the preponderance held either the Sixth Form Certificate or University Entrance qualification, which the majority (87% in both cases) had achieved in the minimum time. They came, usually, from families of between 3-4 children, which reflects the pattern of their generation. By far the majority (86% of the student teachers, 89% of the student nurses) entered their vocation immediately after completing their secondary schooling.

Most of the students were living away from their home towns, and many entered hostel accommodation (40% of the teaching sample, 86% of the nurses). Both groups had a high proportion of close relatives already working in the occupation concerned, although the student nurse sample (37%) was unexpectedly much higher than the student teacher group (22%) in this respect.

The school attainment of the student teacher sample was only minimally higher than that of the student nurses, with an average mark over four subjects on the School Certificate examination of 62% (s.d. 7.42) as compared with 60% (s.d. 6.05). There was a wide range of marks in both groups, with a range of average marks from below 50% to above 75%. Achievements in English, mathematics and biology followed a similar pattern. In English the range for student teachers was 32-88 with a mean of 64.08 and a standard deviation of 10.29. For student nurses the range was 33-84 with a standard deviation of 9.10.

Data for mathematics were collected from student teachers only, and biology for student nurses. In mathematics 74 students did not take the School Certificate examination; those who did gained a mean of 57.45 (s.d. 13.99). In the student nurse sample 72 did not sit the biology examination; a mean mark of 61.89 (s.d. 8.82) was attained by those who did.

In the personality tests the distribution of scores for the two groups on neuroticism and extraversion were very similar both to each other and to the comparative figures for overseas (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1954, pp.16-17). However, slight differences appear for conservatism. The student teacher sample mean was 34.37 (s.d. 12.16) and the student nurse sample 37.91 (s.d. 11.45). No New Zealand standardisation was available for the specific populations under study, but it is noteworthy that the mean scores approximated closely those recorded for the relevant age group, as well, in the general population, as a similar group in the United Kingdom; nor were they markedly different from that of 32.57 (s.d. 10.36) reported for New Zealand university students by Wilson and Patterson (1970). Both the student nurse and student teacher mean scores were below the national mean scores, thus indicating that overall the students held a slightly more liberal set of attitudes towards social issues than is the norm.

Finally, the MTAI scores of the teacher group on entry (mean: 65.78) were higher on average than those for elementary beginning teachers in Australia (mean: 59.5). However, the Australian scores were reported more than 20 years ago (ACER, no date, a) and the situation might now be different.

Looking at the two samples over all, it may be concluded that they are remarkably similar in most respects; indeed statistical analysis revealed only very slight differences in the variables gathered.

EVC ON ENTRY : SOME CHARACTERISTICS

The first set of research questions raised earlier concerned the type and degree of Expressed Vocational Commitment (EVC) exhibited by students from both samples, and the relationship of EVC to other characteristics. First, it is interesting to note that strength of

EVC was normally distributed in both groups, and both had similar mean scores (student teachers 70.49, student nurses 69.56). However, some differences between the samples do occur in particular dimensions of the scale. For example, it appears that student nurses selected their occupation earlier than student teachers (34% of student nurses as compared with 24% of student teachers had held a desire to enter the career from the time of primary schooling, or earlier). On the other hand, student teachers planned (on their own report) to give longer service than the student nurses. Self-estimation of commitment and ordinal career choice were remarkably similar. In the latter respect it is interesting to note that only 57% of the student teachers and 53% of the student nurses claimed that the job they were training for was their first choice of career. Overall, there was a fairly large spread of EVC scores, ranging from 32 to 99 (s.d. 14.48) for student teachers, and from 29 to 97 (s.d. 15.42) for student nurses.

As far as type of EVC was concerned, the best-represented category was altruism (40% of the student nurses, 37% of the student teachers). Thirty per cent of the student teachers fell into the self oriented group, as compared with 17% of the nurses. Eleven per cent of the student teachers and 6% of the student nurses were non-committed and the majority of the remainder fell into the self-oriented/altruistic (SA) category (see Table 4.1).

When EVC scores on entry were related to the independent variables some significant information emerged. It was found, for example, that in terms of their EVC scores women student teachers were more committed to their career than men ($\chi^2 = 18.069$, df 2 $p < .001$; Table 4.2). Socio-economic status and EVC scores were significantly related for the student nurse sample with the upper class students scoring significantly below the lower class group ($\chi^2 = 9.455$, df 4 $p < .05$; Table 4.3). A similar pattern emerged for student teachers; however the level of significance in this case was marginal ($\chi^2 = 5.997$, df 4, $p < .20$). Significantly more older than younger student teachers obtained moderate or low EVC scores ($\chi^2 = 10.68$, df 2, $p < .01$; Table 4.4). There were no significant differences on this variable as far as student nurses were concerned.

High EVC scores appeared to be related to high entry qualifications for student teachers ($\chi^2 = 11.50$, df = 2, $p < .01$; Table 4.5) but not for student nurses ($\chi^2 = 0.53$, df = 2, NS).. A similar pattern appeared for ethnic groups, with non-Pakehas scoring higher than

Pakehas in the student teacher group ($\chi^2 = 8.453$, $df = 2$, $p < .02$; Table 4.6).

Finally, EVC scores were found to be related to conservatism in the case of student teachers, with the more conservative expressing higher commitment ($\chi^2 = 9.755$, $df = 4$, $p < .05$; Table 4.7). Although the differences between groups were not statistically significant for student nurses ($\chi^2 = 7.765$, $df = 4$, $p < .20$) it is interesting to note that they tended in the same direction. Amongst student teachers 38% of the high conservatism group also expressed high commitment, whereas only 21% of the low conservatism group possessed high EVC scores. Amongst the student nurses the comparable figures were 41% and 17%. Similarly 10% of the highly conservative nurses held low EVC scores as compared with 22% of those whose scores were low on the scale. In the student teacher groups these percentages were 16 and 31 per cent respectively.

Although the foregoing analyses are suggestive, they should not be accepted as more than that.. The scores were derived from a test administered on the first day of entry, and as soon became obvious during the research, attitudes towards careers are subject to major fluctuations. However, this initial analysis provided some guidelines for later testing, as well as leads which were followed up with the subsample.

CHANGES IN EVC STRENGTH

The second set of research questions raised in Chapter 3 were concerned with the directions of change (if any) in both EVC scores and types of EVC during the course of training. Before trying to answer these questions, though, several important cautionary points need to be made. First, not all of the leavers were re-tested; hence the data are based on pre-post tests for the stayers only. Second, it cannot be assumed that the leavers come from the low EVC scorers. Leaving was, in fact, often non-voluntary, being precipitated by such factors as academic failure or ill health. Nor can it be assumed that the leavers were representative of the total group. Indeed, statistically significant differences appeared between student teacher stayers and leavers on EVC scores ($t = 3.27$; $p < .001$), level of conservatism ($t = 1.93$; $p < .025$), extraversion ($t = 2.14$; $p < .025$), School Certificate average marks ($t = 2.71$; $p < .01$), and intellectual

ability ($t = 3.00$; $p < .01$). Similar differences occurred in the student nurse sample in the areas of EVC ($t = 4.79$; $p < .001$) and level of conservatism ($t = 4.32$; $p < .001$). Because of these three points, the group data on change must again be regarded as suggestive only at this stage, and will have to be examined afresh after consideration of individual data in Chapter 5.

With the above caution expressed, the means of the EVC scores on entry and exit for those who completed the training programme are outlined in Table 4.8. It can be seen that, while there had been an overall decline in the EVC scores of the surviving student teachers, the difference was not statistically significant ($t = -1.52$, NS), whereas EVC scores of student nurses had decreased significantly ($t = 4.55$; $p < .001$).

Rearrangement of the data into high, moderate and low scores on the EVC scale on entry and exit provide further interesting evidence (Table 4.9). This table demonstrates that, while there is a clear relationship between EVC scores on entry and exit, 47% of the student teachers and 46% of the student nurses shifted either upwards or downwards in the categories over the three year span.

These gross comparisons over the total training period may, however, be misleading for reasons pointed out above. In an endeavour to identify any group patterns of change the data were interrelated by plotting a profile of the movements of EVC scores for each student at the time of the interviews. The EVC scores at the time of interview were assessed from an oral application of the O, C, M and S items of the EVC scale. The T dimension was held to be constant, and was added in from the entry testing. The profiles thus obtained are set out in Figures 4.1 to 4.7 which appear in Volume 2.

Various statistical techniques to aid in the analysis of these data were considered, ranging from calculation of deviation scores from the mean at each repeated interview period, to sophisticated regression and trend analyses. However, as the EVC 'score' in this case was an estimate only, with unknown reliability of measurement, statistical analysis was not really justifiable. Hence it was decided, instead, to examine each student's profile to see if any categorisation was possible. It proved possible to classify each profile as either stable, steadily increasing, steadily decreasing, or fluctuating. When these categorisations are looked at in relation to

the strength of EVC (high, moderate or low) a picture emerged which is summarised in Table 4.10 for the combined subsample of teachers and nurses.

Reference to this table shows that 43% of the student teachers and 62% of the student nurses fell into one or other of the fluctuating categories. Evidence from the informal meetings and observations suggests that fluctuations of attitude towards the career may have been even greater than is suggested by Figures 4.1 to 4.7 and Table 4.10. For example, Student Nurse (SN) 349 who appears in the high stable group twice threatened to resign in her first year of training and indicated generally that her commitment to nursing as a career had dropped. Similarly Student Teacher (ST) 224, also recorded as a high stable EVC scorer, became severely disillusioned with teaching as a career following a confrontation with his associate teacher. These aberrations from the pattern suggested by the profile proved to be temporary; however, they demonstrate the volatile nature of expressed vocational commitment.

To illustrate further the fluctuation phenomenon three abridged case studies are reproduced in Appendix L. These indicate that for many students the level of EVC seemed to be situation specific; that is, their strength of EVC appeared to vary according to the particular circumstances of a given time. This was well summed up by SN 391 who commented as follows in her sixth interview:

Oh, my attitude towards this job changes frequently, you know. At times I'm being a general dogsbody, a scapegoat for others' mistakes, getting upset and depressed, yet at others being someone important and feeling useful and worthwhile. It all depends on what has happened to you most lately I suppose. Like all jobs nursing has its good points and bad points. There are times when you wish to get out, and at times when you're glad, proud even, to be a nurse.

The extent to which the fluctuation phenomenon is generalisable to the total sample cannot be readily estimated. Of the 70 students in the subsample all except two of the student nurses, and 76% of the student teachers seriously considered leaving on at least one occasion; results from the post-questionnaire reveal that this was indeed a widespread phenomenon with 91% of the student nurses and 79% of the student teachers having either "frequently or occasionally" seriously considered leaving the training programme.

Consideration of graphical trends in Figures 4.1 to 4.7 provides further clues regarding general patterns of change in EVC. In the student nurse subsample there appeared to be a period of early disillusionment with the job which lasted until the mid point in the first year. Then followed a spell typified by fluctuations, for the most part within a limited band. A bottoming out appeared towards the end of the second year and the third year is typified by a stabilisation of estimated EVC scores.

Although there was an equivalent drop in estimated EVC scores in the early stages of teacher training, it was not of the same magnitude as that for the student nurses. The major change appeared to be in the second year of training (interview 4) with considerable movement both upwards and downwards. Finally, as with the student nurses, the third year showed what appeared to be a stabilisation of commitment.

The patterns for student nurses and student teachers in the subsample who left in the course of training are set out in Figures 4.6 and 4.7. In the student nurse sample SN 438 and SN 441, who left because of pregnancies, and SN 405 who transferred to another hospital, should be discounted. Similarly in the student teacher sample ST 335 who transferred, and ST's 333 and 334 who were on leave of absence to have babies, should be excluded from the analysis as they were not true leavers. In the student nurse sample all of the leavers except SN 411 showed substantial declines in estimated EVC scores, all falling into the "steady decline" category. SN 411 was a most reluctant leaver. She was from a lower SES background and had academic difficulties in the early stages. According to her ward sister she was "immature". Finally ill health and emotional problems, which she related to examination difficulties, precipitated her resignation. In the final interview she expressed the hope that she would be able to return to nursing in the future.

In the student-teacher leaver subsample six of the nine "true" leavers had dropped significantly in estimated EVC scores at the time of leaving. No pattern emerged from a study of the three who retained their entry level of EVC, except that all were from lower SES groups. ST 302 was a young entrant, who felt that she would be unable to cope with children. She hoped to return to teaching later in life. ST 303 had both emotional and academic problems. The former related to adapting to life away from home. ST 300 was an older male student with

very poor academic background who struggled throughout to cope with the required scholastic standard. All three were terminated under the trial studentship regulations.

The direction of movement of EVC scores of the leaving subsample was further examined via the data from the post-test and leaver interviews. It should be noted that the latter is incomplete with data being gained from 115 of the 149 leavers. Accordingly, these results can only be viewed tentatively. The relevant data are set out in Table 4.11. There were no statistically significant differences between stayers and leavers on exit amongst those who had originally scored highly on the EVC scale ($\chi^2 = 2.51$, NS). On the other hand, there were significant differences between stayers and leavers on exit for those who had had moderate entry EVC scores ($\chi^2 = 22.12$, $df = 2$, $p < .001$; Table 4.11) and the low entry EVC scorers ($\chi^2 = 20.12$, $df = 2$, $p < .001$; Table 4.11). Of particular interest is the fact that 19 of the leavers entered and exited with high EVC scores, and that 53 of the leavers possessed either moderate or high EVC scores at the time of leaving. This finding challenges the widely held assumption that leaving automatically involves a drop in commitment towards the job being left.

Further analysis of the leaver group possessing high EVC exit scores is revealing. Fifteen of the 21 students concerned were from low SES groups (categories 5-6 on the Elley and Irving Scale); eight were Maoris; and 16 were in the bottom two stanines of the distribution of School Certificate average marks. The leaver interview data revealed that many of these students were being forced out of training because of academic difficulties and a smaller, but nonetheless important group appeared to lack the sophistication required to perform successfully in the two institutions. Typical of the highly committed leaver group was ST 247 (SES group 5, School Certificate average 57, EVC score on entry 89) who in her exit interview had this to say:

I tried, I really tried. I want to teach, have done for a long time. I had some trouble on sections, and even more in classes - I just didn't understand some of the people, the stuff in lectures. And I got contradictory advice, I just wasn't sure what to do.

I. Would you come back if you got the chance?

ST 247. *I'll say, would I what? When I'm older I might be able to cope better. I'm going to get more experience with children, then come back.*

The major differences between completers and leavers on EVC scores appeared in the categories moderate moving to low, and low remaining low. In the former the key factor seemed to be related to the question of role ambiguity, with 22 of the 31 being in the potentially high ambiguity group according to the Q sorts. ST 241 was typical of this group:

I found I was frightened of the children. This was quite a surprise to me, but in large numbers ... well I couldn't cope.

And later in the same interview she said

I wasn't particularly highly committed when I came to college I s'pose but I thought I could make a career of teaching. Now I just want to get away from it all, it's nothing at all what, rather like I thought it'd be.

In the latter group (low remaining low) perhaps the most common factor emerging from the interview data related to the fact that these students had been deliberately exploring the possibilities of teaching and nursing. Additionally many were from the younger age group: 12 of the 29 had been termed "immature" on one or more occasions by the college or hospital authorities.

Another striking feature of the low remaining low group was that 19 of the 29 leavers and 21 of the 31 completers measured at the liberal end of the Wilson and Patterson Conservatism Scale. Many of these students had had frequent confrontations with staff members, and had refused to conform in a number of situations. There is an interesting contrast to be drawn here between college and hospital attitudes. In the college the questioning, liberal student, who also frequently emphasised rationality and logic as valuable in problem solving, was respected by the lecturers. On the other hand, similar students in the hospital were termed "cheeky", "impudent", or "foolish". In the hospital, these girls represented 80% of the leavers in the first twelve months.

A further interesting point to be derived from Table 4.11 is that while only 4% of all leavers moved upwards in EVC scores, 18% of all completers improved their scores. Moreover, 34% of the leavers moved downwards as compared with 25% of the completers.

It should be reiterated that the foregoing are very tentative findings. Not only was the leaver data incomplete, but it should also

be noted that the leaver EVC scores were estimated from comments recorded in an informal interview. Furthermore, while the researcher was in a better position to assess leavers from the subsample, owing to ongoing contact, the final leavers' interview was the only data available (apart from their personal files) to assess other leavers. These results should, therefore, be accepted with caution.

CHANGES IN EVC TYPE

The data here are set out in Table 4.12. These show that 58% of the student teachers and 66% of the student nurses shifted in type of EVC over the three year period. Amongst both teachers and nurses the major shifts was from altruism to a combination of self-orientation and altruism. For example, 80 student teachers shifted into the S/A or S categories, representing 60% of all shifts, with by far the largest category being A → S/A (N = 42). In nursing 29 shifted to either S or S/A, representing 66% of all shifts, with, once again the largest category being A → S/A (N = 16).

This overall trend was also highlighted in the interview material from the subsample, the same proportions of whom shifted. Typical of the responses of the "shifters" to S or S/A was that of SN 362:

As I've got older my life style has changed and I find that I've got more away from nursing. When I came service to people was very important to me, but now I find myself thinking, well of myself more often. Like, well, it's not that the job should be the be-all and end-all, you've got to think about yourself and what you get out of life. Nursing has become a job to me, to earn money I suppose, not the vocation I thought it was going to be.

It was notable, however, that a considerable number of students retained the altruism they had upon entry. Indeed, amongst the student teachers, the highest single category was A remaining A (N = 48; 21% of the surviving student teachers). Furthermore, 21 students moved into the altruistic type of EVC and 22 who were S on entry became S/A, thus indicating some movement towards altruism. Many of the latter group were like ST 225, who, somewhat to his surprise, found himself liking children, and the rewards of classroom teaching. The following extract from his interview 6 transcript illustrates the point:

There has been a change in my attitude. It's hard to sum it up, but I'd say, well, I am now committed to the job, but the way I feel committed has changed too. There was a time when the holidays, the good working hours, the security appealed, but now I find myself thinking more about what I can do for kids. I don't think I appreciated the fact that this was such an important job, not fully anyway. At school, we thought, you can just be a teacher — a fall back you know. But now I appreciate just how crucial teachers can be, just how much good teachers are needed. I'm anxious to serve now, rather than get something out of it.

The wide fluctuations of EVC strength scores noted earlier were not apparent with EVC type. Indeed, the material derived from the subsample interviews seemed to suggest that changes in EVC type were gradual, evolving over a period of time. The exceptions were those students who moved into the non-committed category; such shifts were likely to be sudden.

SOME CORRELATES OF EVC CHANGES

The next research question asked was whether the changes in EVC scores could be related to any particular background variables of the sample. To answer this question the surviving student teacher data were categorised according to shifts and stays in EVC scores, and the appropriate variable. Thus students who entered high and exited high on EVC scores were grouped together, as were those who remained moderate, and those who remained low. The other two groups, giving five in all, were formed by, on the one hand, those students who moved upwards, and on the other hand, those who moved downwards. The groups were then divided according to each independent variable (e.g. sex, socio-economic status), thus allowing the χ^2 test to be applied. The relevant data are set out in Tables 4.13 to 4.19.

Unfortunately, the same technique could not be applied to the student nurse sample, as Cochrane's recommendation concerning the number in each cell was not met (Siegel, 1956). The student nurse data are considered, accordingly, in terms of percentages and tendencies only.

Twenty-eight variables were included in this analysis, five of which were exit data. Of the 28, sex, ethnicity, years at secondary school, kin contact, role ambiguity scores on entry and exit and MTAI

scores on exit all showed significant differences between the 'change' categories of less than .05 level for the student teacher sample.

The major differences between student teacher males and females occurred first, in the high remaining high category, where 25% of the women were to be found as compared with 10% of the men and, second, in the downward movers (16% men, 26% women). This seems to indicate not only that women express more commitment to the career of primary teaching but that they are more inclined to decline in EVC scores during training, possibly due to their less realistic notions about the job. The latter point is supported by the fact that women were significantly lower than men in the results of the Q sort role ambiguity measure.

Although the ethnicity variable revealed a significant relationship with changes in EVC (Table 4.14), the results are probably not very meaningful. First, in order to gain sufficiently large sample groups, Pakehas were compared with all others — thus a wide range of ethnic groups were included in the 'other' category. Moreover, the majority of Maoris in both the teacher and nurse courses left during training. Despite these weaknesses it is noticeable that many more Pakeha student teachers were in the high-high category than 'others', a picture similar to that for student nurses. On the other hand, many more of the 'others' category moved upwards in EVC scores than did the Pakehas (38% 'others' as compared with 19% of the Pakeha student teachers; 24% 'others' as compared with 15% of the Pakeha student nurses).

One of the more significant results in this section of the analysis related to role ambiguity, that is the extent to which entrants accurately perceived the actual vocational role. Amongst the student teachers who completed the course there was an over-representation of high role ambiguity scorers on entry amongst the low stable EVC scorers (Table 4.15). On the other hand, there was an over-representation of low role ambiguity scorers in the group which moved upward in EVC scores. In the student nurse sample many more of the high ambiguity group moved downwards in EVC than the low ambiguity group (32% as compared with 18%).

When these figures are taken in conjunction with data both from the leavers and from the interview subsample the importance of a person's job preconceptions becomes clear. Over 70% of all leavers

were from the high role ambiguity group, or, put in another way, a significantly larger proportion of the entry high role ambiguity group, both student nurses and teachers, did not complete their training in comparison with others who entered with moderate or low role ambiguity scores. Evidence from the subsample tended to confirm these points. A number of the nurse subsample on entry viewed themselves as romantic maidens clad in white performing near saintly duties. As one of the group (SN 369) commented in an early interview:

Boy, was I naive, really I lived in a fantasy land of white clad nurses and doctors in shining armour. Ward sisters never entered my thoughts. I was always the heroine, always saving the patient. You can imagine my surprise when it was all "Nurse bring the bedpan, Nurse attend that drip, Nurse make those beds" without hardly a please or thank you even. The smell of faeces and urine, the anti-septic, I just didn't know, I was in a world, a wonderland of my own.

I. Has this affected your commitment to the career of nursing.

SN 369 *It certainly has. Really, I just didn't know this was what it was all about. As soon as I can find another job I'm leaving.*

The case of SN 355, whilst revealing less stress, also gives an indication of the problem.

SN 355 *I didn't realise a nurse would have to be a jack of all trades but master of none. You have to run after people and fetch and carry. It's much harder, physically, than I expected.*

I. Has this clash affected your vocational commitment?

SN 355 *Yes it has, although how much is hard to tell, but, well, if it had been my ideal I'd have been more committed, wouldn't I?*

On the other hand, SN 367 believed that it was a prime reason for dropping in EVC scores.

This job was nothing like I thought it would be. You need tremendous energy to work one's utmost for eight hours per day, 5 days a week. It places great demands on your personality, you must show an attitude of pleasantness, willingness, understanding, patience, kindness and sense of humour to those you are caring for so those who are sick have confidence, trust and hope in nurses. It really is a hard job, nothing like I anticipated.

I. Has this clash affected your commitment to nursing?

SN 367 *It did and it has. In those early days I was completely disillusioned, dashed, depressed. I tried to find ways out. Other things, my boyfriend for example,*

kept me in. I've got used to it now, but it's just a job like any other. Not the kind of work I'd like to do. Yes it caused me to change my attitudes towards nursing.

And, finally, SN 371 commented as follows:

If only someone had told me this was a combination of cleaning lady, manicurist, flower arranger, hairdresser, body washer, bedpan emptier, waitress and servant, perhaps I'd never have come.

In teaching, reality shock concerning job actualities was not as acute as in nursing owing to the different training procedures. For some, however, it came in the first major teaching section in the second year. The extreme example of conflict was ST 307 who left shortly after this interview.

ST 307 *My first school section was a real shock to me. I never really anticipated it would be like that.*

I. *What was different to your expectations?*

ST 307 *Well, the school, it was so large, so many kids. There were 37 in my room. I'd never been in such a large class. And the smell. The windows should have been open I suppose. Oh, and there were control problems - the teacher couldn't get on top. I was frightened she'd go off sick and I'd get left with them all. I'd expected it all to be so orderly, it wasn't like our school.*

I. *Our school?*

ST 307 *The schools I went to. Small country schools. We never had, well, the kids weren't like that at all.*

I. *And this caused a drop in commitment?*

ST 307 *Well, yes, I think it was crucial. I just didn't enjoy it, it was nothing like I'd expected.*

ST 303 also experienced problems on teaching section, and like ST 307 was unable to adjust to the situation.

ST 303 *College life was fine, much as I'd expected it. the real crunch came on my teaching section.*

I. *Would you like to tell me about it?*

ST 303 *Well, most of the problems came from control, or lack of it! I spent almost all the section trying to learn to growl at the kids. But they refused to react the way I expected Even though I played at being really distressed when they were naughty, some of them only laughed. I talked about this with my tutor who could only say, well be firm. My associate just seemed to shrug it off. I began to wonder are children like animals, can they smell fear? Well it got worse and I decided that other jobs might be more rewarding for the amount of effort I put in it.*

The extent of tension created by the clash of expectations led in extreme cases to emotional problems. SN 427 explained it thus:

This job drains your emotions completely. I feel that I should never have come. It's so different to anything I'd anticipated - the cleaning, the dirtiness, the deaths. I suppose I should have known but I just didn't. When I come off wards I sometimes just cry and cry.

And later

God, the difference between what I expected and what I got. I must get away from here soon it's just too much for me. I fear the unknown, I dream about the possibilities, about what might happen. In my dreams it's traumatic. I fear exams, patients die and I'm to blame. It's all a horrible mix up. Last week I dreamt I was bleeding and so were all the patients. Everything went red, my uniform, cap, the sister, everything. I woke up screaming.

Both the statistical analysis and the case studies just cited tend to suggest a strong relationship between high role ambiguity on entry and a change in level of EVC scores. However, the position was by no means clear cut. Many students in the subsample demonstrated a capacity to cope with, and to adjust to, the demands of their vocation. SN 394 was typical of this group. In her fifth interview she commented as follows:

SN 394 *I used to wonder a lot if I was suited to this job. I never realised that nursing means being a personal maid a lot of the time for people who cannot help themselves. I seemed to have frustration after frustration in the job, but sometimes rewards came along*

I. Do you think the clash of expectations lowered your commitment to nursing as a career?

SN 394 *I think at first it did. Like a lot of others here say, I got disillusioned early on. But all that seemed to change as I got used to it. You must adapt to the demands. You just must work at it. This job is not so bad as some would tell you it is. Sure I still get frustrated, especially when some old bag bawls me out, but I can cope now that I realise what's to be done. No, at present I'd say that my commitment is the same as at the beginning. You just must learn to adjust.*

The evidence thus seemed to suggest that some individuals have a higher level of malleability, and were better able to adjust, than others (Birnbaum, 1968). This ability to adjust was crucial for many. At the time of exit from the training course, moreover, a significant relationship between changing EVC scores and level of role ambiguity was established. High role ambiguity students were over-represented

in the downward movers and under-represented in the upward movers. In nursing it was no longer possible to identify a 'high' ambiguity group which seems to indicate that, amongst other possibilities, those student nurses who had completed their course had learnt a great deal more about their jobs while in training than had the corresponding group of student teachers.

Differences between the various EVC groups also appeared on the Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory exit scores (Table 4.17). Those scoring on exit towards the liberal end of this scale had moved downwards in EVC scores in proportionately fewer numbers than the more conservative group (15% as opposed to 35%). Moreover the liberal group were over-represented in the high remaining high category (36% as compared with 7% of the conservative group). This may well relate to some of the points made earlier about role ambiguity. It could be suggested that those who had learnt to espouse the 'appropriate' attitudes towards the career of teaching were those who tended to retain high commitment. However, a check of the two students who fell into this category in the subsample provided insubstantive evidence.

Although the relationship between EVC changes and socio-economic status was not significant for the student teachers ($p < .20$) the trend is worth noting (Table 4.18). Lower SES group students were more likely to have entered high and stayed high than middle or upper SES group students (27%, 21%, 12% respectively). Lower SES group students were fewer proportionately (22%) in the low stable category than upper SES group (33%) students, but more than the middle SES group. These tendencies were also reflected in the student nurse data where 37% of the low SES students entered high and stayed high, as compared with 12% of the middle SES and 5% of the upper SES group.

Further evidence on this point may be derived from exit EVC scores (Table 4.19). Forty per cent of the lower SES students were in the high EVC scoring group as compared with 14% of the upper SES students. In the low EVC group the comparable figures were 35% for upper SES students and 14% of the lower SES students. To this should be added data drawn from the subsample interviews, from the leaver interviews cited above, and from the students' personal files. To pursue this question further 30 (which was 37%) of the surviving low SES student teachers and 16 of the low SES student nurses were interviewed during the last month of training.

Of the 19 low SES group included in the nurse and teacher subsample, seven maintained a high level of EVC, four dropped to the moderate level, two increased from moderate to high, two transferred and four resigned. It is noteworthy that three of the four resignees retained a strong desire to continue in the job, but because of circumstances beyond their control were forced to resign. The general impression left with the researcher was that many of the lower SES group struggled to survive in the training course (especially when they were limited academically), but exhibited more determination to succeed than others. For example, ST 208 (SES group 5, entry EVC score 87, exit EVC score 92, School Certificate average 51%) had this to say in her final interview:

It's been hard all along. I've had to work hard all along, at school, well when I was doing School C. I had to work harder than everyone else it seemed. I suppose I'm typical of those kids we discussed in the course on disadvantaged children. There wasn't much in the way of books at home. Mum and Dad wanted to help but they couldn't 'cos of their own lack of schooling. They encouraged me all along though. I've often thought about dropping out, but Mum and Dad always said "Stick it out a bit longer and see". Mum and her rainbows! [laughs]. Anyway, it wasn't bad advice, things'd blow over, even though the exams were a struggle I managed to pass. Then Dave, my fiance, [engaged, late 1974] he's been a big help with assignments - it's good to be able to talk things over with someone who's already a teacher. I'm only going to be an average teacher, I know that, but I think I've got something to offer, and I'm more devoted to teaching and kids than lots of the others around here

While ST 208, like almost everyone else, wavered occasionally in her determination to succeed, she demonstrated a core of resilience which was fostered by her family.

Each case was unique, but other lower SES students demonstrated similar determination. The evidence presented here, then, is consonant with the findings of Box and Ford (1967): that is, it appears that lower SES students often develop greater commitment to their careers than either middle or upper SES students.

EXPRESSED VOCATIONAL COMMITMENT AS A PREDICTOR

As an additional check on the usefulness of EVC as a predictor, a stepwise multiple regression analysis was carried out. The dependent variable was simply whether or not the student completed the course of training (that is, stayers compared with leavers). Ten factors were then selected as possible predictor variables. Each factor was scored dichotomously. The tetrachoric correlation matrix was then used for the stepwise multiple regression analysis. The predictor scores included EVC on entry, qualifications held on entry, neuroticism score, socio-economic status, conservatism score on entry, scores on the ACER AL and AQ tests, School Certificate English mark, School Certificate average and role ambiguity on entry. A hand calculation of the first multiple regression (EVC and qualification held) was carried out as a check.

In the student nurse sample only four variables were significant in the regression analysis of variance. These were, in order of level of significance: entry qualifications, role ambiguity on entry, ethnic group, and conservatism score on entry. It is interesting to note that expressed vocational commitment on entry added nothing significant to the analysis.

In the student teacher sample the variables were analysed in the following order: EVC scores on entry, qualifications held on entry, neuroticism score, socio-economic status, conservatism score on entry, School Certificate English attainment, School Certificate average mark, role conflict on entry, intelligence score on the ACER AQ test and intelligence score on the ACER AL test. While EVC score on entry appeared as the primary contributing variable, it had a tetrachoric correlation of only 0.28 with the staying and leaving criterion. However, the progressive addition of the other variables led to a rather surprisingly high multiple R of 0.79. The total variance accounted for by these stepwise multiple regressions was 31% in the case of student nurses and 63% for student teachers. When corrected for inflation these figures dropped only slightly to 29% and 62% respectively.

It should again be emphasised that the multiple regressions were carried out on the basis of tetrachoric correlations, and can be

regarded as no more than suggestive. In fact, as far as the student teachers were concerned, the correlation was based on a 30:70 split. While this is within the tolerance limits for tetrachoric correlation, it should be noted that the further away the split is from being equal (50:50) the more distorted the figures are likely to become. However, the results are in line with preliminary analysis of the data which indicated differences between EVC scores of stayers and leavers in both nurse training and teacher training. For example, in the student teacher group the stayers had an EVC entry mean score of 71.33 (σ 14.27) as compared with 65.10 (σ 14.65) for the leavers, giving a result of 3.27 ($p < .001$) on a t test. However, ω^2 was only 0.28, again indicating that only a low proportion of the variance was accounted for by EVC entry scores. In the student nurse sample the mean EVC entry scores were also different for leavers and stayers (71.51 σ 14.72 stayers; 54.86 σ 12.23 leavers $t = 4.79$ $p < .001$).

An analysis of the surviving student teacher sample was also carried out using level of success in the teacher training programme as the dependent variable. The surviving students were placed in two groups for this analysis: those who had achieved commendation or distinction diplomas, and those whose diplomas were not endorsed. A multiple R of 0.55 was reached in this instance, suggesting that the selected dependent variables could explain 31% of the total variance. The effect of EVC entry scores was so low that it contributed little or nothing to the equation.

The analysis to date has concentrated in the main on the quantitative data collected from pre- and post-tests and the interviews. On occasions the trends identified from this analysis have been supported with data derived from the subsample. To answer the next research question, which concerns the reasons for changes in EVC scores, the subsample data needs to be considered in some detail.

CHAPTER 5

REASONS FOR CHANGE IN VOCATIONAL COMMITMENT

OVERVIEW: Reasons for changes in strength of EVC are examined under four broad headings: the influence of other people, the influence of organisational structure, the relationship of people and structure (which includes an analysis of power operations), and the influence of a deified or reified normative structure. The reasons for changes in type of EVC are then discussed. The chapter proceeds to a consideration of the degree of autonomy claimed by individuals, as well as a discussion of the possibility of a combination of reasons for changes in EVC. It concludes that people appear to be more reflective about their vocations than has been previously suggested.

The statistical analyses reported in the last chapter revealed some interesting trends, but apart from suggesting a relationship between certain entry and exit characteristics (for example, role ambiguity) and subsequent movements in EVC, they did not isolate reasons for such movements. The analysis now turns to the observational-interview data which provides further exploratory information related to the second focus of the investigation.

In order to present the material in an orderly manner, a framework based on the following questions was used:

1. How influential are other people in the development of a person's EVC?
2. How influential are the rules and regulations, the 'structure' of the institutions involved?
3. How influential are factors relating to a person's individuality?

In the course of the analysis it was found necessary to add two further categories, as some people appeared to be heavily influenced by either a deity or by a reification of societal norms. Others

appeared to be influenced by a combination of two of the factors — or in some instances by more than two. Accordingly the discussion is divided into four major sections — the influence of other people on the student concerned, the influence of institutional factors, the influence of a combination of the two, and the influence of a deified or reified normative structure.

REASONS FOR CHANGE IN STRENGTH OF EVC

The Influence of Other People

There is ample evidence in the interview data to confirm the view that students perceive other people as being influential in the development of their vocational commitment. A wide range of people were identified by the subsample in this respect — from workmates, through church leaders, to close relatives. In the three case studies cited in Appendix K, it appeared that SN 340 was influenced strongly by her fiancé at a crucial time in her training, SN 352 by her family and kin group, and ST 222 by a strong associate teacher. This demonstrates that the influence of others must be viewed from several different levels; for example, the influence of other individuals, the influence of groups of people (peers, kin, church groups, social/fun groups, etc.), and the influence of 'reference groups'. Each of these are dealt with in the discussion which follows, first from a job perspective, and second from a social perspective.

(a) On-the-job influences

1. Senior staff members

There was considerable evidence, both from the interviews and from the post test, to suggest that relationships with other individuals within the institutions played a significant role in the development of EVC. As the figures in Table 5.1 show, the most common reason given for decreases in EVC amongst the student nurse subsample was confrontations with senior staff, particularly in the wards. The intensity of such relationships is evident in the following extracts from the transcripts:

SN 417, who was to resign within a month, had this to say in her

second interview:

Sometimes we're treated like muck with no respect — do this, do that. We're told off for being five minutes late, yet expected to stay on if the ward's busy or the work is not done. You're treated like children one minute, then they're just as likely to leave you in charge of the ward the next.

And SN 441, also in the second interview:

There's a terribly tense atmosphere in some wards, related to sister-staff relationships. There was one ward where the sister used to throw things at us — she was heading for a breakdown.

Or, again, in the case of SN 405:

I was accused of not answering the call from a patient. I wasn't even there and it wasn't my job. I was an innocent party, but that didn't stop her [the charge nurse] from yelling at me. I walked away because I won't be yelled at when I'm not the guilty one. So then I got yelled at for walking away. It's very frustrating.

I. Did this incident affect your commitment to nursing?

SN 405. (hesitates) *Well, yes I think it probably did. I believe that we should work as a team, least that's what we've been told. To be shouted at like that is demeaning.*

Two further confrontations serve to illustrate that at times the students came to view the wards as battlefields where they had to fight for their rights, a battle savoured by few and lost by many.

SN 340. *I was in ward X. The sister there is a bloody battle axe. She pushes everyone around even doctors are frightened of her. Well, this day she told me to get something from the sluice room, I can't remember what it was now, I was really upset. On the way I got sidetracked by another nurse, so I suppose I was a little slow. Then she came tearing down the ward shouting at me "Can't you do things you're asked" she said "you're slovenly and lazy." I just stood there — the other nurse disappeared. Well, she kicked me off the ward when I said I wouldn't be sworn at.*

I. Is this an extreme example?

SN 340. *I suppose it is, but they're too narrow here. I'm looking for another job. There are other things too, the night work, the shifts. It's not what I thought'd be.*

And SN 423:

Staff nurse told me to do this dressing on a lady. Because the wound was oozing she told me to put on a double dressing

of gauze so I did. Then the sister came round with the doctor, and she got blown sky high "Why was there a double dressing on the wound, it didn't need it." Course she found out who'd done it and she came along and blew me sky high and I said staff nurse told me to do it that way and she said "I don't give a damn" and walked away.

The situation was well summed up by SN 336 in her third interview when she said, "When you're a junior nurse you get the bum rap!"

There is little question that the confrontations and problems with people on the job caused temporary drops in, and in some cases permanent loss of vocational commitment. On the other hand, good relationships with staff members seemed to increase the strength of EVC. For example, SN 418, who had experienced a number of collisions with ward sisters, which, combined with ill health and personal problems precipitated her resignation, had this to say in her leaving interview:

If all wards were like "paediatrics" then many more nurses would stay on. The staff are friendly and helpful. There's no shouting, no screaming by senior staff. You feel part of the team. I think I'd have stayed if this had been the general case.

This suggestion received confirmation in the cases of SN 352 and SN 337:

The staff were so good in Ward Q. There was never any stress it seemed even when a flap was on. Everyone worked well together, I finally saw what it could be to be a good nurse.

I. Did this change your attitude towards nursing as a career?

SN 342. *It certainly did. (pause) I'm certain this was a key experience without which I may have left. You know I'd thought about going many times. I felt a lack of purpose. But this ward, because of the staff, because of the sense of doing a worthwhile job meant all the difference to me. Sister X sets a great example, she's so prepared to listen and well, she seems to care about us all as persons as well as workers. I learnt more about patient care there than all the other wards put together.*

Similarly SN 337 found her commitment increasing as her relationship with staff improved:

When I came I was uncertain as to whether I'd like nursing I wasn't even sure what I'd have to do. Now I find I'm loving it. The wards are super. The staff really work hard and there's good co-operation. The medical ward was good. I've just come off [obstetrics ward], and that was a stimulating experience. I'm now determined to complete my training - and to give service to people.

The "persons as workers" point here is a key one. The general picture though, was that of the senior ward staff maintaining social distance from the trainee nurses, a point borne out in both general and leaver interviews. For example, SN 423 commented as follows:

They treat you very poorly really — never think of you as a person. If only you could go and talk to them as a person, to tell them your worries about work. But they keep well away; we don't even have morning tea with them. If you talk to anyone on wards it's the other juniors. You get the feeling sometimes, that, well, they think we're moronic and not worth talking to.

The relationships between senior staff and student nurses were overlaid by a build-up of expectations on the part of the students. Senior staff members acquired 'reputations' (in some cases wildly astray and without justification); the students did a good deal of note-swapping and gossip about the wards, especially just before commencing work in them. Thus attitudes about particular wards and staff were developed long before the students met the actual people. There was a strong probability that the expectations built-up by this gossip network affected the type of interactions between students and ward staff.

Relationships between senior ward staff and students in the hospital were therefore not altogether satisfying to the student sample. Those students who survived learned avoidance behaviour, a phenomenon noted by McGuire (1964, p.184).

My own impression was not so much that relations between staff at various levels were bad but that they were non-existent. Student nurses spoke of "avoiding" senior nurses, or "keeping out of the road" or "getting on with my own work", of "not having much to do with doctors", and of "not troubling with senior staff."

In the present sample phrases like "... we learn their funny little ways"; "I know when to get out of their road"; "there are places to hide when you know she's on the ran-tan"; "you soon learn when to keep your mouth shut" were commonplace in the interview data.

It should be noted that, in the hospital situation, relationships of senior and junior staff were overlaid by the prevailing belief amongst junior nurses that the hierarchical organisation was "a bad thing". In isolating a category 'relationship with other staff', a tension appears in the explanation. To what extent was the relationship affected by the hierarchical organisation or by the rules

and regulations of the institution? This point is taken up when we come to consider the influence of hospital rules and regulations.

Although arguments and problems with staff members, both on teaching section and in the college were reported by the teacher subsample, the frequency was much lower than that for the nurse sample; nor did the incidents appear to provoke as much emotion as those cited above. There were exceptions, however. ST 140 wrote as follows on her post test:

I got regularly and frequently brassed-off with administrative pettiness, seemingly useless work requirements, and with being a victim of misadvice and poor guidance re courses. Some staff seem to be on a huge ego trip - they're not concerned with helping us be good teachers, but with their own images. The rows I've had with some of them has disillusioned me about becoming a teacher. For example I clashed over late work with X. I was 12 hours late and I didn't have an extension. I'd really slaved over that assignment. They refused to give me a grade on it, so much for all the effort - it was late because I got so interested in it. Looking back I suppose I was a bit rude over it (can't write what I said) but it was BLOODY frustrating.

And ST 226 in his final interview:

Some of the lecturers aren't worth their salaries, and some of the associates should be fired. Useless. I had a real go with the staff at one of the schools I was at - they were real lazy - gone by 3.30 p.m. and damn-all preparation. What an example! Well, I told them it peed me off and that I was getting nothing from it. Next thing I was on the mat at college. Boy, do they stick together. Like glue!

I. Did these incidents affect your career plans at all?

ST 226. *I'll say they did, I almost chucked it in. But then I thought stick it out, someone has to help change it all.*

I. Did it affect your commitment, do you think?

ST 226. *Well, no, perhaps yes. If anything it made me more determined to do well, for the kids' sake. I'm now very keen to teach. I realise just how important it is.*

Thus, while no generalisable pattern emerged, it is evident that relationships with teaching staff and associate teachers appeared to be crucial for the development of EVC in at least some instances.

2. Peer groups in the work context

Although no strong over-riding peer structure was identified in

the present study, several identifiable subgroups emerged.

(a) There appeared to be a 'Social-fun group' (Bolton and Kammeyer, 1967), characterised by low EVC and a desire to be identified as students. This group demonstrated preoccupation with parties, sexual activities and many had or were dabbling with drugs. The regular intake of large quantities of alcohol seemed a necessary attribute for membership.

(b) There was a 'Sporting group', which had some exchange and overlap with the former. The main focus of attention here was the devoting of much leisure time and discussion to formal sports activities of a team nature, particularly rugby amongst the men and netball amongst the women. Many of this group specialized in Physical Education and hoped to extend this interest further. The exchange with group (a) was often on a seasonal basis — for example, a devoted rugby player spent most of his summer months' leisure time surfboard riding, a favourite sport for the 'fun group'.

(c) An 'apprentice group' (Marsland, 1972) was identified who tended to model themselves on a particular teacher or nurse. Members of this group tended to increase in EVC and devoted much of their spare time to activities designed to improve their expertise in their chosen field (e.g., amateur theatricals and St. John Ambulance).

(d) Members of a 'college group' (Marsland, 1972) allied themselves with the college's aims and goals. This group's members were usually attracted by a charismatic lecturer or lecturers and tended to have moderate EVC scores on entry, but these were high on exit. The nurses in this group were referred to occasionally by other students as the 'goodies' (Kreuger, 1972).

(e) There was a 'Maori group' in both institutions based on ethnicity. A strong Maori Club flourished in the College in the second and third years of the study and for many Maori students this was the major point of reference.

(f) There were several 'religious groups' — a highly religious collection of students, ranging from Pentecostal to High Church Anglican. Usually these students belonged to one of the formal religious groups (e.g., Student Christian Movement).

As with most typologies this grouping has no 'pure forms'; indeed, a complicated cross hatch is established if aesthetic interests

and so forth are included. Moreover some students did not belong to any grouping. Nonetheless it does appear that membership of group (a) indicated a low or eventual lowering of EVC score; many in group (b) were using teaching in particular as a means to other ends, namely to achieving a particular sporting goal; group (c) were amongst the highest EVC scorers; group (d) began with moderate EVC and increased with time; group (e) were almost all high EVC scorers, but experienced considerable difficulty with academic work; whilst membership of group (f) not only indicated high EVC scores but altruism as far as the type of commitment was concerned. It must be stressed that the comments in this paragraph are very broad generalisations and that many students belonged to a group without appearing to be influenced by the 'normal' attitude of its members towards the vocation under study.

One further point relating to the influence of the peer group bears discussion. At the beginning of the research over 60% of the total sample claimed that their family, and particularly their parents, were the people whom they turned to for advice. As the enquiry progressed, however, and as the sample was acculturated into the patterns of behaviour in their respective institutions, this tended to change, until, at the conclusion of the investigation, 50% of the student nurses and 21% of the student teachers cited friends as the prime source of advice, while 8% of the student nurses and 39% of the student teachers nominated tutors or advisers. The family remained the main advisory group for 42% of the student nurses and 40% of the student teachers. The shift from family towards external sources of emotional support and advice is interesting, as are the differences between the student nurses and student teachers. It raises a vexed question of guidance and counselling: the college maintained a well-developed system whereas the hospital did not. This also raises the question of informal counselling by the peer group. As this appears to involve dual functions, it is discussed further below.

3. Influence of 'clients'

Relationships with patients in one institution and with children in the other seemed of crucial importance for many students. Here again a division occurred; many found the relationships rewarding and claimed their EVC scores had increased as a consequence; others found that they were unable to communicate adequately, or to service the perceived needs of their clients. Typical of those with problems was

SN 394:

The patients frightened me at first. When I first started I had difficulty walking into a patient's room. One of the hardest parts is pretending to the patient that you have no problems of your own. I used to walk around with a fixed smile but inside I was all strung up and frightened. And you have to put up with all sorts of annoyance and being treated like dirt and spoken to in a way I wouldn't even dream of thinking. And I don't like hypocrisy, saying you'll soon be better when you just know they're going to, well, not get much better, just die perhaps.

I. You said patients worried you at first. Have you overcome this?

SN 394. *Not entirely, no. I'm still constantly frightened of what they do and say to you. Probably more annoyed than frightened now. I didn't realise that they'd order you around the way they do.*

I. *Has this affected your commitment to nursing, do you think?*

SN 394. *Well my commitment has dropped. Yes that's affected it, but other things too....*

SN 349 presents a considerable contrast:

The most rewarding part of this job is dealing with patients. Whenever my determination to complete has wavered, when I've had down-in-the-dumps days, the patients always seem to help me get cheered up. They depend on you and most of them show their appreciation. Occasionally you get a small gift, just chocolates or that, and this makes you feel so good.

I. *Has your relationship with patients affected your commitment to nursing?*

SN 349. *Well, I've always been highly committed to being a nurse. But, well yes, I s'pose it's, well, what's the word, reinforced, I think. I can't think of a job as rewarding as nursing.*

A further point which emerges from the analysis is that different girls worried about different kinds of patients. SN 349, for example, expressed a dislike of geriatric nursing but a great liking for the children's ward; SN 370 on the other hand, expressed completely the opposite view. She commented that she hated to see little children suffering, and wondered why they had to die, whereas she appeared (on the surface at least) to have established excellent empathy with the elderly. It is interesting to note, further, that these attitudes are reflected in the reports made about them in the wards, excerpts of which are reproduced below.

	SN 349	SN 370
Geriatric:	Competent, but appears disinterested at times. Needs supervision.	A very good student who settled in well here. Copes well and works hard.
Children:	A lively nurse who has learnt a good deal. Very interested in the work, and shows initiative. A keen worker.	Takes herself very seriously. Not lazy, but doesn't extend herself. Could show more concern for the children patients.

Student teachers were also influenced markedly by their relationships with children on teaching section. For example, ST 224 commented as follows on his post test:

When I came to college I wasn't sure what to expect. I was a little dubious about devoting my life to a career in teaching. Now I have no doubts about it. This is an important job, a demanding job. This was brought home to me on my sections [practical work]. The kids are so appreciative, my relationships with them were very rewarding. It was the kids, I think, who convinced me that teaching is a worthwhile career, and that I should devote my life to it.

For the most part students were positive in their comments about their clientele. They were seldom non-committal — success in dealing with patients and children was related inevitably to increases in EVC scores and conversely upsetting incidents and poor communication were related to a decline.

4. Influence of doctors

This was, of course, limited to the nurse sample. For the most part the doctors were perceived as aloof individuals who seldom entered the world of the junior nurse. If they did on a social basis they were viewed with some suspicion, students believing "they're out for what they can get". Some students co-operated in this respect but it is doubtful as to whether this affected their EVC scores in any way! The most frequent complaint related to level of expectation. As SN 355 put it:

Most of the doctors expect you to know more than you do. They tell you to do things, like drips, before you've learnt how to do them. This can be terribly frustrating, as they get annoyed if you contradict them, at leastways tell them

you don't know how to do it. I don't think this has affected my drop in commitment, though, there are worse things here.

This seems to sum up the overall relationship of doctors and junior nurses — limited interaction and little effect on EVC scores.

5. The reference group

In some respects much of the foregoing discussion reflects the influence of a reference group. However, the term is used more specifically here to refer to the success structure of the two institutions. It may be postulated that a student's EVC score could be affected by the particular group with whom he compared himself (even though he may not have been a member of that group). Questions to elicit this information were included in both the subsample and leaver interviews. Analysis of the responses seems to indicate that, even though the tendency was for individuals to compare themselves with top scorers, changes in EVC scores for this reason were minimal. The general picture which emerged was of students very quickly acquiring a self-image of their own ability which served to insulate them against any unfavourable comparison. For example, ST 222 put it thus:

I'm likely to be a middle-of-the-road average teacher. I know I'll never be as good as ... [ST 225 — a distinction graduate] he's got it and I haven't. But there's a place for people like me; I'm as good as I can be and feel I've a contribution to make.

6. The influence of dual role-playing people (group figures)

Popitz (1972) has identified a group of people whom he labels "group figures", who play a dual role in institutions. In the present study some group figures appeared as highly influential individuals. Several kinds of group figures were identified, as follows:

The father or mother surrogate. Within both the college and hospital precincts several lecturers appeared as parent surrogates and concerned themselves with pastoral duties as well as carrying out the teaching role. Although this occasionally led to difficulties in adjustment for members of the given group, usually a maintenance or increase in EVC scores was evinced for most students who entered upon such a relationship. For example, ST 221, who had several crises while in training, commented as follows:

I knew X was there to help at times like those.. He's much more than just a lecturer. I mean in times of stress he's

prepared to listen and to give good advice. He's calmed me down when I've needed it. Sure you can talk to other lecturers too but X makes you aware of how important the job is and how you can do it.

No estimate of either the strength or extent of this influence is available from the present data. While some students benefitted from such contacts, others survived just as well with no such surrogate.

The lecturer/sports or drama figure. A number of the lecturers in the teachers' college, especially the younger members of staff, formed close links with students through participation in sports or drama. These lecturers were occasionally mentioned by the respondents as being influential. For example, ST 225 reported as follows in his post test:

I feel I got to know Y very well, more as a friend than a lecturer. He was prepared somehow to get involved with us as students, especially those in the Rugby Club. We were able to talk things over informally on many occasions; this gave me the chance to clarify what teaching was all about. Looking back I think these discussions were probably instrumental in improving my commitment towards teaching as a career ... although there were other factors too.

Again, there were other students who had no such relationships with lecturers and who moved in the same direction and in the same degree as ST 225 — indeed, it appeared that these particular 'group figures' had a relatively slight impact overall.

The lecturer/counsellor-adviser. Although the father-surrogate type discussed above was involved in a considerable amount of informal counselling, the college also operated a formal advisory system. A number of volunteer lecturers had students assigned to them for counselling over the three year period. Although a variety of practices were adopted, most advisers (as they were known) arranged regular meetings with their students as a group, both formally and on a social basis, and also maintained an open-door policy for individuals with special difficulties. The research data provide considerable evidence of the success of this system. All of the subsample consulted their adviser individually on at least one occasion, and some as many as ten times. ST 313 in her final interview summed up the view of many:

Look, Mrs X [first name] was wonderful to me. She gave me a feeling of having someone to turn to. That was very important. I'd never been away from home before, and never felt, well, so isolated and scared. But [first name] made herself available, she gave me the opportunity to discuss problems.

I. How often did you consult her?

ST 313. *Oh, I can't remember that. Ten to twenty times formally, not counting the chats we had over coffee. I don't know really. There were advisory group meetings too.*

I. What did you talk about?

ST 313. (hesitates) *Oh, all manner of things. Some quite trivial ... but others important. Assignments, boy friends, all kind of things. Whether to go flatting or not. All kinds of things.*

I. Work things?

ST 313. *Oh yes, the problems I had on section for example. She put me right there. And often she'd put me onto the right person to talk to.*

I. Did this affect your commitment to teaching?

ST 313. (hesitates) *Yes I think it did. I'm still here aren't I (laughs). No seriously, it did. Whenever I wavered, whenever I felt like chucking it in, I had someone serious to talk to seriously. I'm sure my commitment increased as a result of these talks.*

It is interesting to note from Figure 4.5 that ST 313 entered with low EVC and steadily increased this EVC as training proceeded.

ST 210, in the course of cataloguing a series of complaints, supported ST 313 when she said:

Too many of the activities are trivial and unrelated; lectures are petty, we don't get enough practical experience, the college hierarchy is restrictive. I discussed leaving with my parents who persuaded me to see it out; my adviser was super. He told me I was one of the best students in the college and smoothed out a lot of my problems. Anyway, the appeal of the classroom persuaded me to stay, I've always wanted to teach.

The advisory structure of the college was backed up by a full-time counsellor, who was available to counsel students on either a referral or on an *ad hoc* basis. In the course of the three years the counsellor had consultations with 138 of the total teacher sample (105 females, 33 males) representing 41% of the group. The sessions dealt with a range of matters, from domestic arts and finance to deep personal problems. As with the advisers the counsellor was mentioned by a number of students as helping to consolidate or improve their vocational commitment. Typical comments were: "She made me see where I was going"; "It's good to have someone like that to in a way confirm your job attitudes".

The advisory/counselling system in the college, on the basis of the present data, appeared as a significant factor in changing or maintaining the strength of EVC. Taken together with the involvement of students in decision making through the representative board, it perhaps serves to explain important differences between the development of EVC scores of teachers and nurses. This latter point is further developed later in this thesis.

The student/counsellor-adviser. It is pertinent at this juncture to describe the results of the socio-metric measures administered to the nurse sample, as the 'peer group' is sometimes held to be the dominant factor influencing behaviour. The friendship clusters derived from the interviews of the total nurse sample three months after the entry to training are illustrated in Figures 5.1 and 5.2 which appear in Volume Two. The capital letters (A, B, etc.) in these figures represent groups of students who in their first year of training formed household groups. The geometric symbols within the circles indicate resignees from the group at 3-4 month intervals. The major points to be derived from these sociograms are:

1. The students moved into common households on the basis of friendship groups.
2. There was a tendency for complete clusters to resign (e.g., 417, 440, 423, 410).
3. In the January intake, one resignee (415) was nominated by 10 girls of whom 8 resigned. Three of these were in SN 415's 'household-friendship' structure (418, 419 and 408), and the other 5 all had connections with resignees — e.g., 416 had a link with 433, also a strong link to 359, whose flatmates 412, 424 and 420 resigned; 422 was in the same flat as 432; all of 413's flatmates resigned — 411, 409, 414; all of 423's flatmates resigned; and 431 had a reciprocal friendship with 435 who resigned.

It was established in the leaver interviews that these five students (SN 416, SN 422, SN 413, SN 423, SN 431) had discussed leaving on several occasions with SN 415. In addition, SN 438 who had no primary sociometric link with SN 415, also discussed leaving with her prior to resigning in August 1974. SN 415 was not one of the

subsample, but such was her apparent influence that it was decided to interview her in December 1973.

SN 415 entered with a low EVC score of 39, and was non-committed in EVC type. She had an above average score on both the AL and AQ general ability tests, and had an average of 63 in School Certificate. She came from a professional family, and was one of many in the high role conflict group. She was well below the average score on the conservatism scale, scoring 16, and was an only child. A little older than most of the student nurses, she was remembered by the researcher from the first interview as frank and forthcoming. In the December interview she pointed out that it was her intention to leave in 1974 when her financial position improved. She reminded the researcher that she had come nursing "... to give it twelve months trial". Now she felt that she would be better off elsewhere. In her words:

Nursing is a bit of a drag. The old hags around here delight in pushing you about. There are too many bosses around here — there's no clear communication, and if you get it mixed up you get the rap for it even if it's not your fault. I'm bored with it. The night shifts are monotonous, the work's repetitive. No challenge in the school either. I'm going to go to university next year to try that out.

I. *Have you discussed leaving with many people?*

SN 415. *You mean in my class? (pause) Oh, yes, uh huh. There are a lot of people who shouldn't be here, who really aren't going to be good nurses. They just drifted in, they're, well, they'd be better off in other jobs. We all talk about leaving, a lot, you know.*

I. *How many people have you talked to about leaving?*

SN 415. *About me leaving?*

I. *Well, yes, that, and about them leaving.*

SN 415. *Well about me, let's see now ... my flatmates, only my flatmates [names SN 408 and 419]. But I've talked to others about them leaving. There's lots who just ought to get up and go. Some of them take the most awful rubbish from the old bags. They just ought to think it through and go. They aren't suited, a lot of them, there really is a nurse temperament you know, and not many have got it — well I haven't*

I. *Have you gone to talk to girls about leaving, or have they come to talk to you?*

SN 415. *Well, there's always a lot of talk about leaving — when we're having coffee, when some are tired and down to it,*

we seem to talk a lot about leaving and what other jobs are like ... but do you mean have I talked anyone into leaving?

I. (laughs) Well, yes, I am interested in that, I suppose I am asking about that in a round about way, have you?

SN 415. (laughs) Yes, I suppose I must have - some leave pretty soon after our chats. I suppose there have been some occasions when I've heard about one of the kids with problems and I've gone to talk to her. But it's mostly just when we're on wards, or in school together.

I. Can you give me an example of you actually going to talk to someone with problems, about her leaving ...?

SN 415. My, you are persistent (pause). Well there was [SN 437] I guess. She's a friend of [SN 419], they went to school together, boarding school. She was going to be in our flat, but she went in with some guys in the end. Well she talked to [SN 419] about leaving, about how she was fed up, and wanting to know what to do, and [SN 419] suggested I should talk to her, so I did.

I. What did you tell her ...?

SN 415. Oh, I don't know that I told her anything, we just talked and discussed other jobs, about her problems, oh there were all kind of difficulties she'd had, about the bitchiness on some of the wards; we covered a great deal of ground

I. Did she resign?

SN 415. Oh yes, in October I think, or was it September, about then. She got a job in the Post Office I think, she's better off there.

This extract demonstrates the possibility of SN 415 exerting both primary and secondary influence on other student nurses. Although it is impossible to determine the exact extent of her influence on resignation there is at least a strong indication that she was involved in the eventual resignation of 14 girls from the January intake, and 2 from the March intake. It is even more difficult to assess her impact on strength of EVC. However, as she herself said:

I suppose I've made it my business to talk to my friends about how they like the job. I reckon if you're not suited to a job, you should get out; there shouldn't be any stigma to leaving, there should be a trial period after which one can retire if you want to. Even though I intended to leave, I think nursing is important enough to have the right people in it.

And later she said:

... it's two way, you should be good for nursing, and it should be good for you, that's what I tell them.

This sort of informal counselling was not confined to SN 415. Indeed, as was mentioned above, one of the more interesting comparative findings of the research was that whereas the teachers' college students tended to refer to advisers, tutors and the counselling service for advice, student nurses consulted friends. SN 415's influence was, however, exceptional. A number of her friends in *post hoc* discussion groups commented that she had had a signal influence in "making them aware", thus relating their interaction with SN 415 to their EVC scores. Tentatively, then, the conclusion can be drawn that, in some instances, group figures and informal "Lucy style"¹ counselling was very important. However, the converse existed. SN 344 (not in the subsample) is the paradigm here. Originally she flatted with SN 408, SN 415, SN 418 and SN 419 and, from all reports, was equally involved in the discussions about leaving. Her written comment in her post test is revealing.

I've had my self doubts in the three years. I flatted with a group who all left, they tried to persuade me to go, but I didn't like the way they chose to live. One of them was particularly persuasive [SN 415?], she was always talking about how better it would be for us to leave. I think she talked the others into it, but I don't like being influenced in that way. I like to think things over, and make up my own mind. Looking back I can see how easy it would have been to go with the others, but I'm always pretty determined to make up my own mind. Living in those kind of circumstances can cause you to do things you might regret later. Anyway, I finally made a break and went back to the hostel.

From this account it seems that SN 344 was more reflective about the possible outcome of decisions, prior to actually taking the decision, than many of her peers. This raises a further set of questions concerning the degree of autonomy exercised by individuals in decision making — a set of questions which are taken up in the conclusion of this chapter. It is appropriate to turn now, though, to the second broad division of the 'influence of other people', namely social factors.

¹Lucy is a character in Schultz's comic strip "Peanuts" who specialises in cheap psychiatric advice which almost invariably rebounds on the client.

(b) Social factors

Many students related both increases and decreases in EVC scores to the influence of relatives, in particular first degree consanguineal and affinal relatives. For example, ST 220 (see Appendix K) believed that her drop in EVC score was partly attributable to the attitudes of her fiancé (later her husband) to teaching as a career. In her sixth interview she commented as follows:

My fiancé doesn't think teaching's all that important a job. He says that "those who can, do, those who can't, teach" — you know, Shaw wasn't it? Well I didn't agree with him at first but he's sort of convinced me. I can see there are things in life just as important, no, more important, than teaching kids. My dedication hasn't been very high, has it, not in the past, but now it's well down. I'm going to get my certificate. I hate things unfinished, but then after we get married I'll leave and probably won't come back.

On the other hand SN 371 had this to say in Interview 6:

Everything changed when I met 'David'. You know how I used to be a bit lazy, I wasn't worried about the job, I thought, well get registered then what about air hostessing. I never really put anything into this job, and spent most of my time thinking about me and things outside the hospital. I wasn't going to get shrivelled up and prudish like some I could mention in here (laughs). But 'David' changed that. We used to have long talks about our jobs — he's a vet — and he showed me, and I came to realise that nursing is very important and that I could be a good nurse. I'm now much more committed to the thought of being a good nurse. I now can't think of anything better to do — it was 'David' who started me thinking this way.

And in the final interview she added:

Although nursing has its frustrations I now find it a worthwhile job. I get great encouragement from my husband ['David'] who also sees its importance. It's got better as we've gone along — at first some sisters treated us like dummies and fussed over the most trivial things, but now we're given more responsibility and seem to be accepted more.... We intend to have a family sometime, we're not sure when. I'll probably take a break from nursing, then return, and nurse until retirement I think. Oh, we may travel overseas if the chance comes up. But nursing is now my life career when earlier I was very uncertain. I think getting married and talking about these things with my husband has been very important.

These two examples illustrate the poles of individual influence — one related to a drop of EVC score, the other to a marked increase (entry 47, exit 79). Between the poles many individuals influenced the

subsample at different times. When the evidence presented in Tables 5.1 to 5.4 is considered in connection with the case studies cited above and in the appendices, it is obvious that 'other people' were a substantive influence in the formulation of individual expressions of vocational commitment. While very few of the subsample were not affected in the manner suggested above, obviously some were influenced by this aspect more than others. Analysis of the transcripts, student records and observational notes leads the researcher to conclude that 39 of the total subsample (N = 70) were more influenced by 'other people' than any other single category. For these individuals interaction and discussion with other people was a substantive influence in the development of EVC.

The Influence of Organisational Structure

It is necessary now to draw certain distinctions between decision making processes in the two institutions under study, as they serve to explain some important differences between the statements of student nurses and student teachers.

The School of Nursing in its hospital setting

The structure of the school of nursing, and the hospital in which it was based, was both autocratic and hierarchical. Indeed, in most respects it conformed to Weber's classic description of a bureaucracy. Rank was carefully defined by both uniform and an assigned status system. For the most part duties were assigned according to the position held; however, as is reported elsewhere in this thesis, some confusion over the job requirements of student nurses led to problems.

Student nurses were virtually excluded from the decision making process. They were not represented on any of the boards or committees set up to determine curriculum matters; nor were they encouraged to be critical of existing procedures. Unlike the teachers' college the school of nursing did not have a formal advisory structure. A part time counsellor was available, but as this person was a psychiatrist he was rarely consulted.

Because of the nature of the function of the institution, the hospital had many more rules and regulations regarding procedures than did the teachers' college. This spilled over to the hostel accommo-

dation. The hospital hostels [homes] maintained a stricter régime than was the case in the teachers' college.

Finally, the Student Nurses' Association lacked support from the student nurses themselves, and during the course of the study was held in low esteem by staff and students alike.

The Teachers' College

The advisory-counselling structure of the college has been described above. On the surface the organisation of the teachers' college was democratic. The advisory-counselling structure was complemented by a well organised system whereby students could voice an opinion on the curriculum and organisation of the college. This was formalised in the Student Representative Board (the Rep Board) which was composed of elected representatives from all sections of the student body, as well as staff members. The Rep Board was, in fact, operated as a complaints forum. In addition, the college authorities maintained an open door policy with the executive of the students' association, and, finally, students were represented on all decision making boards in the college structure.

We have, then, two greatly contrasting institutions — one operating on the basis of a finely ordered hierarchy and excluding students from decision making; the other much more diffuse, and inclusive of students in the decision making process. How then, did students perceive the influence of these structures in the light of their development of vocational commitment?

Institutional Ethos

Many researchers have found strong normative structures within the institutions they studied, deriving from nomothetic and idiographic structures (Horowitz, 1968). In the vocational commitment context, though, no such overriding structures were found in the present study, probably because the two formal institutions from which the samples were drawn were large and were also extremely diffuse — a diffusion increased in the instance of the teachers' college by strong links with the university on a common campus, and in the case of the school of nursing by its location within the hospital precincts. Although the students' associations at each institution endeavoured from time to time to establish a corporate spirit amongst their members, their

efforts went largely unrewarded. Moreover, the only time during the course of the study that the school of nursing or the college met together as a body was at the graduation ceremonies, and only on rare occasions were sports teams fielded, or cultural events staged by the institution as an institution. The college came closest to attaining the goal of a corporate entity, but most of its activities were shared with the university. It should be noted in passing that this was perceived as a weakness by a number of college staff and students, particularly the former, many of whom had themselves trained in small, monopurpose colleges, and who had witnessed the present institution grow from a personalised entity to a diffuse formal organisation. Shipman (1969) has discussed a similar transition in a different setting.

Unlike Shipman (1966), however, the present research did not bring out a single, powerful normative structure relating to vocational impulse. Rather, a series of subcultures seemed to operate in respect of "becoming a teacher" or "becoming a nurse". If a common normative structure existed, it related to attitudes in personal study and acceptable workloads, although even here a range of attitudes prevailed.

There is some suggestion from the Q sort techniques employed in the role ambiguity procedures that practising nurses and teachers were able to verbalise what is entailed in being a nurse or teacher. However, in the training process disjunction between the ideals of some of the lecturing staff and actual nursing and teaching practice led to certain difficulties. There is little question that many tutors and lecturers in the training institutions tended to present an idealized picture of the practical situation. As SN 352 put it:

There's no relationship between the school and the wards at all. They tell us one thing then the sisters tell us the opposite. It's absolutely frustrating. Some of the tutors are too far away from practical nursing.

In similar vein ST 209:

Look, on my first teaching section my associate said "Forget everything they tell you up there, they've forgotten how to teach." And I'm inclined to agree you know. There seems precious little relationship to classroom teaching and some of the parts of the [college] programme.

ST 223 perceived it this way:

There are occasions when I think the lecturers tell it the way they'd like it to be, the way they'd like to have taught, rather than the way it is, or is going to be if you get me.

Many of the tutor nurses, in line with current trends in patient care, tended to emphasise the humanitarian aspects of nursing. Earlier it was posited that many of the present sample were altruistically inclined. Thus, the ideals expressed by tutors in the nursing school course found a ready audience in many students and persuaded them to spend considerable time talking to patients, besides performing the normal routines. There were several recorded instances of such nurses being reprimanded by ward sisters for this activity. Many had comments such as "wastes too much time talking to patients" endorsed on their ward reports. The frustration of the student nurses with this type of ambiguity is highlighted in the following extract from the transcripts:

Here I was putting into practice what the tutor nurses had suggested, chatting to patients, keeping them cheered up, when the ward sister came tearing down the ward. She raved at me can't you get the work done, are you all finished. She was almost foaming at the mouth, I don't know what else had upset her. Well that was the end of that. To avoid her doing that again I hid in the sluice room or invented a rubbish round, anything to avoid being made to look a congenital idiot in front of the patients. You just can't win in this place; this clash is one of the main reasons for my change in commitment.

This type of confrontation was frequently mentioned as a reason for drops in EVC scores (see Table 5.1). Another area relating to institutional norms which led to conflict was a lack of clarity in role expectations when students were on practical section. This concerned the individual's self-perception as 'student' or 'nurse' or 'teacher' or 'student nurse' or 'student teacher'. Merton, Kendall and Reader (in Merton, 1957, p.181) found that students in training tended to think of themselves at one time as students, and at another as physicians, depending on the social context. This appeared to be occurring in the present study with the students having to adapt quickly from one status to another, and frequently also having to accept a change in level of responsibility. For example, SN 352 had this to say:

It's frustrating how one moment you're expected to do all the responsibilities of nursing and then you're told you're just a student and shouldn't be doing this or that. You're blasted to hell if you're a minute late on wards, but then you're

expected to stay on if emergencies arise, or if someone else is half an hour late.

And SN 362:

When you're on duty, in the wards, they expect you to be highly responsible, yet when you're off duty in the hostels, or out at a party or somewhere, they believe you're quite irresponsible. It's plain stupid!

Student teachers had fewer problems in this respect than student nurses. Their roles when on section were, for the most part, clearly spelled out, and they were distinguished from other teachers by being referred to as 'college teachers'. However, one area of conflict, which they occasionally related to drops in EVC, arose from the student teachers' perception of 'student role'. They perceived this role as possessing greater autonomy and freedom of choice of curriculum and dress than was allowed for by the college authorities. This conflict was probably exacerbated by the proximity of the university on a shared campus.

Rules and Regulations (Job requirements)

Problems associated with what might be grouped together as "job requirements", were frequently mentioned reasons for drops in EVC scores in both institutions. In nursing, night duties and being left in charge, shift work, demands for duties considered to be "non-nursing", dirty jobs, the wide varieties of practices on different wards, and the frequency of moving from ward to ward, feature prominently in Table 5.1. In addition, uniform requirements received occasional mention as did problems of hostel life (including bad food, lack of privacy, and noisiness). In teaching, rules relating to attendance (the keeping of rolls, etc.), and the handing in on due dates of assignments were mentioned as reasons for drops in EVC scores (Table 5.2). Examples of typical comments on job regulations and requirements and associated factors may be found in the case studies in Appendices K and L.

The formal rules and regulations of both the hospital and the college came in for considerable criticism, although only 3 nurses (all leavers) and 4 teachers (2 of whom were leavers) linked the rules with drops in EVC scores. The most common complaint in nursing related to uniforms. Many instances of rebukes from senior staff over purported untidiness or infractions of the uniform code were recorded. The most serious complaint came from SN 423 and was cited as a contributory

cause of a major drop in EVC score and eventual leaving. In her words:

They get onto you for petty things. I lost my cape. I told the home [hostel] sister I'd lost it and asked if I could wear a cardigan — it was a freezing cold day. It wasn't a regulation cardigan. Then X [a senior staff member] saw me wearing it, she tore strips off me without asking any questions, that's just so unreasonable — she did it without listening. I think this was when I decided that this job's just not worth it.

I. Was it the uniform or the telling off that had the most influence?

SN 423. *A bit of both. There are too many petty rules, especially about uniforms. The caps are stupid, we don't really need them.*

The nurses' caps, which seemed to the researcher to be designed to be awkward, were indeed a perennial source of conflict.

Shift work was singled out as a substantive influence by a proportion of the nurse subsample. This was particularly marked amongst the married women. When these work factors are combined with other conditions, such as maintaining a regular social life, or running a household, the problem is exacerbated. SN 352, in the case study in Appendix K, provides the paradigm here; other examples which merit attention because of the intensity of the change in EVC scores are those women who married whilst in training. SN 369, in her sixth interview, summed up the position for many when she said:

It's just bloody hopeless trying to work out shifts, husband and all the household work. My husband helps but the cooking's left to me, and most of the cleaning. I can hardly cope. And when they mix the shifts up, or tell us late, hell breaks loose at home. I'd quit but we need the money. I've come so far, but I'd get out even now if the chance arose.

And SN 367, in her fifth interview, struggling to retain her level of commitment:

The problem of mixing a family responsibility and nursing is always there. Shift work is a terrible nuisance. I get so tired, doing all I have to do you know. I fall asleep in class, especially in the afternoon. It really has affected my work pretty badly. I'm just completely zapped out by it all.

Perhaps the extreme case in this respect was SN 401. She married between the third and fourth interview and in the fifth interview mentioned the difficulty of completing household chores as well as

working and studying. Her marks had dropped away badly, and she suffered some ill health. Her husband appeared less than helpful. A picture emerged of a relatively immature man who wanted all that marriage had to offer, but was prepared to give up little in return. According to his wife he had maintained his sporting contacts and his social life with male friends. He was angered frequently by the interference of shift work with their social life. SN 401 claimed that, on one occasion, in the course of an argument precipitated by the fact that attendance at a party clashed with his wife's work requirements, he had struck her, but was immediately apologetic. The problem was compounded insofar as SN 401 was forced to travel long distances to work. By her own admission the combination of these factors led SN 401, who had a low level of commitment on entry (EVC score 54), to seek alternative employment. In her words:

I have to work, we need the money. But nursing just doesn't fit in with other things. It's not that I don't like nursing — I've enjoyed it more than I thought I would — oh there've been ups and downs. But now I'm depressed about it all. I'm so tired some mornings I have to be shaken to wake up. I'll get another job if I can, closer to home, and on a regular basis — no shift work.

Thus the relationship of work and running a home had, in SN 401's view, led to a lowering of her EVC scores. However SN 391, who was just as concerned with family problems as SN 401 (viz. In interview 4 — "it isn't easy maintaining a home what with being married and cooking and cleaning and all"), did not drop markedly in EVC scores over the three year period. When questioned about the relationship of home and work and EVC scores she had this to say:

I don't think my commitment has been altered by this. After all, getting married was my choice — I've made my own bed as the saying goes. I suppose that shift work upsets us a bit. I'm going to have children after finals — I suppose I could come back to nursing, but no more shift work until after the children are old enough.

Thus for a number of students married life and/or interference with regular sporting or cultural activities were perceived as reasons for drops in EVC scores; for others, however, they were not major factors at all. It should be noted, then, that the type of experiences mentioned above and illustrated in Appendix L, did not always lead to a drop in EVC score, nor were some reported declines permanent. For example, some nurses commented that being left in charge of a ward was stimulating:

"I felt important, I felt I was doing something worthwhile and that I could cope. I began to see, I think, just how rewarding the job could be". Others stated a preference for variety; and some commented that frequent shifting was necessary for young nurses to get an overall view of the situation. For the most part, the sample learned to cope with the demands of the job. As SN 378 put it in her post-test:

There are irritating demands like shifts, night work, dirty duties, etc., but they are part of the job of nursing, and anyone who is not prepared to accept them as necessary should leave.

The question of why Student A should identify experience X as a reason for a drop in EVC scores, whereas Student B nominated the self same experience as a reason for increase in EVC scores is tackled later. For the moment though, it should be noted that some support for the view that change is idiosyncratic to each individual emerges from this section of the study.

Learning factors

Two reasons in this category were given for drops in EVC scores: first, peaks in work load and, second, curriculum disagreement.

The first was a perennial problem in the teachers' college and was isolated as a reason for a drop in EVC scores by 12 of the subsample and 19 of the leavers (see Table 5.2). ST 278, a leaver, had this to say:

There are times when you have virtually nothing to do, others when the work gets right on top. Everyone says keep on plugging, it's the same for all of us. But why can't they do something about it; why is it we have weeks free then sudden peaks?

I. *Did this affect your commitment to teaching?*

ST 278. *Yes. I think it did. Well how can it not when you suddenly, or not so suddenly, think hell 9 - 5 work doesn't mean this. You know what to expect. Here you never know who's going to set an assignment next. Or whatever you should do as a minimum in assignments. It's one of the main reasons for me deciding to leave. They should plan it better.*

In nursing the problem was often related to the pressures of ward duty.

SN 391. *The problem of study and work, well there's an awful clash at times. I think the demands made by the school are sometimes unfair. We shouldn't have to swot*

while we're on wards. The pressure of work has made me feel like quitting on more than one occasion. A steady job with normal hours seems good when you've got a stack of work and you're bone tired from wards.

As in so many other areas, however, generalisation is difficult. A number of student teachers claimed that their EVC scores dropped because of guilt feelings over the lack of work. Some even claimed that the three year course could be covered in two years. However, the much more frequent assertion was that the pressure of work was such that leaving was considered. An analysis of the teachers' college course does reveal peaks and troughs in terms of due dates of assignments, seminars and research papers. The relationship with the university complicated this issue, and despite the efforts of college staff to spread the load, the possible permutations have often defeated their best efforts.

Curriculum disagreement arose in the main from the amount of 'theory' included in the courses, although the problem was by no means confined to this area, with the physiology and anatomy course in the hospital and the studies in teaching courses in the college coming in for considerable criticism. In the early stages of the hospital course many girls expressed surprise, amounting to disbelief in some instances, at the amount of theory deemed necessary and the extent of formal study required. By the second interview, four girls, all who had low marks in the School Certificate examination, complained bitterly about the standard of theoretical knowledge demanded by the authorities. SN 362, for example, said "the amount is too large, the standard too high. I can't see what it's got to do with practical nursing". By the fourth interview we find SN 391 commenting:

My level of commitment has declined as a result of school work which has too much theory in it. Why should I learn that? I can be a good nurse without all that material. Not enough emphasis is given to practical ability on this course.

In the post test 72% of the surviving student nurse sample complained that the course was, overall, "too theoretical". Moreover a number of students commented at various times that the material in the school of nursing was "uninspiring" and "dull and monotonous". Some students commented that particular courses were too difficult; others that they found the work too easy. Typical of the latter is SN 349 (School Certificate average 74, biology mark 69) who commented:

Much of the school work is boring, repetitive. We seem to be covering a lot of the same work over and over.

I. *In the school of nursing itself, or from secondary school?*

SN 349. *A bit of both. But I did quite well in biology at secondary school right up to U.E. And, well, the physiology and anatomy course is repeating a lot of that material, but at a lower level. I find it a bit frustrating — I could study on my own during these lectures — I switch off anyway (laughs).*

On the other hand, four of the subsamples commented that the school work was "enjoyable and rewarding". And two singled out the anatomy and physiology course for special praise!

In the teachers' college the first year course *Introduction to Educational Theory* (PS 1, 31.101) came in for trenchant criticism from a minority of the students. In her second interview ST 209 had this to say:

Look, I am here to be a teacher. Not only can't I understand half the stuff in the Ed. Theory course, but a lot of the theoretical stuff is completely irrelevant. If learning that rubbish is what it means to be a teacher, then I won't be very good.

And ST 211 in her sixth interview:

I'm sure my commitment to teaching started to drop with that first year theory course. It was a complete and utter waste of time. I thought we should deal with how to teach rather than the theories behind teaching.

There is also considerable evidence to suggest that students had inherited a resistance to this course. In a group discussion at the beginning of the second year, it became clear that some of the third year students were using the unpopularity of the theory course for political purposes, in order to bring about full-scale curriculum changes. Moreover, despite a major change in the course, including new nomenclature, it still provided the focus for student criticism. There was undoubtedly a carry-over of attitudes from year to year; indeed, after the renaming of the course from *Introduction to Educational Theory* to *Issues in N.Z. Education* in 1974, students continued to refer to the course as "Ed. Theory" (an almost pejorative phrase in the student subculture). It appeared that only dramatic and publicised change would create the conditions for a fresh student appraisal of the value of theory. Whether this is worthy of the effort, in the light of the

findings presented in Tables 5.2 and 5.4 is open to debate.

Additionally, some students singled out this course for special praise:

ST 224. *It made you think — it was one of the few challenging courses in the whole three years. It set a good foundation, making us consider what education really is and what we ought to teach. Some of the kids didn't try on this course — they were egged on by others in the halls — but I really enjoyed it. I hope it's not changed in future years.*

Students like ST 224, on the other hand, tended to criticise *Studies in Teaching* courses which they claimed were "unimaginative and uninspiring", containing "repetitive work and recall-type assignments".

Some students also noted that good examination results led to an increase in their EVC, whereas poor results led to a drop. Even here, though, the findings are not clear-cut. Occasionally a poor examination result stimulated increased effort and led to a higher score (see Appendix L).

Finally, a number of students claimed "poor teaching" led to a drop in EVC scores. SN 349 had this to say in her fourth interview:

The tutors should be better trained and also should be able to communicate what they are trying to get over.

In similar vein SN 401 commented:

I feel the place where the most improvement could take place is within the tutorial department. I think they often become closed to suggestions from outside and exist within their own world.

The clinical tutors were the subject of both favourable and unfavourable comment, with most students, however, in agreement that the tutors were helpful. Three students were, nevertheless, condemnatory and suggested that the clinical tutor system could be abolished:

SN 394. *It would be better to abolish the clinical tutor system. In my last ward the CT came and upset the whole routine by following a nurse around for an hour and making petty comments as she went. She just upset all the ward in the end, people worrying and crying in the sluice room. It would be better if we had the registered nurses as part of the teaching staff, trained in teaching and got rid of the CTs.*

Legal Obligations

In the case of nurses no formalised contract existed between the students and the training institution, other than an agreement covering

the amount of notice required on both sides before resignation or dismissal became effective. In the case of the student teachers, though, an agreement known as the "bond" was formalised between the student or his parents or guardians, and the Department of Education. Under this agreement student teachers are bonded for three years after the completion of training; if the bond is broken a 'headsum' of \$200 for each remaining year is payable by the teacher or his/her parents. A copy of the agreement is reproduced in Appendix M.

The effect of the bond has received some attention in recent years (Freyberg, 1970), but has not been discussed in connection with EVC. On the surface there is some evidence that it serves to keep the weakly committed on the job, as there is a marked increase in resignation at the completion of three years of teaching, that is at the end of the bonded period.² In the present study very few students seemed concerned with the bond or its influence; the rate of headsum was set when the student teachers' allowances were not much more than half the rate current when the fieldwork for this study was completed.

There were, however, some notable exceptions, particularly towards the end of the training period. For example, ST 211, a student who frequently considered leaving, and who had very poor teaching section reports, had this to say:

I know I'm going to have problems in teaching, it's just not for me it seems. I wasn't sure of it when I came here, but now I know it'll be calamity! I was always afraid of committing myself for six years, the bond and all that you know

I. *How influential was the bond in keeping you at college?*

ST 211. Well after I'd scraped through the first year, very influential. My parents aren't all that well off, and it was something they often mentioned when I thought of quitting. I think they'd find it hard to pay back a thousand dollars, and I haven't got anything saved. I'll just have to see it through to the end of the bonded period, and then try another job if I can get one.

I. *So the bond is an influence on your commitment to teaching?*

ST 211. (laughs) Yes I s'pose if it wasn't for the bond I

²This may, of course, be entirely unrelated to EVC. It may reflect a desire to travel, or a feeling that wider experience is necessary for successful teaching.

might be off overseas to see my grandparents perhaps, in Lebanon — but that costs money too. Yes it has influenced my commitment — it keeps me here.

It is interesting to note that this student, from a lower SES family had inflated grossly the headsum of the bond. In other interviews it became apparent that many students were only vaguely aware of the finer details of the bond, and more particularly, the possibility of leaving under regulations which did not call for repayment of the headsum. ST 212 is typical of the latter. In her final interview she put it thus:

I'd get out right now if it wasn't for the bond. That's a lousy deal. They tie you up for three years after training whether you like the job or not, whether you're good at it or not — a bum rap as Alistair would call it'. (laughs) My heart's not in this job (pause) never was ... you know that don't you?

I. You tell me ...

ST 212. *I've never been really committed, have I? Always said LOW. (laughs) But now, hell, I really dread next year. I couldn't control the little beggars when they decided to be naughty, even when the associate was there, hell, what's it going to be like when I'm on my own.*

I. How strong was the bond in keeping you at college?

ST 212. *Jeez, that's pretty obvious, haven't I just told you Very strong, hell I'd be long gone now if it wasn't for that.*

I. Couldn't you buy your way out?

ST 212. *Sure, I've thought of that often enough. `But with what, dear man, with what? My parents, well Dad really — you know all about that, have given me up for lost. No bread from there any more! The well's dry, dry. So I'll have to put up with the darlings, or them with me more likely. Provided I get certificated that is*

I. How does this relate to your commitment to teaching as a career?

ST 212. *(pause) To my commitment? That's not easy to say — there are other things that you know about. So not a great deal. But it's sort of always there — like the Sword of Dam, whoever, a force that I have to reckon with I reckon. Without it, well, I'd have shown how much commitment I've got — I'd GO! Without it my low commitment would be NIL, wouldn't it? So I s'pose it's not unrelated, entirely that is.*

ST 212 entered the college with an EVC score of 42, and exited with 34. As Figure 5.1 demonstrates, at no time during the course

of the study did she rise beyond the low EVC category. She had built up a record of minor clashes with the college administration and teaching staff, although, in her own words she'd "... kept a low profile" in the third year after a termination warning. She was a member of the social/fun group described above, appeared to be a heavy drinker, and, on her own admission had dabbled with soft drugs over a period of years; however, she claimed to be 'straight' in this respect on leaving college.

It appears from this evidence that there is some relationship between the bond and ST 211 and ST 212 staying on the job. They represent one extreme end of the degree of influence of the bond. In response to direct questioning in the penultimate interview, only five (19%) of the surviving sample, related the bond to their EVC; for most the ready availability of sufficient funds to pay it off made it both non-threatening and a non-issue. An example here is ST 228, who came from a professional background, who entered with an EVC score of 49, preferring fine arts, medicine, law, real estate and acting to teaching, and who exited with a score of 33. In his final interview he responded thus to questions on the bond:

Look, I still want to get into a job where I can use my talents more than teaching. I'd have got out earlier if the chance arose, but now that I've come this far, well, um, I may as well get my certificate as a sort of insurance. The bond means nothing - I've got enough saved now to pay it back if needed. When the chance comes I'll go, as you know the one thing that college has shown me is that I've got ability in art, I must follow up on that, mustn't I?

While the bond may have had some minor influence, it appears that most students in the college accepted it as a necessity in the process of becoming a teacher, and had little or no relationship to EVC.

Summary

The evidence presented in this section makes it clear that a number of the subsample were substantively influenced by the organisational structure - probably about eighteen people in all were influenced by this aspect more than any other. However, as the analysis proceeded the nature of influence on the students was by no means clear-cut. For example, many of the subsample themselves did not wish to over-emphasise any one factor. It is significant that SN 340, for example, in the transcript extract cited on page 73 added "... there are other things too ...". Similarly, in the case of ST 140 (page 76) a combination of

"administrative pettiness" and staff action was given as explanatory of change; likewise SN 394 wanted to add "other things" to the influence of patients, and SN 423 was unsure whether it was the uniform or the "telling off" which precipitated her drop in EVC.

In the case of the married nurses, furthermore, the question arose as to whether the change had been more influenced by the attitude of their husbands, or by the nature of shift work, or by a combination of factors in the situational context. It is to this latter point which we shall turn shortly, and the questions it raises concerning the legitimacy of rule, power and authority.

Second, it should be noted that different people reported different degrees of influence of the same (or at least similar) sets of experiences. Why did some people develop coping strategies whereas others did not? In teasing out this question further it was necessary to consider certain individual features, such as ethnicity, personality, conservatism and age. Finally, it appeared necessary to look at a small group of students not covered elsewhere who appeared to be influenced by what might be termed overriding normative structures.

The Relationship of People and Structure: A Question of Legitimate Power

Critical to the relationship of people in the two institutions under study were individuals' perceptions of power, authority and rules. Table 5.1, and the case study of SN 418 described in Appendix K, demonstrated that dislike of the hierarchy and/or antagonism towards the 'authority structure' was mentioned frequently by both student nurses and student teachers. In many instances this dislike for the hierarchical structure led to overt conflict. SN 427 summed up the position for many students in this way:

SN 427. *People are very hierarchy conscious here. You are expected to climb the social ladder before you get recognised. And a lot of the senior staff just treat you like muck under their feet. The three stripers, seniors, are the worst I think. A little authority and they push you around — at least they try to. It really pees me off I don't intend to stay much longer. I want a job where I can show a little initiative and not get shouted at.*

I. *I wonder if you'd explain this a little further for me.*

Do you think the senior staff have too much power?

SN 427. Well not really. Nursing, no hospitals I mean, need some sort of authority structure. I recognise that. It's not that senior staff have too much power, it's how they use their power.

I. Do you mean they tend to abuse their power?

SN 427. Well didn't I say that — they push you around? Look, I'm not questioning the right of the sisters to tell you to do certain things, it's how they do it. They've no right to shout and scream like they do. Like some of them do. We're human, we've got feelings and some rights. And sometimes they ask you to do, no tell you to do things that you shouldn't have to do.

I. Such as?

SN 427. Well, all sorts of things, rubbish rounds, orderly's jobs, layouts — we're not meant to do that. For some of them we're people just to be used for everything, not students, not nurses.

I. Has what you seem to think is misuse of power affected your commitment to nursing?

SN 427. You bet it has. I want a job where people aren't going to use their authority to put you down all the time, where their position is used so that they can abuse you and make you feel like a moron. It just isn't right.

Two key issues are raised here. First, SN 427 obviously felt that warm human relationships were needed in nursing, but also it is obvious that she felt that power had been illegitimately used. This illegitimacy appeared related to a drop in her EVC scores. This indeed appeared to be a crucial factor in the development of vocational commitment amongst a number of the student nurse subsample. Of this subsample, nine made frequent mention (more than four mentions in the first two interviews) of illegitimate usage of power. Seven of the nine dropped in EVC scores during the first twelve months of training, culminating in their leaving the course. The other two, however, learnt coping behaviour. SN 349 provided the paradigm here:

I. Look, things seem to have been going very well for you. Have you had any problems? Say with senior staff?

SN 349. Well yes, there was one sister on one ward. She's pretty well known around here — I bet you've heard about her.

I. You tell me.

SN 349. *Well, she's likely to get a bit belligerent if things don't get done her way. And she gets you doing all sorts of dirty jobs almost as if she was punishing you.*

I. *Has this happened to you?*

SN 349. *(laughs) Oh yes, no one gets away from her, I remember on one occasion she saw me talking to a patient and she yelled at me, Nurse can't you find anything to do without being told; and later she gave me a job which she knew would keep me past my duty time.*

I. *Do you think she should use her power and authority in this way?*

SN 349. *No, I suppose not. But, well, she's probably got her problems. When she yelled at me that time the patients said, take no notice of her nurse, she's just having a bad day. You learn to judge people you know, she's a funny one, but there might be a heart of gold there.*

I. *How much did this upset you?*

SN 349. *Only a little. The patients covered it up a lot, made me feel better. And as I said when you think about it she's got more worries than you and if yelling a bit helps, O.K. Sure she shouldn't but as long as it doesn't affect the care of patients I'll live with it.*

I. *Would you say this incident affected your commitment to nursing as a career?*

SN 349. *Heavens no! Not at all. Part of this job is working with others. The job's a hard one, full of tensions. So if there's the occasional blow-up O.K. The thing is not to make it worse. Sure some of the sisters overuse their power and push us around too much. But you learn to avoid this after a while.*

In this case the student nurse appeared to have developed an ability to weather insults, and to rationalise them, thus providing some evidence in support of what Birnbaum (1968) terms the "malleability hypothesis". Paradoxically, those few students who raised issues relating to "power" early in their careers and who survived the training course, tended to model themselves on the more aggressive senior staff, and by the time they became 'three stripers' were found to be amongst the most authoritarian of the subsample. SN 349 provides the paradigm once again. In her first year, she complained about the lack of personal relationships on the wards between the staff and students, yet in the third year we find her saying "... you have to really be firm with the juniors, they can be dangerous to patients. The occasional

telling off seems to be the only way to get it through to some of them". Here, then, we have a student who not only conformed, but appears to have been socialised to what she eventually took to be a normal pattern of behaviour. Repressive tolerance had become very much her way of life, and just as Goffman (1961) remarked in his study of asylums, she had identified with the aggressors.

The picture which emerges, then, is that most of those student nurses who frequently identified illegitimate operations of power, dropped in EVC and left the course of training. In many respects this phenomenon may be related to the autocratic system outlined earlier in this chapter.

The teachers' college presented a major contrast to the hospital. Of those students in the teachers' college subsample who mentioned illegitimate usage of power frequently in the early stage of training ($N = 7$), almost all completed the course of training. However, and this may be significant, all except one of the group were elected onto the students' representative board in their first year in the college, and later in their careers a number of the group attained leadership roles in the structure. One case serves to illustrate the point —

ST 221 entered with a high level of expressed vocational commitment. Early on he expressed his displeasure with what he took to be petty rules and the extreme penalties which accompanied what he took to be minor infractions of the regulations. He claimed that some lecturers maximised their power to the point of illegitimate usage. He claimed to have challenged this power on a number of occasions.

Look, he said, the essays had to be in on Friday no later than 3.00 p.m. I said to him that he was unreasonable as many of us worked on until 5.00 o'clock. Why the arbitrary 3.00 p.m. cut off? He said that 3.00 p.m. suited him and that was the way it was and that as teachers we'd have to meet deadlines. I tried to argue that deadlines should be reasonable ones, but he cut me off and said that he had the power to demand the essays when it suited him. I reckon he was using the system to suit him not us and that's not right.

ST 221 was elected by his tutorial group onto the representative board. According to his own report this was because he was the only one to "speak out" in tutorials. "I suppose I'm known for being ready to ask questions" he said. He appeared quite pleased by the election, though, as "it gives me some say in the college — I'll know how to get some changes". However, the "Rep. Board" failed to meet his expectations.

It's a sell-out man. Look, the students don't know how to organise it, they let the staff ride roughshod over any ideas. Hell, though, the kids are more conservative than the lecturers. It's no place to get change. No way.

In his third year ST 221 was elected to the student association's executive. Here again, though, his desire to gain certain reforms met a dead end. This time his difficulties appeared to be related to the refusal of the college authorities to take a firm stand on some issues. As he commented in 1975:

They're so damned reasonable and approachable. If only they were unreasonable sometimes — if only they'd come out and take a stand, then we'd have something to fight about. Sometimes I think only a good head-on confrontation will bring change, we're so apathetic ... but they never give us an issue, the Rep. Board sees to that!

The attitude of college lecturers towards ST 221 also provides interesting evidence. He was identified early in his college career as a "potential trouble maker". As one lecturer remarked to the researcher in the senior staff room, "ST 221 is a problem sometimes. He's bright enough — probably the best of that tute group — but he's always looking for ways out — he can be a stirrer ... we'll have to channel him I expect!" In this example, the deliberate aim of staff to socialise students towards their own attitudes is starkly revealed.

Of most interest to the present research, though, is that ST 221's EVC, as with most of the student nurses, varied according to his perception of the legitimacy of the power operation. This generalisation held good for all students except those few, like SN 349, who came to accept the structure and organisation of the system as a normal pattern of behaviour. The data emerging at this point seem to be pointing strongly to a relationship between EVC and the given circumstances — in other words EVC seems to be situationally specific.

Two further reactions to the hierarchy and its relationship to certain individual characteristics should be recorded. A number of students claimed that the hierarchy was stunting their development as creative individuals. SN 429, for example, had this to say:

My level of commitment has never been very high, but now it's nil, mainly because, I think, the bureaucracy here doesn't allow any chance for personal development. It's all rules and regulations, the power thing — do this, do that, orders all the time. Well I like to think out what I'm doing, I like reasons for doing things. Too often there's one way of doing things, and one way is their way. I want a chance to express myself more.

Second, some students found it paradoxical that the hierarchical organisation led to a bureaucratic regimentation rather than a humanistic orientation. ST 296 is typical of this group.

I came here because I wanted to work with people. What do I find? A large, very large organisation that has formal rules, regulations by the million. You should hear the way they talk down to us. They even keep rolls, are we adult or not?

I. *They?*

ST 296. *The teaching staff, the lecturers. They treat us like big kids. This place is like an overgrown secondary school without the uniforms! You can't get at them either, you feel powerless in an organisation like this. I find it odd, you know, here we are meant to be dealing with people and we get hit with formal rules, petty laws made by who knows.*

I. *Has this affected your commitment to teaching?*

ST 296. *Yes it has. I think I might go to social work or something. Here you make no impact. They don't seem concerned with kids or people at all.*

ST 296 was the only member of the teacher subsample who articulated his concerns in this way. The others, while often complaining of "petty rules" and extreme penalties for what they saw as minor infractions, never related this to their EVC score. The bureaucracy and its attendant hierarchial organisation were viewed as a necessary evil in the process of becoming a teacher. The question of whether such organisation was in the "real interests" of the students (Lukes, 1974) is taken up later.

In this section, then, it has been demonstrated that the organisational structure, taken together with the ways people operated the rules and regulations in that structure, had an influence on the development of EVC. Perceptions of power, and the way in which the authorities in the two institutions either ignored or defused potential issues, may have been the crucial factor in the development of EVC. The last two examples, though, suggest an even more complex set of reasons. Not only is interaction and interpretation involved in the case of SN 429, for example, but also factors relating to her personality appear to be entering the picture. Perhaps, then, individual features, or as Popitz (1972) terms it, "individuality patterns", may provide a more complete answer to the questions relating

to the development of EVC.

The Influence of Individuality

In this section the "something besides" which people bring to every position they occupy will be discussed — their personality, their temperament, the outcome of their biographical experiences, and so forth. The incidence of homesickness amongst a number of students, a fear of death and dealing with disfigured patients amongst the nurses, difficulties in maintaining friendships, loneliness, illnesses, individual reactions to personal styles of leadership — each may be subsumed under this heading. All were given as reasons for drops in EVC scores, but as Tables 5.1 and 5.2 indicate, not in sufficient number to merit wide generalisation.

In Chapter 4 when analysing the relationship between movements in EVC scores and the independent variables, mention was made of several characteristics which may also be considered under individuality patterns. For example, a person's ethnicity, or their socio-economic background, or their level of conservatism may contribute to their overall personality. Socio-economic status has been discussed in some detail above, but ethnicity was covered only briefly. The reason for this brief coverage was that the numbers of Maoris in the sample were so small that statistical analysis was precluded. However, it is worthwhile reporting results from the subsample and leaver interviews not only to guide further research in this area, but also because several trends became apparent in the subsample which were not revealed by the other parts of the research.

Perhaps the major point to be noted is that in the teaching sample only 9 of the 20 Maoris completed training, while in the nursing sample 2 of 6 finished the course. Thus Maoris were proportionately over-represented in the leaving group. Most of these leavers were reluctant, and had for the most part failed to measure up to the academic requirements. For example, ST 246, who had already experienced failure in the U.E. examination, found herself quite unable to cope with the standard of work. In her tutor's words "... she seems to be trying hard enough, but has very poor work habits. She needs constant guidance and counselling". ST 305 has similar academic problems, entering with a

minimal School Certificate pass (51%) and an accredited U.E. from a small, rural secondary school. However, he also had difficulties on his teaching sections. In his words:

Some of the lectures have been confusing: I haven't felt I've put my best into them. But it was two weeks of placement which really convinced me I should resign. By the end of the time my nerves and patience were stretched and worn thin. I love children and have worked with them before, but I found that when it came to a class of 30 I just couldn't take it.

ST 305's tutor noted a further critical point; this student came from an isolated Maori community, and the secondary school he attended was predominantly Maori. Thus the tutor's cryptic note about his "problems with dealing with middle class, Pakeha children" attains some poignancy.

The impression should not be left that all Maori students entered with high EVC strength. Two cases from the teaching sample illustrate this point. ST 318, for example, entered with an EVC score of 54, and was found to be "pregnant on arrival". ST 306 had a slightly higher score (66) but expressed a strong desire to enter the police force. His parents and teachers (he attended a private Maori denominational boarding school) persuaded him that "he would do more for his people" if he were to come to teachers' college. In his first year of study he encountered several obstacles which did little to reinforce his wavering EVC strength. During the second year he built up a record of absenteeism, and in the teaching section became depressed at his seeming inability to relate to children. With the help of a sympathetic lecturer and adviser, he was released from the college to enter training for the police force.

A number of the Maori students, particularly those from rural areas, experienced difficulties in adjusting to the demands of large formal organisations like the teachers' college and the hospital. The extreme case in this group was ST 300, who missed many lectures in the early stages of his college life because of a failure to cope with timetables and room locations. This particular student, despite considerable help from the authorities, failed to cope with the complexities of the institution. In July 1973, his adviser, concerned with ST 300's problems, wrote a three page memorandum emphasising that whilst the student had ability, he was suffering from "culture shock". She outlined ways in which he could be helped, but these did not have the desired

effect. In August he was caught in a cheating episode and, additionally, he fell ill with pancreas problems. He was terminated under Regulation 21(a) — non-confirmation of studentship after the first year trial period — in early 1974.

At the leaver interview ST 300 maintained that he was still "keen to teach". He felt that his major problems stemmed from academic weaknesses, but he also noted his difficulties with formal organisations:

Boy, this place sure is complicated. It took me a helluva long time to find my way around. The rooms are all over the place — I missed a lot of lectures — the rest of the T group thought I was real dumb I reckon. They had a few laughs at good old Joe's expense (laughs). This guy in my T group helped me, but I'd got way behind, there seemed to be no way to catch up. Everyone was on my back — forms to fill in really it seemed easier to quit. Then I tried one way of catching up, but that didn't work did it? (laughs) [referring to copying another student's essay] I decided to give it all away after that — I started going to the pub a lot, there's always someone to talk to there ... I knew I'd get chucked out, turfed, but, hell, I didn't know where to turn to, what to do. Was I confused ...?

Later in the interview the student was asked if he'd come back to college if the opportunity arose.

I'm not really sure, but yeah I reckon so. I know one helluva lot more now. I reckon I could do it, now that I know the ropes. I feel a bit ashamed, letting everyone down from home. I think I could be a good teacher, and maybe, one day I'll give it another go. Yes I'd still like to succeed in being a good teacher. After a bit I might try to come back. The college, you know, hell, well, it scared shit out of me at first you know. I think there should be other ways of getting to be a teacher other than going to a big college.

Although ST 300 represents an extreme case, at least 10 other leavers also demonstrated anomic symptoms (Durkheim, 1961). Firm conclusions cannot be drawn in this respect; once again the tendency requires further investigation.

The foregoing has demonstrated that many Maoris in the subsample experienced difficulties which affected their EVC. It would, however, be stretching the data to suggest that 'Maoriness' per se was the crucial factor. This was best summed up by ST 229, who, in the course of a lengthy interview, had this to say:

Being a Maori is hard to describe. It means listening to what you are told. It means having a knowledge of whakapapa [geneology] of knowing one's place and one's right. Of having a place in the land.

I. Does this mean that you've maintained a high commitment to teaching because you are a Maori?

ST 229. Well, uh huh, yes that's part of it. (long pause) But not all. There's a feeling I must succeed. Do well in the Pakeha world as well as the Maori. But I make the decisions don't I? Can we really separate this out? Being a Maori is me. I'm a Maori. I can't see why you want to make the distinction.

I. I don't necessarily. I'm just interested if you do.

ST 229. Oh I suppose put that way there's times when I couldn't, when I don't pause to think, I'm a hori and horis act this way or that. I'm me. And I do things I like regardless. Yet being a Maori on this job tends to make me try harder. But I s'pose you're going to say, is that you as a Maori or you as you, eh?

The "you as you" comment raises issues related to personality factors. In the quantitative section of the study reported in the last chapter no strong evidence emerged to suggest that personality factors such as neuroticism or extraversion, or conservatism, as measured on the various scales used in the study, were related to the development of EVC. Nor was there further evidence from the subsample to suggest that either neuroticism or extraversion was related to changes in EVC scores. However, some interesting material came to light in interviews in relationship to conservatism scores. In Chapter 4 it was noted that many of the early leavers measured at the liberal end of the Wilson and Patterson scale. Some of these students had argued fiercely with older members of staff, not only on what the former perceived as "narrow routines" or excessive bureaucratisation, but also on social issues like abortions and homosexuality. SN 415 summed it up as follows:

We seldom really discuss things with staff, over cups of tea and that. Anyway, I avoid that now — it's not worth some of the rows.

I. What do you mean? What rows?

SN 415. Oh, well, well I had some good old rows in the early days here. We're not expected to have opinions you know — we're too young.

I. Opinions on what? Can you be specific?

SN 415. Oh all kinds of things. I remember an awful argument over abortion. I think it should be on demand, but hell was I shouted down by Sister. She said I was a murderer if I felt like that, and that nurses shouldn't feel

like that and it's our job to save lives not take them. I couldn't get a word in at all, then they all got onto me — it went on all week. I was pleased to leave the ward. I felt like telling them to stuff it in the end!

Added to the clashes with the senior staff, which occurred more frequently amongst the liberal student nurse subsample, these arguments may be related to drops in EVC scores.

Age on entry is another area worthy of close attention even though it did not appear as a strong indicator of shifts in EVC scores in the evidence presented in Chapter 4. Comparison of the profiles of the subsample (Figures 5.1 to 5.7) indicates that the younger entrants (SN 391, SN 401, SN 340, ST 221, ST 230, ST 218) appeared to fluctuate slightly more in their EVC scores than those in the 18+ category. Many of this group were convinced themselves that they had entered too early, before they really knew what they wanted to do. For example, ST 218 had this to say in her final interview:

I came to college straight from a Catholic boarding college; I had just turned 17. I wasn't really sure about teaching. And all the time I've been here, I've felt, well immature. Compared with the others. It was the Sisters who persuaded me to come. I'm sure it'd been better if I'd stayed longer at school, or better still worked some place else. Sure I've struggled through, and I suppose I'm just as committed as I was at the beginning, which wasn't particularly high. But, brother, have I had my ups and downs. (laughs)

I. Can you recall some of these for me?

ST 218. *Oh yes, I think so (pauses). There was placement, that's when I first had doubts, and that theory course which I failed, and, oh the times the workload got so much that I just wanted to quit.*

I. Why did you stay then?

ST 218. *Nowhere else to go! (laughs) And well I didn't want to disappoint Mum and Dad; they want me to do well as they didn't get much schooling themselves. And the friends I'd made were sticking it out, so why not me?*

I. Do you think you'll teach for very long?

ST 218. *Depends. I doubt it. I'm not really looking forward to it, you know. I'm not really looking forward, I'm a bit scared of having my own class. If I cope, O.K. I'll stay; but otherwise bond and out!*

This lengthy extract has been included because it typifies the high fluctuation of the 16-17 year olds in the subsample.

Furthermore, it should be noted that 16-17 year olds left the training course in greater proportions than the 18+ group. Many of the 16-17 year old leavers expressed doubts about their maturity, and claimed still to have a strong commitment to teaching or nursing; many, particularly in the teaching sample, expressed an intention to gain other work experience and then return to their first choice occupations. In two cases the college authorities recommended favourable treatment of any subsequent applications for entry by particular 17 year old entrants.

The number of 16-17 year olds in the subsample was so small (6) that firm conclusions cannot be drawn from the foregoing data. The researcher would strongly recommend that larger scale studies be devoted to young entrants to teaching and nursing. It is his present view that the grossness of the pre-post testing may conceal the real picture.

This brief account of individuality factors and their relationship to EVC has added little to the foregoing discussion, apart from underlining the difficulty in arriving at an adequate set of generalisations. It should be noted, though, that in the extracts quoted so far, changes in EVC were almost universally related to an event, or series of events, thus strengthening the claim made earlier that EVC is situationally specific. There were, however, two groups who appeared to stand outside this generalisation, and while they were numerically small they demand separate treatment.

Deification of the Normative Structure

Three students in the subsample (two student nurses, one student teacher) claimed consistently that they received direct guidance from God, and that He acted as a mediator in the development of their EVC. Put in another way, these students claimed that their level of EVC at any given time was a result of divine guidance. An example of this type of guidance is given in the case of SN 340 which appears in Appendix K. However, unlike SN 340, the other students adhered to their faith, which was fundamentalist and Pentecostal in form, throughout the course of the study. SN 378 provides the best example. In her third interview she said:

I get guidance from God. I stay in nursing because He wants me to. In a way nursing is a service to God, and that's why I'm here and why I'll stay here.

And again in interview five:

God gives me all the guidance and strength I need to stay in nursing. If the going gets rough like when I was in Ward X, then I'll know, I know that God will give me help when I get time to pray.

And in the final interview:

God has seen me through this. Without His strength I mightn't have made it, but He was always there. I knew this was the path He'd laid out for me. When you ask about my level of commitment; well that's influenced by God a lot.

The motivation amongst this small group appeared to be Calvinistic in its origins, with students being spurred on to do good deeds so as to ensure their place in the life hereafter. For example, ST 208:

I remain here because of the good I can do for God's children — we're all children of God you know. It's very necessary for us to lead a good life, a blameless life. Teaching will allow me to do the work that's necessary on this earth — to give devoted service.

I. But you are training for the State school service which is at least nominally secular.

ST 208. Yes I know that, but it's better for the children to be taught by a practising Christian, and one with the guidance of God, don't you think?

I. I really haven't got an opinion on that. Does God affect your commitment to teaching then?

ST 208. Yes, a great deal. He tells me how He thinks I should be committed. That, and His command to do good deeds, will make sure that I succeed.

Weber, in *The Protestant Ethic*, has explained the overriding influence of such Calvinistic beliefs. However, despite close questioning of others in the subsample, the religiously motivated group, who may be said to have "deified" the normative structure, appeared to be in the minority. Nonetheless, they formed a very important minority, and, SN 340 aside, claimed that their faith in the Deity helped maintain a constant level of EVC (strength).

Reification of Societal Norms

Without going into the sociological implications of this perspective in relation to that of previous subsections, it was possible to identify three students in the subsample who appeared to be influenced substantively by their own perception of societal norms — that is to say, they appeared to reify, or personify society. In making this personification they claimed that the telling feature as far as they were concerned was societal expectations of their behaviour. ST 214, a moderately committed student, put it thus:

Well, I've thought about leaving often, I don't know how seriously, but sometimes I've thought, well a, um, routine, er, job i'd be O.K. No assignments and regular hours. But, well, this is my second job already you know, I've already been two years doing prelim. You mustn't chop and change too much you know

I. *Why do you say that?*

ST 214. *Well, people don't like it do they, they don't think that people ought to change around too much do they? You should see a job through, um, ... (pause)*

I. *When you say people, who do you mean?*

ST 214. *Well, um, that's not at all easy to say ... everyone, my parents, they keep telling me to stick at it*

I. *So it's really your parents who are the influence here*

ST 214. *No, no, not only them, not only them, others ... (pause), um ... employers, they want you, they want you to stay on the job; they want permanent staff. Just about everyone, it's the expected thing, by society I s'pose. Everyone expects you to get a job and, um, settle in it*

Similarly, SN 402, who had been a draughtswoman before coming nursing, and who was to leave eventually, had this to say:

One must complete a task. I didn't like draughting much, but there was a need to finish. I got my NZCD and then decided that that was enough and then came here.

I. *Are you saying that you've expected to stay on and complete tasks? I'm not sure what you are getting at here ...*

SN 402. *(pause) Well, in a way I am saying that you're expected not to change about too much - to stay in a job I s'pose.*

I. Well, now, who is it that expects you to stay?

SN 402. Oh people, employers, everyone. A rolling stone is not liked.

I. That's interesting. In your case is there anyone specific?

SN 402. Of course, my husband — he wants me to stay on. But, no it's everyone — it's an expected thing in the community.

Despite close questioning, however, only three of the subsample placed any emphasis on "an expected thing in the community" and SN 402, an introspective subject, was the only one to spell it out in this way. It appears that reification, or personification of societal norms, if present at all was not readily identified as such by the sample. For the most part, as described above, the respondents placed much more emphasis on influences deriving from other people in the role set (in this connection SN 402's admission of the influence of her husband may be a telling point) and from organisational structure.

There were, though, two other students, both from lower SES groups, who could be categorised with the three just mentioned, although in a rather different sense. These two students remarked upon a feeling of impotence, and blamed many of their problems on a nameless "them".

SN 418 put it this way:

It's just hopeless trying to change everything. They make sure the cards are stacked against you. I sometimes think they're all against me. If we had more to say, if we could talk to them — but they're not the real power anyway, it's all at the top.

I. I'm a little confused about this. Who are "they"?

SN 418. Well, I was talking about the top brass here at first, but then I realised that they got their orders from above; they can't do anything, it's really those at the top.

I. I'm still confused — do you mean the government?

SN 418. Yes, I s'pose so. It's them, you know, they make all the laws and rules and we can't do a thing about it.

I. You feel you haven't any power then?

SN 418. None at all, it's all up there. This really brasses me. You can't get change. This means you can't improve anything. They're so far away I feel, the hell, this job's not worth it.

I. *Has this feeling of powerlessness led to a drop in commitment to nursing do you think?*

SN 418. *Put that way I s'pose it has. If I could get at them to overcome, no to change, to get a better deal, I'd feel better about nursing. But it's all rules, regulations, from way above.*

This confused picture of a manipulating, all powerful "them" leading to a drop in EVC was very uncommon. However, when related to the power factors mentioned earlier in this chapter, it does assume some importance. In sum, though, examples of deification and reification were relatively rare in the subsample. Before moving to a summary and conclusions it is necessary now to discuss briefly reasons for changes in type of EVC.

REASONS FOR CHANGES IN TYPES OF EVC

An analysis of the reasons given by the students for changes in the types of EVC is complicated by the number of categories used to distinguish these changes. Moreover, unlike strength of EVC, and as is argued in Chapter 4, it appears that changes in type of EVC evolve gradually over a period of time, and are, in the usual course of events, not susceptible to major fluctuation. Accordingly, there is much less data available from the subsample than was the case for EVC strength. However, stated reasons for change were collected from 84% of those who had changed during their time at the college or school of nursing.

As was noted in Chapter 4 (page 61) the major movements EVC type amongst both student nurses or student teachers were away from altruism (A) on the one hand, and from self-orientation (S) on the other, to a combination of the two (S/A).

These major movements are closely reflected in the subsample. Unfortunately, though, owing to the size of the subsample, very few students fall into the remaining categories; indeed only one (SA moving to S) contained more than a solitary case — and it only had two. The comments which follow, therefore, are limited to the two major movements.

Typical of the responses of those who moved from altruism to S/A was that of SN 362 who said:

As I've got older my life style has changed and I find that I've got more away from nursing. When I came service to people was very important to me, but now I find myself thinking, well of myself more often. Like, well, it's not that the job should be the be-all and end-all, you've got to think about yourself and what you get out of life. Nursing has become a job to me, to earn money I suppose, not the vocation I thought it was going to be.

Similarly ST 221, who fluctuated considerable in EVC score but began high and ended high, commented as follows in the final interview:

Teaching was what I'd always wanted ... as long as I can think back ... we even played games when I was little and I always was teacher. Then I think it all came together, you know, when we talked about helping people, about being useful in society in social studies at school. It just seemed to come together.

I. You seem to be talking about the type of commitment you held when you came to college. You really wanted to help people?

ST 221. Uh huh, yes I did ...

I. Is that still the same? (pause) Do you still think it's still the most important reason for wanting to teach?

ST 221. The most important reason? Uh huh ... Well, I'm not all that sure that it is now. I've changed haven't I? When I went through that problem, when I had bad marks ... well, it wasn't only wanting to serve, no, to help people that got me going. How can I put it? I can't really sort this out, but really, I'm, I'm getting a bit out of it too.

I. Look, that's a bit vague — can you be more specific?

ST 221. Well there's lots of things in teaching that suit me other than just helping, teaching kids.

I. Such as ...?

ST 221. Well I think it frees up other things — other jobs, travel too. And I think I'll like the breaks away.

I. The holidays?

ST 221. Yes that — but there's something else I find hard to tell you about. I just get something out of being with kids, they give me something, it's so enjoyable I guess.

I. Do you enjoy the authority?

ST 221. No, no, (laughs) not that. It's just that they do something for me — for my ego I suppose — I get something out of it too.

This extract illustrates not only the shift from A to S/A, but also the difficulty experienced by students in this form of self-analysis. The second group (S moving into S/A) was typified by ST 225, who, somewhat to his surprise, found himself liking children and the rewards of classroom teaching. The following extract from his interview 6 transcript illustrates the point, and provides a suitable summary:

There has been a change in my attitude. It's hard to sum it up, but I'd say, well, I am now committed to the job, but the way I feel committed has changed too. There was a time when the holidays, the good working hours, the security appealed, but now I find myself thinking more about what I can do for kids. I don't think I appreciated the fact that this was such an important job, not fully anyway. At school, we thought, you can just be a teacher — a fall-back you know. But now I appreciate just how crucial teachers can be, just how much good teachers are needed. I'm anxious to serve now, rather than get something out of it

CONCLUSIONS

Repeatedly in this chapter it has had to be stated, either that there is little evidence of any generalisable reasons for the changes observed in EVC scores, or that the reason(s) given by students seemed in themselves an insufficient explanation. Even in those cases where students appeared to be heavily influenced by their interaction with other people, a degree of autonomy in decision making appeared, sometimes quite unexpectedly. For example, SN 344, one of the most impressionable of the subsample, had this to say when discussing the influence of SN 415:

Look, I listen to what she has to say. I'm interested. Just as I listen to my parents. But I make up my own mind. My beliefs aren't altogether shaped by others. I have to make the decision in the end, and I do.

Yet some students in the subsample seemed to be ready and eager to be influenced by others; SN 433 typified this group:

The influence of others? Yes that's always been important to me. I've always worried about what other people think of me. In some ways I behave the way I think they want me to behave.

I. You'd say other people had a considerable influence on your commitment to nursing then?

SN 433. Yes I would, certainly. I would. My friends are very important to me. I s'pose in some ways because they say that things are lousy in the hospital I tend to agree, even though sometimes I enjoy the job. You could say they've persuaded me to leave even though it was me who handed in the resignation.

I. Your resignation wasn't entirely your own decision then?

SN 433. No, I've always been influenced a lot by other people. Even at school I did what others wanted me to. I've always been like this.

The major conclusion to be derived from the foregoing, then, is the extreme difficulty found in generalising about reasons for changing EVC scores and types. Moreover, when pressed many of the sample refused to give one reason for changing their EVC. It is worthwhile including two extended extracts from the leaver transcripts, in order to reinforce this point:

SN 423

I. What was the reason or reasons for your drop in vocational commitment?

SN 423. You know that's a very hard question. Reasons I think — there were more than one reason. I think it began from the beginning. I was dewy-eyed and naive when I came here — I don't know why I was so stupid, but I just didn't know how death, how maimed people, how blood, urination, defecation would affect me. Yet I think I could have got used to most of that. It was probably relationships with the senior staff that got at me. I had bad relationships with senior nurses. There was only one sister I got on with. The other 6 wards I've been to, the sisters treat you like the dirt beneath their feet because you're new, they think you can't do a thing right, and you're scatter-brained. They're sarcastic and, you know, they're just generally nasty, and if, well I think if that's what's being a sister's like I never want to be one ...

There's just no relationship between you and the hierarchy. You're just under them, they just tell you what to do and you do it their way. Especially in Ward Z with Sister Q, if you don't do it her way, you're for it. Her ward is run like clockwork, and you do it her way and until you get into her routine it's terribly hard. I've found I can do things in certain ways but don't do them well others. But there's no room for your way on her ward. When she was off and I was on I got through the work quicker. When she was there things had to be done at a certain time in a certain way — HER way, and HER time. I couldn't work in that way. It takes about a week to learn all the sisters little fancies and you get blown up if you don't do it their way. Then, in Ward Y I did something wrong, and I got blown up — we seemed to have big fights all the time. I didn't realise I was meant

to feed the patients with a spoon - I was using a fork and sister came in, snatched the fork off me and threw it right across the room, and I think that's wrong. She seems to have stopped it now, but she used to throw things at the nurses when things went wrong. She used to throw bedpans, bedpans! ...

On another day we were waiting to come off duty in Ward P and the sister threw books at us calling us stupid morons. It was 5 minutes before coming off duty and we were pooped out, it's just what everyone does, waits around to go off duty 5 minutes before and she called us stupid morons, threw books at us, told us to get on with work until it was time to get off. Then she kept us there late. I was fuming. This was when I decided to resign.

I. So really, it was bad relationships which persuaded you to resign?

SN 423. Put that way I suppose it was -

I. Well, then, if we were able to change these relationships, if there was more chance for you to get to know the senior staff better, to express your ideas, to get a fair hearing and not to be blasted all the time, would you consider returning to nursing?

SN 423. You make it sound good! But those are big ifs.

I. It's a serious question -

SN 423. Yes, I'm thinking about it. (hesitates) No, it's not only the human relationship thing although that's terrible and that's why lots of people leave. With me it was the final straw. Ward P was just the last straw. There's shift work, there's the problem of study and physical labour, there's the inward looking nature of nurses. I don't want to get too narrow. I suppose I'm selfish, but all of those things, night work, shift work, they stop you from enjoying life. The day I resigned I felt free, freed from the burden.

I. So it's a combination of reasons?

SN 423. Uh, huh, a variety of things, building up to the end ...

I. The reasons you've given are all related to work. Were there other factors, social factors? Sport, things like that?

SN 423. Well work interfered with sport, with going to parties and so on. That wasn't as important to me as some others. [SN 352] was always saying that if it wasn't for the job she'd always keep boyfriends (laughs). But I never had trouble that way. You could usually swap duties if there was something you really wanted to go to. No I think the main reasons are the ones I've given.

I. Well ...

SN 423. Hang on, there's one other important thing perhaps. The hospital's too closed, there's too much emphasis on work and nothing else. If you live with nurses it's work, work, work. Too much shop. I want more from life than that.

I. So, in sum your reason for dropping EVC (strength)?

SN 423. Oh heck, it's complicated. I thought I could tell you clearly when we started talking, but there's so many things ...

ST 299

I. We have been talking for some time now about your experiences in the college and on teaching practice. We've also established that your commitment to teaching as a career has dropped greatly. I wonder if we can tie-up the two. What were the reason or reasons for dropping your commitment?

ST 299. I think we've got the main reason. I just didn't have the patience to cope with children and I felt awkward trying to communicate with them. I felt that I'd have trouble in controlling them if I got a class of my own. It was nothing like I expected.

I. You said this was your main reason. Were there others?

ST 299. Well, the college wasn't what I expected either. I was bored because of the inconsistency of the work load. In the first year I seldom had to work more than twenty hours a week and a lot of it was low level stuff that a competent fifth former could handle. Then there was something about the whole place that bugged me. Perhaps I'm too conservative, but the attitudes and style of dress were too casual and out of place in a college preparing people for a profession. There was no privacy in the halls, and too many people goofing off on booze. I think all these things had an influence. Then at the beginning of the second year and again after teaching section I missed work because of ill health. When I got behind I thought it's not worth catching up. One week we'd have nothing to do, then we'd have to work weekends to catch up. This started to interfere with my social life. I couldn't do the things I wanted to.

I. If we were to change these things would you consider returning to teaching?

ST 299. Well perhaps yes. I think I needed to be older. I was too young and immature when I entered. I needed to know more about kids and how to handle them. But there's lots of other reasons why I wouldn't come back too. The bond for one. Fancy tying someone up for six years, before they know much about the job at all. It's different to being taught - I know that now. I think I appreciate my own teachers better now!

These examples demonstrate clearly that no one reason is sufficient to explain the attitude changes of these two students. Tables such as 5.1 and 5.2 can therefore be misleading unless this point is recognised. Increasingly, as the research progressed, it became clear that both behaviour and expressed attitudes were reflections of the idiosyncrasy, the uniqueness of each individual under study as well as the specific circumstances in which commitment developed. The major conclusion to be drawn from the results discussed in this section of the study was therefore that changes in EVC scores appeared to be related to the individual's unique relationship with the peer culture(s); to his relationships with teaching and practical staff; to the influence of his kin group; to his relative success or failure in adjusting to the differential normative patterns; and to his own set of characteristics and personality. The interplay of these factors is complex, and while some limited generalisation is possible, it is in many instances idiosyncratic to each individual.

There is, however, considerable evidence in the data presented in both this and the previous chapter to support the view that expressions of vocational commitment are subject to wide variation, almost from day to day, and most importantly are situationally specific.

Moreover, the evidence gathered from the subsample did not cast any major doubts on the method of scoring EVC outlined earlier in this thesis. Indeed, it is interesting to note that both techniques generated approximately the same level of finding in this respect.

Finally, some comment must be made on the reflectivity of the subsample. The impression may have been left from the foregoing that the researcher believes that his subjects behaved in a purely habit-responding manner. However, as was noted above, many of the sample claimed to be autonomous in decision making and many more were prepared to reflect on their actions and their possible outcomes. Thus, for many people free will was never dominated completely by deterministic factors — while 'reflexive' behaviour and typifications devised the dish, it was often garnished by a sauce of reflectivity.

The results from the study, together with their implications for both theoretical perspectives and practical training, will be discussed further in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

OVERVIEW: The major findings are presented in summarised form at the beginning of this chapter. A number of issues relating to methodology and sociological theory are then discussed. In this connection the points concerned with role concept and career choice are revisited. Finally, attention is concentrated on the practical implications of the research for teacher and nurse education in New Zealand.

As is not uncommon, the research described in this thesis has unfortunately provided fewer definitive answers than one would have liked, and has raised a number of additional questions. It has, however, demonstrated the complexity of theoretical constructs such as vocational commitment and has confirmed the position adopted in the formulation of the research design — namely that vocational commitment is multidimensional, and cannot be assessed by any single or integrated system of measures.

But it has gone further than that: it has demonstrated, at least to the researcher's satisfaction that no matter how expressed vocational commitment is assessed, it is likely to fluctuate over a period of time. This is partly as a result of the strong influence of immediate events on commitment itself — its situational specificity — and partly as a result of the coarse nature of many of the attitude measures involved.

The researcher has also succeeded in delineating types of commitment from a theoretical model. These types of commitment were borne out by empirical observations of the subsamples. Furthermore, several other important findings which may be summarised as follows emerged from the research.

1. The extremely wide range of EVC scores on entry confirmed the proposition that many students were in the 'tentative' stage of career choice.

2. The research revealed the idiosyncratic nature of stated reasons for changes in EVC.
3. It uncovered some of the more common factors in general changes of EVC scores and type during the process of training.
4. It demonstrated the difficulties in predicting success in the training programme from any analysis of entry data.

In the course of relating these conclusions to those of other research workers in this field, it will be desirable at the same time to consider both some methodological and some theoretical issues. The practical implications of the study can then be suggested.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Problems associated with attitude testing

Of paramount importance to the present study has been the frequently expressed difficulty associated with attitude testing. The bases for the development of a scale to measure the degree and type of expressed vocational commitment were described earlier, and an account given of the steps taken in constructing the scale and the ways in which its validity and reliability were assessed. Despite the care taken in this construction a number of doubts persist, some of which relate to attitude testing in general, and some to the measurement of vocational commitment in particular.

(a) Faking of test responses

Problems with the Hawthorne effect were discussed in some detail in Chapter 3; it is appropriate now to discuss difficulties pertaining to students faking their responses in pencil and paper tests. One of the major dilemmas faced by any social researcher is to ascertain the degree of "truthfulness" in each response to questionnaires and interviews (see Cicourel, 1964, for an excellent exposition of such problems). As one teachers' college administrator put it in the course of this study: "Students lie like flatfish" (Field Notes, 1/11/74). The predeliction of research samples to faking scales and questionnaires and to tailor their answers according to the environmental conditions, or their interpretation of the interviewer's expectations, is well documented

elsewhere (Borland, 1957; Sheldon, 1959; Evans, 1966; Shipman, 1967a; Mischel, 1968; Wilson, 1973). In addition to these points, Dicken (1959) indicated, on the basis of his research, that some respondents to questionnaires give an inaccurate response because of their own idealised impression of themselves. A study of particular interest at this juncture was that conducted by Shipman in 1961 and 1964 at the Worcester College of Education. One of the instruments administered by Shipman was the Maudsley Personality Inventory, which contained 20 lie items. In 1961, 43 of Shipman's sample (36%) scored beyond the tolerable limit on the L factor. In the repeat testing in 1964, 23 (including 17 of the original 43) were similarly over the limit. Shipman suggested that institutional pressures to conform, particularly where the cultural and social structure is well known and well integrated, may predispose people to answer in particular directions. To overcome this problem he suggested three strategies — the inclusion of:

1. Investigation of institutional pressures to help in the analysis of results;
2. Lie detectors or a variety of techniques to facilitate cross-checking of results (Gibson, 1962, 1964);
3. A multidisciplinary theoretical framework, whereby the sociological influences on psychological data would not go undetected (Shipman, 1967, p.57).

All three of these strategies were included in the present research. As noted earlier, the Eysenck Personality Inventory (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1964), which includes an L factor, was used. It was ascertained from this scale that 75 of the student teacher sample (22%) and 22 of the student nurses (19%) scored beyond the allowable level of the L factor. These students were interviewed individually in an endeavour to ascertain their reasons for faking (if indeed they had). The following pattern emerged:

(1) Error in answering scale		21	
(2) Deliberate faking			
(i) on grounds of "no business of researcher to pry into my personality"	21		
(ii) tailoring responses to individual's beliefs about the expectations of the researcher or the institution	32	53	
(3) Idealised self-impression		<u>23</u>	
		<u>97</u>	

The last-named group were most interesting. Almost all of them were highly religious, and a number, even under intensive questioning, continued to maintain that it was accurate for them to answer in the affirmative to such items as "I never gossip". The total "lie" group (N = 97) were subjected to close questioning concerning the EVC Scale. It appeared that much less faking took place on this scale than on any of the others. For example, Student Nurse 338 had this to say:

I didn't mind you trying to find out about what I plan to do with myself, in my job and all that. But when it came to some of the other tests, they were private - well personal, like, well, umm. Really some of those things are my business, aren't they ...?

In all, only six instances of deliberate faking were found in the EVC Scale, all within the C and M dimensions. The respondents' scores on these scales were adjusted according to their admissions in the interviews.

The question of the inclusion of the 97 possible fakers in the pre-post test analysis, particularly their Extraversion/Neuroticism scores, was carefully considered. An analysis of the group revealed that the distribution of their scores did not differ markedly from the rest of the sample, nor were there significant differences in the demographic variables. As a consequence it was decided to leave in their data in the final analysis.

(b) The reliability of attitude tests

Of even more importance than the foregoing, though, is the general finding of this research that expressed attitudes towards a career fluctuate markedly within limited time spans. While this finding is

not at variance with other research — for example, Becker et al. (1961) — it does bring into question whether it is appropriate at all to devise sophisticated scales which purport to measure expressed vocational commitment as their reliability will always be in question. Moreover, as EVC appeared to change rapidly and dramatically, it may seem unwise to use it as a predictor of future performance. Viewed in this light, the finding that EVC on entry is a poor predictor of either leaving, or level of success in the training programme is not surprising.

(c) Problems with the EVC scale

Three major problems associated with the scale itself should be mentioned. First, despite the procedures outlined above, which specifically incorporated a variety of checks, at least one ambiguous item slipped through in the M dimension of the EVC Scale — "I couldn't think of anything better to do". This item was interpreted by the researcher (and by his team of judges) to mean that people had selected their career because they couldn't find a viable alternative. It was not until the post-test when a respondent pointed out that, for her, this item indicated strong commitment (in that she couldn't think of any job better than nursing), that the possible ambiguity showed up. As the item represented only a small part of the EVC Scale, the tests were not re-marked on this account.

A second problem within the scale relates to the bipolar nature of the theoretical construct (see page 18). Unfortunately some items in the M dimension purported to measure both degree and type of EVC (items i, iii, iv, v, vii for teachers; items i, ii, iii, iv, v, vi for nurses). Although the overlap was relatively slight, it should have been avoided, and casts some doubt on the bipolar model.

Third, the question arises as to whether or not the dimensions of EVC outlined above are valid indicators of the strength of a person's attitude towards a career. The key issue in this connection was discussed briefly in Chapter 3 — can what is basically a multidimensional phenomenon be reduced to a single score? Earlier it was suggested that Gardner's cogent arguments concerning the dangers of the reduction procedure could be countered on the grounds of the high correlation coefficients (of the order of 0.75 to 0.94) achieved between the dimensions of the scale in the pre-test (Gardner, 1975). However, with

the research sample these figures were not reached. Tables 6.1 and 6.2 set out the relevant data. Although all of the correlations were statistically significant well beyond the .01 level (indeed only those asterisked failed to reach 0.001), the Motivation and Time-held dimensions need to be reinterpreted cautiously in the light of actual results from their use. The former is especially dubious. Kelsall and Kelsall (1969) have exposed the difficulties in endeavouring to ascertain the "true" motives for career choice; elsewhere the present writer has demonstrated the futility of many such efforts in the past (Ramsay, in press).

In the present research the M dimension was included to try to sort out the committed from the non-committed. The evidence in Tables 6.1 and 6.2 suggest very strongly, if the other dimensions measured strength of EVC, then the M dimension does not have a large role to play. Put in another way, the M dimension appears to contribute weakly to the total EVC scores. The researcher would not recommend the inclusion of this dimension as a measure of EVC strength in future studies. However, its use may be necessary to provide an indication of type of EVC.

The T dimension also posed a problem. Although significantly correlated with the other dimensions, it, as the only constant factor in Forms D and E, gave an indication of reliability over the three year time span. The relevant correlation coefficient for student teachers is 0.75, and for nurses 0.77. In the light of the fact that the tests were administered three years apart, and as this is an item likely to be misinterpreted (as despite care in administration, some respondents are likely to comment on present rather than past) the reliability obtained was considered reasonable. On the basis of these arguments, it was decided to rescore a 10% sample of the high, moderate and low EVC scores from each vocation, excluding the M dimension. Interestingly enough, the ranking of the sample (within its own vocation) was not markedly altered ($\rho = .89$). In the light of this finding and the high inter-correlations achieved for all groups in the post-test, it was decided to accept the original scoring. Moreover, despite reservations concerning attitude testing in general, it is argued that the EVC scale used in the research is a reliable and valid measure for its purpose -- a conclusion which is supported by material arising from the interviews.

However, given the many and varied problems in assessing attitudes, and the extreme variation over a period of time of attitudes towards a career, the present researcher is now of the view that almost as much would have been achieved by using the S dimension of the scale alone. If this self report could be coupled with objective observations and the opinions of others in the role set, a realistic assessment of vocational commitment might be obtained. The important reservation to bear in mind is that neither written one-shot tests, nor one-shot observations are likely to be reliable indications of long-term or pervasive attitudes.

In conclusion, despite the reservation noted above, it is interesting to find that two Australian researchers, in applying the present author's EVC scale to a sample of 378 student nurses, have found it to be both reliable and valid (Leaf and Fraser, 1978).

Observational and Interview Research Problems

The matter of 'objective observations' mentioned in the above penultimate paragraph raises the vexed question of appropriate methodology for a researcher seeking to trace the development of vocational commitment. Taylor (1969) has noted that the dearth of empirical studies in this area is indicative not only of the complexity of the terms, but also of the methodological difficulties involved in identification and measurement. While the former did not prove insuperable the latter posed special problems, some of which have been mentioned earlier. Several of those points need to be reviewed in the light of the research results.

The most difficult problem related to what Mayo (1949) has described as the Hawthorne effect. This problem has been discussed above in connection with observational techniques in general; it is, however, no less a problem with repeated interview procedures. Shipman summed up the difficulty very well when he said:

All observation in the Social Sciences is subject to the paradox that achieving acceptance and rapport necessary for meaningful, spontaneous behaviour to occur means reducing objectivity, as this involvement affects the perception of the observer.

(Shipman, 1966, p.31)

The possible "non-objectivity" of the researcher was only part of the problem, however. There is little question that having

someone available to talk to, about job problems (no matter how non-committal that person attempts to remain), may have an influence on decisions relating to vocational commitment. In spite of being asked for advice on several occasions the researcher maintained a listening role and avoided counselling of any type. This proved extremely difficult on occasions especially with some of the student nurses who desperately sought advice. Nevertheless, the temptation was successfully resisted in all instances except one. The case where advice was proffered related to a highly committed nurse (not in the subsample) who had become involved in an incestuous relationship. She wished to get out of this situation and the only way she felt she could succeed was by leaving nursing and taking up a position in another city. After listening to the problem the researcher suggested to the girl that she should consult the hospital authorities to see if a transfer to another training institution could be arranged. Although reluctant to do so, the girl did eventually manage to gain a transfer. Her data were excluded from the sample, but the case study illustrates the problem of maintaining a neutral position. In this instance, then, the advice proffered by Newson and Newson (1976) on the necessity to maintain neutrality was not followed completely. As the student in question severed all ties with the sample group, however, it is improbable that the results of the research were significantly affected.

Related to the above points is the researcher's relationship with one particular part of the sample — the student teachers. One of the major difficulties encountered by Shipman in the research cited above was the fact that he was known to the sample as a lecturer in the institution he was studying. This probably accounts for the much higher rate of faking in Shipman's pre-test than was the case in the present study, where the researcher was initially identified as a "researcher from the university". However, because of the close links through the school structure of the university and the teachers' college, it soon became well known that the researcher was responsible for teaching and assessing the student teachers in their first year of study. There is no question that this led to a barrier between the researcher and the researched, which in at least two instances was never completely broken down. An analysis of the interview tapes showed a disparity between the student teacher and student nurse sample, the latter being both more forthcoming and forthright. Silences were

longer in the student teacher sample; the researcher did twice as much talking in the teacher interviews than in the nurse interviews; student teacher answers were much shorter than student nurses; and there was much less "personal" material in the teacher data. The discrepancies between the two groups did lessen as the research proceeded, probably because the researcher was not responsible for any teaching in the second and third college years. Nonetheless the interviews were much more rewarding in the hospital than in the teachers' college. There is little question that many of the student teachers were maintaining what Goffman (1956) refers to as "impression management", that is the development of a veneer which is hardened when people of different status interact. As Shipman (1967a) points out, this is particularly relevant when one of the parties is subject to assessment by the other. The present researcher must accept, therefore, some distortion in the student teacher sample responses.

The Hawthorne effect is difficult to check in research, such as that described. However, it is worth noting that:

1. No marked differences appeared between the subsample and the total sample in terms of shifts and stays in expressed vocational commitment.
2. No marked differences appeared between the subsample and the total sample in terms of leaving or staying in the given vocation (see Table 6.3).
3. The proportion of leavers did not differ markedly from other teachers' colleges and schools of nursing in New Zealand in the same years.

It is therefore contended that any such effect, if it did occur, was insubstantial.

From a purely methodological point of view, the observational section of the study may have been improved (assuming the Hawthorne effect could be countered) by working on an acknowledged partnership basis with several members of the appropriate role set. The researcher felt that there were many occasions when the symbols and terms being employed were too distant from his own culture to be interpreted accurately. For example, in one clique of the student nurse sample, the term 'guy' inferred that the couple being referred to had formed a sexually intimate relationship, whereas 'boyfriend' carried platonic

connotations. Information specific to the group was sometimes difficult to analyse. The group discussions helped considerably in this respect. Several verbal and non-verbal cues, hitherto unrecorded, were clarified in these sessions. This approach is commended strongly to future researchers in this area.

Other sociological and psychological techniques which might have been used also have their strengths and weaknesses. Despite the findings of Bill (1973), who suggested that questionnaires are at least as effective as interviews, the present researcher believes the latter to be essential. Although there may be some respondents who feel "safer" with a relatively anonymous and emotionally less stressful questionnaire administered in a large group, once rapport and confidence was established the open-ended interview provided more valuable data in the present study than the questionnaires. The weaknesses in Bill's work and those he cites (e.g. Sears, 1965) are that they are typically "one shot", that is, they were endeavouring to gain data about one attribute on one occasion. Such research has its place in social science, but there is considerable doubt that a series of questionnaires alone will be sufficiently sensitive to assess the dynamics of the situation described in the present research, and especially in providing information about pervasive attitudes, as pointed out above. It is interesting to note that some researchers still appear to be placing considerable faith in the questionnaire approach — for example, the recent Australian study of teacher socialisation by Carpenter and Foster (1978).

Multidisciplinary approaches

Many researchers (e.g. Shipman, 1966; Gallop and Ghuman, 1973) have suggested that the kinds of questions asked in the present study are best answered by adopting a multidisciplinary approach. As Gallop and Ghuman (1973, p.50) say "... human behaviour is not satisfactorily explained by psychological considerations on the one hand, or by sociological on the other". In the present research a deliberate attempt was made to encompass theories and methodologies from a number of disciplines, and to adopt an eclectic approach with regard to the various possibilities present within sociology.

This, in itself, posed special problems. The half decade which the research spanned was marked by a renewed, vigorous debate in the

field of sociology. Indeed, some writers (e.g. Gouldner, 1971) suggested that sociology as a discipline was in this era in a state of crisis, with warring factions representing positivists on one side, and "interpretive sociologists" on the other, seemingly camped in impenetrable surroundings. To hew a particular line was by no means easy; moreover, in the course of the research there was a tendency for even the allies in the warring parties to split amongst themselves. As Giddens (1976, p.34) has pointed out, the ethnomethodologists have tended to split, for example, into three camps: that led by Douglas and Cicourel who appear to believe that by using their techniques better, more accurate descriptions of society may be possible; that led by Sacks and possibly Garfinkel, who tended to concentrate on linguistic analysis while maintaining 'ethnomethodological indifference'; and that led by McHugh, and accepted by most English ethnomethodologists, which adopts a purely relativistic position.

The present research, whilst subsuming some of the views of the symbolic interactionists and the reflexive sociologists, began in a positivistic mould following in many respects the guidelines set down long ago by Weber and Durkheim. As the study progressed, though, the researcher became more influenced by the writings of Schutz (1967) and the neophenomenologists, and began to place more emphasis on interaction as well as probing for intentionality, reflectivity and autonomy. And, despite the reservations expressed earlier concerning the Hawthorne effect, greater efforts were made to become immersed in the culture studied. That this was not entirely successful has been recorded above. However, the writer would concur with Giddens' view:

Immersion in a form of life is the necessary and only means whereby an observer is able to generate such characterizations. 'Immersion' heresay, in relation to an alien culture does not, however, mean 'becoming a full member' of the community, and cannot mean this. To 'get to know' an alien form of life is to know how to find one's way about in it, to be able to participate in it as an ensemble of practices. But for the sociological observer this is a mode of generating descriptions which have to be mediated, i.e. transformed into categories of social-scientific discourse.

(Giddens, 1976, p.161)

In future studies of vocational commitment, there is little question that researchers should be able to participate more freely in the groups under study than was the case of the present researcher. This may, of course, demand a different type of person or persons;

indeed, it is the present writer's view that the successful completion of this type of research depends upon the involvement of a team of people, embracing a variety of disciplines as well as that of the practitioners.

A question of suitable methodology for investigating power

A further methodological weakness arose from the emergence of the importance of power as a factor in the development of expressed vocational commitment. At the commencement of the study the writer's view was informed by the classical writings of Weber (1947), and contemporarily by the field work of Bachrach and Baratz (1962, 1963, 1970) and Dahl (1957). However, this view was altered by the publication *Power: A Radical View* by Stephen Lukes (1974). In his reassessment of the theoretical positions developed by Dahl, and Bachrach and Baratz amongst others, Lukes asked

... is it not the supreme and most insidious exercise of power to prevent people, to whatever degree from having grievances by shaping their perceptions, cognitions and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things, either because they can see or imagine no alternative to it, or because they value it as divinely ordained and beneficial?

(Lukes, 1974, p.24)

In making such an assertion Lukes focussed attention on what he termed the third dimension of power — that aspect of power which arises from prior influencing, from the shaping and determining of peoples' desires, wants and needs. In so doing he raised questions relating to the "hidden agenda", the "decision to take non-decisions", the ability of given people to manipulate events to their own ends, and the strength of the socialisation process itself. Moreover, his statement provokes the question: Is there a group or person who exercises power in the insidious and supreme way Lukes suggests; a group who has, perhaps, found what C. Wright Mills terms the 'master symbol'? Does Lukes' argument imply that the reflexive behaviour of people will inevitably outweigh the reflective capacity of the same people? Are we confronted, not for the first time, with a reconsideration of the extent of free will enjoyed by individuals as opposed to a deterministic account of their behaviour?

For those sociologists involved in field research, an equally important question arises as to whether the notions can be researched

and the theoretical questions answered. From a logical viewpoint, if the implications of covert manipulation raised by Lukes are really the telling points, then surely the more effective they are, the more difficult they will be to ascertain. In other words, if the person or persons who are exercising power have reached the "most insidious level" the sociologist himself may be unaware of the operation of power, or of potential, hidden issues. The sociologist is thus caught up in a vortex — having plunged in, having accepted that there is something insidious and supreme (and hidden), he must suffer an agonising spell of dizziness before the manipulators and their contrivances are revealed. But how can the researcher reach the centre of the vortex, how can he maintain his equilibrium and establish the locus of power in the third dimension?

To answer this query it is necessary to follow Lukes' analysis a step further. In research on power, according to Lukes, we should not wait for overt conflict to occur or overt issues to emerge, but should give consideration to potential issues and latent conflict. Thus, as Lukes points out in an important footnote, we must assume "that there would be a conflict of events or preferences between those exercising power and those subject to it, were the latter to become aware of their interests" (Lukes, 1974, p.25). In claiming that this latent conflict is empirically ascertainable Lukes draws attention to what he terms "real interests". This is a key concept. In connection with it, it is important to realise that Lukes' "radical view" of power is based in part on the assumption that man may be the product of a system which works against his "real interests" and that there is a need to ascertain what people would prefer and want were they given the choice. Accordingly, an empirical framework emerges involving a questioning of the sample about their real interests, which may be distinctly different from what they had taken to be their interests prior to questioning. These "real interests" can then be matched against the researcher's observations of what has taken place in the system in which the persons are operating.

Alternatively, the researcher may impose his own value judgements on what are the real interests of the group being researched. There are, of course, dangers in both approaches, especially the possibility of predisposing the research sample to given responses. Paradoxically, in using this approach, the researcher may himself become the power

exerciser!

However, given these weaknesses, some methodological questions do emerge from the previous discussion. In summary they are:

1. What are the "real interests" of the sample? This may be ascertained either by offering the sample choices, or by the researcher making a value judgement on his own account.
2. Are these "real interests" in conflict with the present procedures or events?
3. Has there been a suppression or manipulation of the "real interests", thus operationalizing an act of power?
4. To what extent have people learnt to tolerate, or conform, or let things go by default — to agree to a state of "repressive tolerance"? (Marcuse, 1969).

The last question is probably the most important for the present study. It was noted in Chapter 5 that many students did, indeed, learn to tolerate and conform, and, in some instances, it was argued that this development of conformity had an influence on their vocational commitment. There are, though, several other points raised by Lukes' notions on power which were not clarified by the present study.

For example, there were a number of instances when the students in the teachers college claimed that their representatives on the various boards failed to comprehend fully the procedures adopted by these boards. There were also complaints voiced about the relevant material arriving late, and of decisions being made elsewhere and presented to the boards as a *fait accompli*. Unfortunately, the present research lacked the necessary sophistication to check the validity of these assertions, nor could they be related to EVC. Once again, the need for a greater amount of observational data becomes obvious.

A further supposition which was not able to be tested as a result of the methodology adopted arose from the establishment of 'complaints committees'. One may question the motives of the authorities in establishing such committees. As was mentioned above, the College Representative Board appeared to take the heat out of conflict situations. Some students claimed that complaints voiced in this group died there. It appeared in some cases that discussion of the complaint

was a sufficient condition for its disappearance, at least temporarily. Viewed in this way the structure could be seen as conservative and maintaining the *status quo*. Much as Crenson (as cited by Lukes, 1974, p.43) found that anti-pollutionists in Gary, Indiana, were blocked by a refusal on the part of the U.S. Steel to act either way on the issue of air pollution, so too did some of the student activists complain about the college hierarchy and the representative board which acted as a complaints committee.

The present study lacked the sophistication to relate suggestions of covert manipulation to the development of EVC. If suitable research techniques could be developed, however, investigation of Lukes' third dimension of power and its relationship to the development of EVC might be particularly rewarding.

This lengthy section on power has served to demonstrate one of the major shortcomings in the present research design. It lacked the sophistication to answer questions relating to lobbying, to Lukes' "hidden agenda", to the actions of individuals in suppressing information, or, as Korda (1975), in his cynical analysis of power suggests, controlling information by making it as complex and mysterious as possible, so that only a few can explain what it means. Korda's point is, of course, in line with suggestions currently being put forward by those sociologists who are concentrating on knowledge, language and schools (e.g. Bernstein, 1971; Young, 1971). Their prime argument suggests that the language being used in schools is deliberately codified in a way which excludes certain groups from understanding, and, as a consequence, achieving.

Future researchers, then, would be well advised to include methodology designed to tap the covert dimension of power. This, of course, raises at least two further problems. First, although techniques of participant observation, and astute questioning of key figures, as well as the use of informants as adopted by Pettigrew (1973) in his analysis of the politics of organisational decision making, may bring to light valuable information, one wonders whether the covert nature of the dimension being analysed prevents researchers from reaching the centre of the vortex. Second, the vexed question of value judgements remains unanswered. In this research the value judgements of the majority of the students was relatively clear — they

sought change. Yet, in two contrasting systems, in which autocratic techniques and participant procedures were utilised, change was slowed down. The ability of students to operate in a climate of repressive tolerance, and to work within a naked power system was remarkable. These two problems will require careful attention by future researchers in this field.

Summary

In sum, a number of methodological problems have become apparent during the course of the present study. However, it can be claimed that many of the weaknesses apparent in earlier researches were avoided. For example, the pitfall of accepting a unidimensional definition was overcome, consonant with the suggestions of Haller and Rosenmayr (1971) and Becker (1960). Dreeben typified the unidimensional approach when he defined commitment to teaching as "... simply spending the better part of one's working life as a classroom teacher" (Dreeben, 1970, p.180). It was indicated in Chapter 2 that this type of definition is too simplistic; it is unacceptable as well on the grounds that many classroom teachers continue to teach only because they are trapped in the system by dint of being unable to find another job of comparable salary and work conditions. Other researchers who operated from unidimensional, or at best bidimensional criteria have included Walker (1961, 1963, 1967), Geer (1966), Box and Ford (1967), Kingsley (1968), Hackman and Dysinger (1970), Flude and Whiteside (1971), Kay (1971), Miller (1971) and Coulter (1972, 1973).

Much of the earlier research can also be criticised on other methodological grounds. Where scales were devised they were seldom tested for reliability or validity (e.g. Hills and Downs, 1962; McNamara, 1972), and scores have frequently been derived from factors unrelated to the dimension supposedly being tested. (See Gardner, 1975 for a critique, and Stern *et al.*, 1960; Loftis, 1963, 1964; and Evans, 1965 for examples.) In addition, as Bond (1974) has pointed out, many studies claiming to be about attitudes are really only measuring opinions. In this respect it is notable that much of the research paid scant attention to the cogent criticisms put forward by Mischel (1968) who has argued that many attitude tests are faulty in construction and fail to meet the claims of their authors. Moreover, Mischel commented that attitude tests should not be viewed as indicators

of some ongoing, stable characteristic, on the contrary, attitudes may be situation specific. The validity of Mischel's comments becomes obvious in the light of the findings presented in Chapters 4 and 5.

A number of the studies which have claimed to measure shifts in vocational attitudes were cross sectional (e.g. McPartland, 1957; Hill, 1959; Gibson, 1972; Gottlieb and Hodgkins, 1963; Sherlock, 1963; Bolton and Kammeyer, 1968; Flude and Whiteside, 1971; McNamara, 1972), and those that were longitudinal have reported high attrition rates and/or low response rates which cast doubts on their findings (e.g. McGuire, 1964; Pavalko, 1970; Anderson and Western, 1971). And unfortunately the occasional work which reached conceptual adequacy has often failed to measure up in its empirical section containing one or more of the faults mentioned above.

Finally, most of the research has depended on the exclusive use of questionnaires, scales, or 'one shot' interviews (e.g. Walker, 1961; Kiesler and Sakumura, 1966; Western and Anderson, 1968; Anderson and Western, 1969, 1970, 1971; Singh, 1970; Kay, 1971; McNamara, 1972; Lamond, 1974). Only in very rare instances were a series of interviews, observational techniques and studies of personal records included in the research strategy. Moreover, in their discussion of their findings many of the researchers have erred in assuming that causality could be ascertained through correlations between various characteristics (Cohen, 1968).

The present research does, then, represent an advance on most others in this field. It has produced fresh information on the problems of developing scales to measure attitudes like expressed vocational commitment, and, by adopting an indepth approach with a small group of students, it has demonstrated that vocational 'commitment' is more volatile than most earlier researchers indicated. Moreover, the interview-observational approach has allowed the researcher to emphasise the importance of given situations on the development of vocational commitment. Finally, the findings have indicated that more stress on ethnographic techniques may have paid dividends.

SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY AND THE PRESENT STUDY

In the light of the methodological problems just discussed, the question now has to be asked whether the findings of the study have anything to contribute to the general area of sociological theory. In attempting to answer it, it is appropriate to consider theories of role and socialisation mentioned in the second chapter, as related to the development of expressed vocational commitment.

Role and socialisation

There is evidence in the present study to suggest that there were a variety of differentiated structures which influenced the subjects in various ways and in various degrees. Some subjects appeared willing to conform to whatever situation they found themselves in, demonstrating a putty-like malleability. Put in another way, they appeared prepared to flit like butterflies from one circumstance to another with the parameters, the regulations and the expected behaviours of the environment all influencing their behaviours and expressed attitudes. No matter how much some of the sample complained about prescriptions, there is no doubt that, if they wished to continue with their chosen career, they were forced to conform. Thus for some students in the subsample, the crucial variables were the influence of other people and/or the organisational structure.

These observations give some support to the position adopted by those sociologists who believe in the viability of the concept of role. There is little question that, in the domains discussed in the present research the inducted members (i.e. the registered nurses, the certificated schoolteachers) were aware of what constituted acceptable behaviour and appropriate attitudes in given situations in their jobs, and either consciously or unconsciously they passed these standards onto the novitiates. The extent of this agreement is revealed in no small measure by the results of the Q sort, although Lamond (1974), surprisingly, found no such consensualisation in her research with Scottish nurses.

Moreover, some evidence posited above supports the view that a consensualised set of expectations were reified into normative structures by certain members of the subsample. However reification, or in some instances deification, of norms was comparatively rare.

Reification, whereby society appears as "a mighty person directing and orienting human puppets in their human role" (Coulsen, 1972, p.110) received only limited support from the evidence in this study.

There are further difficulties in accepting without demur the position advocated by some role theorists. The data presented in Chapter 5 indicate that communities are not as orderly as the role theorists would have us believe — a point emphasised by Goulder (1971) and Rex (1961). Clearly there are dangers in accepting without argument notions of man as a role conformer, and of depicting communities as always being orderly. Dahrendorf (1958) has suggested that the basic problem is not order, but conflict, and posited that this area has been ignored by role theorists. This, of course, is incorrect and overlooks the Parsonian notion of structural incompatibility (Parsons, 1951) and the work of Merton in role conflict (Merton, 1964). However, despite the endeavours of Parsons and Merton to include conflict in their overall theory, there is still evidence to suggest that supporters of role-concept adopt an overly-deterministic position. Typical of this group is Stebbins (1971) who has suggested that people will behave in consistent lines of behaviour because they are threatened for not doing so; in some cases the 'threat' may be little more than a fear of disapproval of those with whom the actor is interacting. It must be reiterated that the evidence from the present study fails to substantiate such a view to any large extent.

Indeed, the relationship between the stated attitudes and actions of many subjects in the present study gives strong support to the prime Schutzian and Meadian hypothesis that people are rational individuals capable of both reflection and of autonomous decision-making. There are examples cited above of individuals who not only viewed their own universe as capable of being manipulated and modified, but who also endeavoured to persuade others in their immediate group to be more self-actuating and to determine their own destiny rather than have others decide it for them.

There is little question also that many of the members of the subsample applied sets of typifications to guide their everyday behaviour. In face-to-face encounters the subjects brought to bear "commonsense understandings" in terms of which they "typified" other people. This enabled them to calculate the probable response of other people to their actions, and also allowed for ready communication. It

was only later, according to their own statements, that many of the experiences and the interactions took on meaning, and were influential in the subjects' subsequent behaviour and expressed attitudes. It is important, though, to note that many of the subsample did pause to reflect, to contemplate and to discuss preceding events. And some were prepared to change their behaviour and expressed attitudes according to recapitulation and to their reinterpretations of events. Thus, in spite of what some role theorists maintain but in line with Giddens (1976, p.160), it is contended here that the production and reproduction of human society has to be treated as skilled performance on the part of its members, and not merely as a mechanical set of processes.

These points are well summed up by Giddens in his second set of rules. He says that men produce society, but as historically located actors, and not under conditions of their own choosing; and that structures must be viewed not merely as constraining devices, but also as enabling devices; and that processes of structuration involve an interplay of meanings, norms and power (Giddens, 1976, pp.60-61).

In sum, the findings of the present study cannot be said to provide complete support for a purely deterministic orientation in the concept of role. There was little evidence to sustain the view that the behaviours and attitude formation observed were wholly the result of a constraining set of social forces in a system in which the functional requirements and the social control mechanisms guaranteed conformity. Thus the notion that man is in a one-sided battle with the forces of society (as in Berger's analogy of the puppet theatre or Durkheim's "internalisation") must be challenged as being both an "oversocialised theory" (Smart, 1976, p.58) and being dependent on a personification of society (Coulsen, 1972, p.110).

One of the most important findings related to the individual 'twist' that members of the subsample appeared to bring to their relationships. This, in some respects, seems contrary to the consensualisation aspect of role concept, but in line with the views of Simmel (1910/1911). In his words:

... we know of the official that he is not only an official, of the merchant that he is not only a merchant, of the officer that he is not only an officer; and this extrasocial existence, his temperament and his personal destiny, his interests and the worth of his personality, however little he may modify the central fact of his official, mercantile and military activities each time gives a certain nuance for each person who comes face

to face with him and interweaves his social image with extra social imponderables.

(Simmel, 1910/1911, p.394)

Thus, in even the most basic interactions, role relations were tempered by 'something besides'. Members of the subsample appeared to perceive other members of the group not just as individuals, but in a generalised social form containing images of the person as a nurse, a friend, a believer in Christianity or a basketball player. Thus, in Popitz's words "there were many instances where the images distorted and obscured perceptions of reality" (Popitz, 1972, p.31).

The findings of this research, then, suggest a compromise between the influence of deterministic forces on the one hand, and the constructive, contemplative, creative and productive aspects of human behaviour on the other hand. Such a conclusion is consonant with the views of Marx when he wrote:

Men make their own history but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted by the past.

(Marx and Engels, 1962, p.247)

Thus, any sociological theory purporting to explain attitude development must in essence pay attention to the interplay of determining forces and individuality. To obtain such evidence is not an easy task. Perhaps the way forward lies with the hermeneutic approach in which the researcher enters into a dialogue with his subjects in order to understand how they act, and in order to grasp the 'form of life' which gives their actions meaning (Giddens, 1976, p.56). While being no mean feat, this is the goal for which sociology must strive.

Before proceeding to a discussion of the practical implications of the findings of the research it is appropriate to reconsider the career choice theories outlined in Chapter 2.

RECONSIDERATION OF CAREER CHOICE THEORIES

The major implication for theories relating to career choice is that the age-stage theory gains considerable support. A large

proportion of the intake to the two institutions under study admitted that they were unsure that the vocation they had selected was what they really wanted to do. Others, who obtained high EVC scores were found to hold expectations at variance with the realities of the job they had selected, thus indicating once again that the age group studied were exploring career possibilities. The wide fluctuation of the EVC scores in many students, and the overall changes in scores in the pre-post tests, also suggest that the training process itself was a period of actualisation, with a gradual emergence from tentativeness to reality. Faced with a forced adjustment to unexpected circumstances, a number of students took the step of changing vocations.

Yet all the foregoing points may be challenged on the basis of over-generalisation. Just as Piaget's age-stage theory of human development has been criticised (Beard, 1960, Freyberg, 1966; Baer, 1970) so too may Ginzberg and Super's theories. In the present sample there were those students who entered with high EVC which they steadily maintained despite all difficulties. Such students are referred to by college and hospital authorities as "possessing strong vocational impulse". As one college lecturer put it "... the trick seems to be to catch the impulse and maintain it, whilst simultaneously professionalising, committing those in whom it is weak" (Field notes 22/4/75). Many of the group of students who maintained high EVC scores throughout also had high anticipatory socialisation, thus being well prepared for the college or hospital environment. It may be suggested that a group of students, consisting of roughly 10-15% of the total intake, were in the realistic stage of career choice, circumstances brought about by their earlier experiences. Just as Beard (1960) found a child in her sample able to conceptualise mapping skills well before the norm for her age group, so too were there students in the present sample who had formed hard-nosed, realistic views about their chosen career, and who demonstrated determination to achieve their goals despite the obstacles which confronted them.

At the other extreme, a group of students representing about 8-10% of the sample, had not proceeded beyond the fantasy stage of career choice. This group had formed their paradigms of nursing or teaching from atypical models and/or popular novels and television programmes. The influence of the nursing novels of Lucille Andrews and Kate Norway, and the television programmes *Emergency Ward 10*, *Dr. Kildare*,

Temperatures Rising and Mr. Novak seemed to have considerable impact on this group of the sample.¹ In another context Crowley (as cited by Korving, 1976) found that 60% of his subjects (teenage girls taking O level examinations in the United Kingdom) who regularly watched television confined their occupational choice to careers which had quite literally been brought home to them by TV drama. Such appeared to be the case for the small group under discussion, especially amongst the nurse sample. Some of this "fantasy group" adjusted very quickly to the actualities of the situation, but others were amongst the major downward movers in EVC.

A third criticism of the age-stage theory of career choice relates to regression, particularly from the stage of reality to the stage of tentativeness. Although demonstrated by rather a small group, this is an important phenomenon which bears further investigation. Typical of this group was ST 67 who entered with an EVC score of 87 claiming that she had held a lengthy desire to teach and assessing her commitment as "very high". On exit, however, she had dropped to an EVC score of 68, with a self estimate of "low". She pointed up several reasons for this drop of EVC score. In her own words:

During the 2nd term of second year I found the course frustrating because of the very low standards demanded, and the frequent irrelevancies. Then my commitment dropped again during my final section when I was in a situation which depressed me (large intermediate). I lost much confidence in my ability to teach as a result of the evaluation visits in my third year section. Why did they wait till then? These have decreased my commitment. I'll work out my bond but that's about it. I'm getting married next year and I plan to have children within three years. If, a big IF, I get on O.K. next year I will return after the children are at school. But there are also other possibilities you know. I've passed all my varsity work, and should get a degree if I got an S4. Now that'll give me all sorts of other career choices — psych. service, welfare work, probationary service. University has opened my eyes, whereas college tried to close them. I suppose that you could say that I'm pretty tentative about what I'll do now whereas I was certain earlier. I'm just like that.

The key factors here may well be the "opening effect" of university success, and the "closing effect" of a poor teaching section.

¹Evidence to support this conclusion was derived from two sources — the M dimension of the EVC scale and the analysis of Q3 of the first interview. *Angels*, a more realistic programme, was not shown on New Zealand television until late 1975.

This case study gives some support to the critical events proposition put forward earlier as well as demonstrating a movement from the reality stage to tentativeness.

Finally, the stage theorists do not appear to recognise the extent and degree of fluctuation of career commitment. Although they infer a brittleness by labelling the age-stage "tentative", they give little hint of the depths of despair and despondency, as well as the climactic highs which many of the present subsample revealed. As Jackson has put it in another context, adopting basic roles is far from static but is both emerging and receding; "they are not whole suits of clothes picked out of the prop. box to be taken on entire" (Jackson, 1972, p.7). This point relates to the tentativeness of many people in this phase, and perhaps even more significantly, the effect of unexpected events. Environmental conditions should not be overlooked here. Revans (1964, p.67) has depicted hospitals as "institutions cradled in anxiety"; and it is noteworthy that teachers have a very high rate of mental ill health in New Zealand. Certainly the students in both institutions, according to the interview material, seemed to be exposed to a variety of circumstances which they found exceptionally trying.

In Chapter 2 it was suggested that this research might throw some light on the controversy surrounding the "accidental" theory of career choice. This remains a clouded area. On the one hand there were those students who planned ahead, pursued their goals carefully, and avoided possible diversions. An example was ST 210, who had this to say in her final interview:

Despite all the frustrations it's worth it. You know I thought about leaving on several occasions, over the imbalance of the work load which is just silly. But I've always wanted to teach, and that's it. I've succeeded in all my exams, I suppose I could get an S4. But the appeal of the classroom and the children is too much. Some of my friends say I'm mad, passing up a chance of a degree and other jobs like the psychological service, but that's for them not me.

ST 210 had indeed overcome many obstacles and resisted other opportunities. A talented pianist, she had been offered a place in a training programme leading to a chance of concert work; an above average gymnast and sportswoman she had resisted the chance of specialising in physical education. Throughout she demonstrated a desire to be a classroom practitioner, following incidentally, the

footsteps of her father, brother and one of her sisters.

At the other extreme a large number of students had no over-arching plan but rather were moved by the tide as it ebbed and flowed. Many of this group were typical of those portrayed by Becker (1960) as laying side bets. For example, ST 253, who maintained a moderate EVC score throughout:

I really never intended to go teaching. I doubted if I'd get U.E., but when I did I thought, well teaching might be better than an office job. I quite liked kids so thought nothing ventured nothing gained, well who knows. I never plan more than a year ahead at a time. It's really a bit silly to ask about how long I intend to teach. It depends. I suppose I'll work my bond out, unless I get pregnant. I may return after the children go to school, I don't really know. There may be other chances, better jobs. Welfare work quite appeals to me. You'll have to wait and see, won't you? For the moment, teaching is the best thing for me, but perhaps not for ever.

Becker's notion of "investment" also receives considerable support from the research evidence. The longer the students stayed in the training programme, the more determined they were to complete their training. By the last interview many said that as they had devoted three years of their lives to training they might as well see it out and become registered or certificated. As SN 355 put it:

I've put a good slice of my life in here haven't I? A lot of time and effort, I may as well get something out of it. Even if I don't nurse for long even if I just chuck it in, at least I'll have something out of it. The longer I stayed, the more determined I got to get registered.

'Side bets' were, however, not always deliberately taken out. As Becker (1960, p.36) himself has pointed out, the side bets were often placed because of the existence of "generalised cultural expectations". In the present research there were instances of students staying in the training programme because they perceived clearly the societal norm which labels those who leave jobs quickly as untrustworthy. For example, SN 194, after three months of training, said:

Nursing is my second job. I don't like it ... the wards are terrible. I get so tired ... No, I'm not going to leave, I'm expected to stay - I don't want to be a rolling stone.

And ST 36, after four months:

I must stick it out to the end. Everyone expects it of me. People who change jobs often aren't liked in our community.

Others in the sample found that side bets had been placed for them by "impersonal bureaucratic arrangements" (Becker, 1960, p.37). Examples of such arrangements are pension funds, bonds, special housing loans and so forth. As was noted in the results section, there were few instances of this sort of constraint in the two groups under study, mainly because of the lack of bureaucratic restraint on leaving whilst in training. A further argument in favour of the side bet theory of commitment relates to what Becker (1960, p.37) called "individual adjustment to social patterns". Over a period of time individuals adjust themselves to the patterns of behaviour required to carry out a particular role. Many instances of this have been outlined in Chapters 4 and 5. Goffman's notion of "face to face interaction" — elsewhere termed impression management — suggests another way side bets are made. People in social situations tend to present an image of themselves, which in later times they feel obliged to live up to. As Becker himself has noted, staying in a job is the result of a complex of factors and also relates to what is perceived as being valuable. ST 36 said:

I stayed on because I believe what I'll be doing is valuable to other people. I'll like teaching children.

In sum, two of the most important findings of this research were that many students embarked on their chosen career unsure of whether they wished to pursue it, and that during training their attitudes fluctuated markedly. These findings have major practical implications which are discussed in the next section.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

In research of this nature any practical implications suggested by the study will be based not only on the empirical findings, but also inevitably on the value judgements made by the researcher. Too frequently these value judgements are not clearly indicated, but in this case what follows must be judged in the light of these presuppositions:

1. That it is important to a profession that its practitioners develop a commitment to it and its ideals as their training proceeds.

2. That the training process should be as interesting and pleasant as possible for both trainers and trainees.
3. That the process involved should be 'educational' in the sense that it involves more than just training in a narrow range of professional skills.

Given these value judgements what, then, are the practical implications?

Recruitment and selection

(a) Deferment of decisions

The most obvious finding of the present research is that large numbers of the age group involved in career selection are at a tentative stage as far as career choice is concerned. This carries two possible implications — it demands either an improvement in orientation programmes so that students are specially prepared at a younger age to select their given career, or else a deferment of final selection until the student is older and one assumes, more mature. The present writer tends to support the latter view, not only on the grounds just mentioned, but also to give entrants to teaching and nursing a broader experiential base. Deferred selection is by no means a novel suggestion in teaching (Meighan and Chambers, 1971). In the Soviet Union, for example, following the Krushchev Plan, experience in the work force is demanded before entry to any tertiary training institution. Although the prime motivation in the Russian instance was ideological, namely to promote a 'love of labour' amongst white collar workers, the notion of teachers being directly recruited from schools has been challenged in other societies. In the United Kingdom, for example, the James Report, whilst not being prepared to recommend formally a compulsory break between school and college, noted the advantages of it becoming a "known practice ... to give preferences, other claims being equal, to those who had not proceeded straight from school to higher education" (Department of Education and Science, 1972, pp.28-29). Furthermore, in recommending a cyclic approach, with a programme of liberal education preceding professional training, deferred selection was in fact encouraged.

This recommendation, if implemented in New Zealand, would in many respects bring this country into line with the United States where the

practice of enrolling for a liberal arts programme in college or university for one or two years prior to selection for training has been long established (Conant, 1963; Minogue, 1971). The present writer favours, therefore, deferment of selection with applicants being required to have a prerequisite of some post-school experience either in the work force or in an approved liberal arts programme. If the latter is the chosen path, then the programme of study should be deliberately broad; indeed the cultural/aesthetic background of many entrants to teaching at the present time is frequently criticised, although paradoxically, some students enter college specifically to advance their abilities in this respect.

If deferment of selection is accepted, what of the 10-15% of the present entrants who have 'strong vocational impulse'? This group could be catered for in the universities and in the liberal arts programmes by being encouraged to take a limited number of credits (e.g. cognitive psychology, philosophy, biology) which could shorten the subsequent training period (although not markedly). This proposal differs from the James approach, where diversity of experience was favoured rather than advancement, but it serves the same purpose of ensuring more mature students.

(b) 'Reality shock' and orientation

Even if deferment were implemented, improved work orientation programmes would still seem to be essential. The dramatic nature of "reality shock" and its relationship to EVC scores, particularly in nursing, has convinced the writer of the need for better programmes designed to prepare entrants for the work involved both in training and on the actual job. Here again, the task is very difficult; no matter how sophisticated the orientation programme, all contingencies will not be covered. Bob Newhart's brilliant skit on the Night Watchman on his first night of duty at the Empire State Building being faced with King Kong is an extreme example of what might happen to tyros; nonetheless, no matter how detailed the manuals or how sophisticated the vicarious experience, the very nature of the teaching and nursing task suggests that the unforeseen will occur. For all that, ingenuity and effort must be brought to bear to devise appropriate orientation programmes with perhaps more on-the-job experience as teacher aides or hospital orderlies than is currently the case. Such programmes may be especially

important for entrants to teachers colleges, many of whom in the sample studied here believed they knew what to expect as a result of their own school experiences. The difference between the teacher and the taught is considerable.

Schools may also have to play a greater role in career orientation programmes. It is interesting that work experience programmes have been pioneered in this country with groups of pupils who are labelled 'slow learners'. The evidence from this research suggests that a case exists for such programmes for children who will eventually join the professions. Moreover, there may be an argument for using the social studies programmes (in part at least) as vehicles for work orientation — thus developing what Bortz (1971) has called a "career clusters curriculum".

The findings with respect to the relationship between decrease in strength of EVC and reality shock are in line with much of the overseas research. For example, Williams and Williams (1959) claimed that many students left nurse training because of severe emotional confusion which they directly related to marked contrasts between students' pre-vocational experiences and the several situations of emotional shock (e.g. defecation, urination, death, disfigurement, etc.) encountered on the job. Tew drew similar conclusions when she said:

... we shall continue to lose good nurses who, no matter what reason they give for resigning, are leaving the profession because the closely knit community of which they hoped to be a part has thwarted their ideals, blunted their enthusiasm and has created feelings of failure and resentment which have become unbearable.

(Tew, 1963, p.31)

McGuire (1964) also found that role conflict was amongst the most potent forces for disillusionment with the programme of nurse training, brought about, she believed, by a clash of attitudes. As she states:

The methods, either conscious or subconscious, used by the senior nurses to ensure conformity amongst entrants to the profession will tend to select out those with atypical attitudes rather than bring about changes of attitude in the direction demanded by the hospital community.

(McGuire, 1964, p.149)

Within the teaching sample, the findings are consonant with those of Harris (1946), Rosenberg (1957), Whiteside, Bernbaum and Noble (1969), and Riddle (1972). Indeed, Rosenberg's analogy of a person selecting a

career being like a child holding a coin and looking at a long line of sweets which he has never tasted, but one of which he wants to buy, is startlingly apt in the light of observations in this research.

(c) Prediction of success

(i) Psychological tests

The prediction of success is yet another problem area. Despite a considerable amount of research, there is little agreement on the characteristics of a successful teacher or nurse. In the present research several entry variables were significantly associated with successful completion of the course, as indicated by t tests and multiple regression analyses (see pp.69-70 above). Nevertheless, in neither the student nurse nor the student teacher samples were there any combination of variables which could be used in a practical situation to increase prediction of success to any great extent. The student teacher analysis, which produced the highest multiple correlation, required ten variables to account for a little over half of the variance. It was a fact, also, that the total variance accounted for by the first four variables, which is the maximum number likely to be useful in any selection process, was only 24%. This latter figure can be compared with that ascertained by Freyberg (1977) in his *ex post facto* analysis of the 1972 intake into Hamilton Teachers College.

In his study a combination of the best predictors available at the end of training accounted for only 20% of the variance of teaching effectiveness in the following year, while the best combination of predictors of teaching effectiveness from college entry produced a much lower multiple correlation of only $R : 0.19$. These findings led him to conclude that his results "... provide little comfort for those actively involved in student selection and guidance" (Freyberg, 1977, p.13).

Taken in conjunction with the results of the present study, Freyberg's findings cast doubt on the claims of some researchers who believed they have discovered a significant predictive relationship between certain psychological tests and success in the training programmes. For example, Birch (1975) claimed that the Rotter Incomplete Sentence Test could be of value for selecting trainee nurses, and Bergman and her colleagues (1974) in an Israeli study made

major claims for their programme of psychological testing of prospective nurses. Thurston (1968) has suggested that his self-devised personality test was a reliable predictor of success in both practical and theoretical nursing, while Burton (1972) claimed to have demonstrated a relationship between the 16PF test and completing a nurse training programme in the United Kingdom. In teaching, Mann (1961) reported a significant relationship between high scores on the neuroticism section of the Maudsley Personality Inventory and low success in teacher training.

However, the studies cited in the foregoing paragraph all have severe methodological weaknesses. Moreover none of the tests 'weeded out' the unsatisfactory entrants completely. For example, of the 38 students whom Burton classified as satisfactory on entry, 14 ended in the unsatisfactory category, and 5 of the 28 classified unsatisfactory became satisfactory during the course of training. With results of this nature, and given the fakeability of the tests, it is highly dubious whether they should be employed for selection.

Despite these criticisms the present writer would suggest further work with the Wilson and Patterson Conservatism Scale. This is an easily administered test, and has been found by Thomas, Shea and Rigby (1971) to be a reliable measure. In the present study an analysis of the early leavers (i.e. in the first nine months) from both the hospital and the college revealed that almost all (97.4%) were in the bottom quartile, that is, at the liberal end of the Wilson and Patterson Conservatism Scale. These students were found to have greater problems in relating to staff than any other subgroup. Although it is tempting to conclude that a relationship exists between leaving, a coincident decline in EVC scores and a clash of "liberals" with bureaucratic organisation, data from the present study do little more than suggest the possibility of such a relationship. Obviously, it could be that the liberals tend to leave earlier than the conservatives from all institutions and not as a result of clashes. Further research, drawing comparisons between hierarchically organised and liberally organised institutions seems desirable.

(ii) Socio-economic status

In Chapter 4 it was noted that there did appear to be a relationship between students' socio-economic status group and EVC. This

finding is in line with that of Barr (1959), who found a strong relationship between social class and completion of training with the lower class group being more likely to complete the course. On the other hand, McPartland (1957) found that 65% of the dropouts from the student nurse group she studied came from lower class homes. However, she also found that large numbers of this group were not alienated from nursing, but were forced into resignation, usually because of academic problems.

In teaching Marsland (1970, p.56), using Evans's F Scale (a rather dubious measure, as was remarked earlier), ascertained that students from working class families became more committed to their careers over the three years of training than did students from higher classes. Watson (1966) in his New Zealand study of teachers found, contrary to McPartland, that those most likely to withdraw came from professional or managerial home backgrounds. Birch (1975) found no relationship between social class and leaving. These findings are certainly rather mixed. It appears that further indepth work is required before the necessary evidence is obtained to test fully Box and Ford's (1967) important hypothesis on marginality and commitment. However, the present data do tend in favour of Box and Ford's major conclusions.

(iii) Educational qualifications

Similar confused findings arise in the area of educational qualifications attained in the course of training. Little relationship between level of educational qualification and EVC appeared in the present research. However, Mason (1961), Walker (1961), Wyllie (1966) and Coulter (1972, 1973) have found that an increase in the level of qualification gained (e.g. a diploma with distinction or a degree) related to a lower level of commitment to teaching. On the other hand, Miller (1971) concluded that students gaining a B.Ed. degree were marginally more committed to a career of teaching than others, and that there was no evidence in his study to support the view that graduates may use their qualifications to gain work outside teaching.

(iv) Age on entry

A further factor where significant differences in EVC scores were expected to be found was in relation to age on entry. Although the younger students often had some difficulty in adjusting to the programme

of work, the difference with older students on EVC was not significant. Thus the findings of this research conflict with that of Tetreault (1976) who found an increase of 'professional attitude' with age, peaking at about 24-26. However, it is consonant with the findings of Mann (1961), McGuire (1964) and Birch (1975); thus, as with personality, it must be concluded that a range of vocational commitment will be found in all age groups.

Despite this conclusion the researcher would urge further work in this area, as he suspects that the picture may be distorted by the grossness of the pre-post test situation. Insufficient numbers of younger students in the subsample prevent extrapolation of evidence from this part of the study. However, the researcher was left with the distinct impression that the older, mature students had several advantages over the younger students, not the least of which was a more realistic notion of career patterns and what their future job entailed. Although no more than an impression at present, the researcher believes that the older entrants are more likely to survive longer in teaching and nursing than younger entrants, if only because of their awareness of jobs and the world about them. As the number of older entrants grows (in teaching the proportion of age groups has changed markedly) the possibility of comparative studies increases.

(v) Intelligence and educational performance

In line with most other studies (Mann, 1961; McGuire, 1964; Marsland, 1970; Birch, 1975), intelligence was not found to be a major factor in the changes of EVC scores during the course of the research. Nor were academic qualification held on entry found to be significant (Barr, 1959; McGuire, 1964). On the other hand, Pavalko (1970) claimed that both are important factors when retention (not commitment) is considered, and Hutcheson, Garland and Prather (1973) in their study of resignee nurses found educational performance to be the only significant factor. Similarly Hackman and Dysinger (1970) claimed that high academic competence and a high level of 'commitment' resulted in persistence in the career, whereas high academic competence and low 'commitment' almost invariably led to withdrawal.

These findings are not supported by the present study, perhaps because of the differences in definition of commitment, which in Hackman and Dysinger's study was presented as a unidimensional attitude.

Once again, though, the researcher would recommend further research, as some evidence from the subsample suggested that the highest academic group became bored with the college and nurse training programmes. Eighty per cent of this group expressed the view that the programme of work presented little challenge to them. In the college some of these students found the bulk of their academic stimulation from their university courses; in the hospital, opportunities to take extra courses were not utilised — some girls claimed they were discouraged from doing so. The researcher believes on the basis of comments from the subsample that students who enter the teachers college with University Entrance or better, and who do not undertake university work, may be at risk. For the moment, though, Hackman and Dysinger's conclusion cannot be confirmed, and resolution of this problem awaits further research.

(vi) Sex

The significant relationship between sex and shifts in EVC in the student teacher sample is interesting. As was noted in Chapter 5, the tendency was for more men to move upwards and fewer to move downwards. It should be noted, though, that women outnumber the men in the high remaining high category. This last point aside, these findings seem much in line with previous overseas and local research, dating from Hartmann (1937, p.590) who stated that women appeared to be more restless in their teaching posts than men. This conclusion, has, however, been challenged recently by Morton-Williams, Finch and Poll (1966) who found in their British study that women were more committed to teaching than men, as did Hellawell and Smithers (1973) in their Birmingham study.

There is considerable evidence in Western societies to suggest that women are socialised in such a way that they acquire people oriented values (Goldsen *et al.*, 1960; D'Andrede, 1967). It may be suggested that not only will teaching satisfy such values (Rosenberg *et al.*, 1957; Cohen, 1969), but that it also provides women with a contingent career choice. However, it should be noted that the incidence of contingent career choice, first noted by Mason, Dresell and Bain (1963) and later confirmed by many researchers including Watson (circa 1971) in New Zealand, did not receive complete support from this study. Although some of the women in the teaching sample indicated that they selected their career because of its compatibility

with child rearing, a surprisingly large number, perhaps reflecting current changing attitudes towards careers by women, commented that they placed a career before marriage. Others commented in the interviews, and particularly in group discussion, that they saw no reason why they shouldn't combine child rearing with a career. In the course of the research a small group of the student teacher sample actively campaigned for improved service conditions for women returning to teaching. Nonetheless the point remains that the majority of females in both nursing and teacher training believe a break in service for child rearing was both necessary and desirable.

(vii) Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory

The significance of the MTAI results with the teaching sample is interesting. This test is purported to reveal 'desirable' attitudes towards a given teaching strategy (Leeds and Cook, 1947; Leeds, 1952). The pre-post test reveals considerable movement of scores ($\bar{X}$ pre 65.78 post 100.05; significant on a t test at the .001 level). Moreover, this test revealed significant differences between stayers and voluntary leavers. Some care should be taken in interpreting these results. The MTAI is open to faking (Coleman, 1954; Mitzel et al., 1956; Borland, 1957; Evans, 1966) and there is no evidence to suggest that the expressed attitudes will be carried over into practice. Gibson (1972) has suggested that the veneer of liberal attitudes achieved by students is shed during the first year of teaching. It is noteworthy that the present research revealed that the major fluctuations of EVC (strength) occurred during and immediately after the first practice teaching session; it may be hypothesized accordingly that reality shock will be at its greatest for teachers during their first year of classroom work, but has been passed by nurses within the period of training.

There is some evidence from the United Kingdom and Hong Kong to suggest a relationship between students performance and scores on the MTAI (Evans, 1958; King-Funli, 1969). Linden and Linden (1969) have likewise suggested that the MTAI may distinguish between those who enter teaching after graduation and those who do not. Ofchus and Gnagey (1963) indicated that those with high MTAI scores were the ones who planned to stay in teaching for a minimum of ten years, thus indicating a relationship between MTAI and strength of vocational

commitment. In the present research it is interesting to note that there appear to be major differences between high and low scoring EVC groups in terms of MTAI scores, and also between those moving up and those moving down in EVC strength. This may indicate that those students who were prepared to accept the college ideal of teaching were likely to remain high in vocational commitment, or move upwards. In another context Pollack and Michael (1966) working with student doctors, found a marked shift towards the instructor's attitudes during training, while McLeish (1969) demonstrated a similar shift amongst student teachers during three years of training. Once again, this supposition must await further sophisticated research.

(viii) Summary

Although these findings are interesting, it is necessary to recall that prediction of success — or for that matter of leaving or staying — at the time of selection is difficult, a point made as long ago as 1945 by Tyler. The problem is compounded by the nature of the age group from which the selection is made in this country. In the present research, the findings indicate clearly that a wide variety of people, with a range of personality types and background characteristics, will succeed in their training course.

(d) Selection procedures

Although the study did not concentrate on selection *per se* it became obvious that some tidying up of the procedures used by the authorities would be desirable. The 1973 nursing intake was interviewed by the Matron only; however, more recently the tutorial staff have been involved as well, and work has commenced on devising standardised criteria. Although this may not have as much pay-off as is anticipated for the reasons already outlined, the move is to be commended, if only in fairness to the applicants. The selection of teachers involved a much more complex system of selection than was the case for nurses. A panel representing the employing authority (the Education Board), the teachers college and normal schools, the Department of Education and the teachers' organisations was responsible for interviewing and selecting entrants to college. A complicated points system was used; the candidates were arranged in rank order and a cut-off line imposed when the college's quota was filled. Unfortunately, however, the interview panel was not composed of the same people for every interview.

Some attended as few as three of the interview sessions, and as many as four deputies were used. Thus standardisation of selection, despite the use of a comprehensive criteria list was very dubious. In recent months the teachers' associations have drawn attention to these procedures and changes seem imminent.

One finding of the present research which is of considerable importance to those people involved in selecting students, is the way many of the sample group deliberately managed the impressions they portrayed. The research has provided ample evidence to demonstrate that students lied successfully at their interviews, or, put in another way, managed impressions. There is a well established communication network between students in training and applicants; interviewees are well briefed before the actual interview as to the type of questions asked (Ramsay, in press). Moreover, some schools ran mock interviews to train their candidates in 'appropriate' behaviour. One example seems to illustrate the problem faced by the interview panel:

I. *Are you suggesting that you lied in the selection interview?*

ST 278. *Well, I wouldn't go so far as to say that, but well, I had a fair idea of what they'd ask. Um ... I talked to X who's at the college already, and the school'd had discussions. I bought a tie as a result of that (laughs).*

I. *And a suit I expect?*

ST 278. (laughs) *No, but I wore tidy clothes and a jacket - that's meant to be important. And well, um, they asked why I wanted to be a teacher. Well, of course I said I liked kids, who'd come teaching if they didn't. But, well, actually, I didn't really know if I liked kids did I. Do I? And I found out I didn't. But if I'd admitted that I was unsure to them, then I wouldn't have got in, would I now - ?*

This response suggests that a new line of questioning should be used in interviewing applicants. Rather than leaving answers to "Why do you want to be a teacher?" unchallenged, when responses such as "Well, I like children", are given, some follow up (e.g. How do you know you like children?) should be made. Queries concerning job expectations also seem essential. In short, concentration should be on second rather than first order questions. Furthermore, in fairness to all applicants, it seems appropriate to utilise one interview committee and to train the panel in interview and questioning techniques.

Even if all the proposed changes recommended so far are implemented, some relatively uncommitted students will enter college

and the school of nursing. How then should the induction process be organised?

Early Induction

(a) Academic work

One of the major tasks of the college and the school may be to cushion reality shock in two ways — first from the training programme perspective, and second, from job actualities. Both institutions should recognise the need to inform the entrants prior to enrolment of certain details — for example, pay rates and frequency of payments, attendance hours, the programme of work and rosters, copies of syllabuses, contracts and agreements. For the most part this was completed to the satisfaction of entrants; however, it seems logical to ask the students regularly what sort of information they felt was lacking in the pre-enrolment notices.

In nursing, prior information regarding the nature of the introductory courses could remove some of the surprise element concerning the amount of 'book-work' required in the hospital course. This information could also be used in the interview to ensure that the candidates fully comprehended the quantity and standard of study required. There also seemed to be a case for reorganising the block approach to study. Certainly it appeared that little study was completed whilst the students were on ward duty. The answer here seems to be a reduction in hours of work per week on wards, thus allowing greater freedom for continuing study. Moreover, some recognition should be given to the point that the particular age group of the intake (providing an earlier recommendation is not implemented) is traditionally the group involved in the mating process. Leisure and social activities probably assume more importance for this group than at any other stage of life. In recognising this, the employing authority should carefully consider the work load and hours of physical and mental labour currently demanded.

(b) Ward and teaching practice

Although some problems occurred in the introductory school work at the hospital and work in the college academic programme, especially with the brighter, liberal and more challenging students, the major conflict arose when the students first commenced practical work. This finding is in line with Coulter (1972) in Australia who found that a

low assessment in teaching practice resulted in a drop in commitment. Horowitz (1968) in the United States found that students' attitudes changed from nomethetic to idiographic after teaching practice; however, Lagey (1956) found no significant changes, whilst Lipscomb (1966) in a methodologically superior study, but with a small sample, found major changes in career attitudes. Corrigan and Griswold (1963) found a relationship between teaching practice and three educational ideals. Evans (1969) found a movement of student teachers' attitudes towards those held by experienced classroom teachers, and Nagle (1959) found that practice sections were frequently held to be the most valuable part of the training programme. In his summary of work in this area Cope (1970) concluded that, while the evidence is not unequivocal, the bulk of the research suggests that practical components of the preparatory course bring about considerable changes in students' attitudes, a finding supported by Cohen (1969, 1972) in his surveys of the literature.

The first area of conflict noted with the nursing subsample related to routines which apparently differed from ward to ward. Bendall (1965), in an English study, has shown a relationship between leaving and frequent ward shifting. She found that hospitals with an average of 10.25 shifts in two years had a 10% 'wastage' rate. When this figure increased to an average of 15.75 shifts so too did the wastage rate — to over 30%. As the present study was confined to one hospital, similar comparisons cannot be drawn. However, it is worthy of note that frequency of shift (approximately 16 in the three years) was the subject of complaint by leavers and stayers alike.

Two avenues of reform are open — either a reduction in the frequency of shifting, or the development of more uniform procedures on the wards. Some work has already been completed in the latter respect with the development of 'procedures cards', which the students found invaluable. However, the conflicts often arose from rather more menial matters, such as the appropriate time to turn back the bed covers. Thus, in line with the comments of McGuire (1964) the researcher would recommend more frequent discussions of procedures between tutorial staff, ward sisters, staff nurses, clinical tutors and a representative of the students. Wherever possible uniform procedures should be developed and the procedure cards should be drawn up on the basis of these meetings, which should be either issued to, or be readily available

for, the use of students and staff alike. Where a ward has specific procedures unique to that situation, a separate 'ward card' could be developed. This uniformity and information should reduce the tensions detailed in Chapter 5 and Appendix L. Thus, prior to the first ward duty, student nurses could be made aware of the routines. Moreover, the school should focus much more on what is expected of the students in the ward, and staff (including doctors) should recognise that the students are students, at a given level of training with limited expertise, a point which could also be made about teachers on sections (Conant, 1962). All staff should recognise that when they are in contact with students they are by precept nurse trainers. A team approach to nurse education involving all personnel seems highly desirable.

Congruence between ward practice and school learning could be further improved by a greater interchange of staff. Registered ward staff should be encouraged to participate in the school programme, and conversely, tutorial staff should spend periods of time working on wards. In teaching there seems to be a need, on the one hand, for associate teachers to visit the college more frequently and, on the other hand, for college lecturers to renew their acquaintanceship with children in the classroom situation. At present there is a considerable gap between college and classroom. In England, Hanson and Herrington (1976) have commented as follows:

The bandwagon rolling on, carries college academic staff as well. Whatever they may say in college about corporal punishment, they now have to act as public relations officers and so they sip tea and make polite conversation with head-teachers who beat children. For all this, they know that their future is outside schools, but the students know that their future is inside. Teaching practice is seen by some tutors as a brief interruption to their academic work; an unfortunate necessity. For students, teaching practice is a taste of the future reality.

Teaching practice is, therefore, a formative influence. It is not just induction into an everyday world in which time-tables, homework, assemblies, rewards and punishments, curricula, 'sir' and 'miss', ability groupings, deficient parents, and the 'dignity of a noble and responsible profession' are unproblematic. It is also a reminder of a previously experienced world, but now seen with a teacher and not a pupil perspective. Latent attitudes are revived, and while the student will return to carry on with his college world work and give verbal assent to the liberal line laid down and assumed he will not be committed to that line. His

final dissertation may be about free schools or deschooling, but before it is completed he will know that his future is teaching ten-year-olds in a new suburb of Cheltenham where neither head nor parents will want to have any truck with Ivan Illich or John Ord [sic].

(Hanson and Herrington, 1976, pp.31-32)

Similarly Hughes (1956, p.22) has remarked "the nurses who educate nurses ... [are] removed to some degree from reality: they may preach an idealized version of hospital work".

Although Hanson and Herrington and Hughes may be over-generalising, there is sufficient evidence in the present research to confirm that a gap exists. There is a need therefore to close this gap between idealism and realism.

This should not be taken to mean that the movement is one way (college → classroom); indeed, investigation may show that teachers and schools need to change as well as colleges.

Student teachers seemed happier in their relationship with associate teachers than student nurses were on wards, but there is little room for complacency here either. If the students' accounts were accurate, there were a number of associate teachers who were providing a poor model, a problem by no means limited to New Zealand (Hannam, Smyth and Stephenson, 1976; Hanson and Herrington, 1976). The college in the present study had one special feature which led to problems in teaching practice: it is a large college in a relatively small town; hence there were difficulties in gaining sufficient numbers of highly qualified practitioners as associates. There appeared to be a need, therefore, for greater development of microteaching techniques and simulations. In the former an important start has been made (Freyberg and Katterns, 1971; Freyberg et al., 1974), but the latter remains a relatively untouched area. When one notes the millions spent by airlines and business firms on simulations it is surprising that more has not been achieved in practice teaching (Turner, 1974). Investigations of such techniques are, accordingly, strongly recommended.

(c) "Anomie" and induction

One further point needs to be mentioned concerning early induction. The researcher has already observed that some individuals are at risk in the process of adapting to large formal organisations. This is

particularly so in the case of Maoris from rural areas. The very high Maori dropout from educational institutions is documented elsewhere (Ramsay, 1975). It is interesting to note in passing that in 1974 the Department of Education ruled that all colleges should include Maori Studies in the curriculum. Subsequently, three Maori lecturers have been appointed and have formed the nucleus of a strong support system for Maoris in the college. The decline in the resignee rate amongst Maoris has since been dramatic; it is interesting to conjecture what might have been the case, especially for those Maoris with high EVC scores if these appointments had been made 12 months sooner.

It is appropriate to recommend, then, that both hospital and college administrations should alert their staff to induction problems, so as to preclude the cases of *anomie* described in this research. All of the above suggestions should improve the early induction of student nurses and teachers and should be carried over into the whole training process to which we now turn.

The Training Process

One of the major findings of this research has been the high degree of idiosyncrasy demonstrated by the subjects. Even though the researcher had been involved in teaching first year students for three years prior to this study, the variety revealed by the analysis of independent variables came as a major surprise. The wide range of background knowledge, of intellectual ability, of personality type, of ethnic group, of religious belief and in all probability of preferred learning style, holds very real implications for the curriculum planners in both institutions. It is very disappointing that Carpenter (1971) in her report on nurse education in New Zealand ignored these important points, and as a consequence had little to say on curriculum and pedagogic matters apart from recommending better training of tutor sisters. Hopefully this brief section may repair her omission.

The most common teaching technique in both institutions was formal lecturing, very often to large groups. The adoption of this technique led to the probability of the lectures being aimed at what was perceived as the 'average' ability of the group. This tendency sometimes resulted in students at one end of the ability scale becoming bored, while those at the other extreme failed to cope. Both the hospital and the teachers college made attempts in the course of the

study, through tutorial grouping and individual assignments, to grapple with this problem. Clearly, though, what is required in this sort of situation is a greater emphasis on individualised programmes and the introduction of self-instructional units for remediation and extension. The Dundee College of Education is at present working towards having 20% of its students' time devoted to self-instruction using a wide range of visual and audio materials. Programmes of this nature could have a major impact on the attitudes of a large number of students towards their college and school programme. Investigation of the development of such programmes is accordingly strongly recommended, with a view to revising existing pedagogical practices.

As well as individualizing programmes, there are advantages to be derived from contact between small groups of students and teaching staff. Taylor (1969) has suggested that this kind of contact allows the college to bring influence to bear upon its students in the direction of commitment to professional values, and Morrison and McIntyre (1971) have claimed that serving teachers have an impact on recruitment to teaching. Marsland (1970) and Shipman (1966; 1967b) provided more empirical support for this position; in the present study the influence of 'group figures' and the advisory structure in the teachers college was notable. This reflects the seminal findings of Becker and Carper (1956, p.297), who concluded that the mechanism of acquiring an ideology producing commitment to an occupation appears to be closely related to participation in informal groups with teachers. This may explain, at least in part, why student nurses' EVC scores tended to drop during training, while student teachers' scores increased. McGuire (1964, p.88) has pointed out in her English study that nurse training tends to encourage peer contacts, but denies informal contact with superiors in the nursing hierarchy. Evidence to support this conclusion in the present study may be derived from the nurses' comments about staff relationships. Both Malloch (1960) and Taylor (1969) have observed also that residential patterns may either facilitate or counter the development of strong commitment. The sociometric section of the present study provides some support for this contention.

In the light of research on individual differences and the notions of psychologists such as Hunt (1968) on matching cognitive style with learning preferences there seems a very real case not only for

differentiating the college and school course, but also for allowing greater flexibility in the length and pattern of the training programme. Many of the student teachers found it ironical that the Studies in Teaching courses and the Learning and Teaching course concentrated on theories of individual differences, readiness and maturation, while the overall college programme followed a lock-step three year structure with only minor deviations from the overall common pattern. On the basis of the evidence acquired during the present research one may argue for a much more flexible arrangement. For example, there is little question that students become ready for practical sections at different times in their college and nursing school experiences, and also that they assimilated theoretical materials at different rates. The researcher would recommend consideration of a continuous practical section similar to that operating at the University of Saskatchewan, Regina, repeating 2 or 3 times per year, which students can enter at a time decided upon by the students, their advisers or tutors and the college or school authorities. Some students may need only one such practical section before their probationary period in the classroom; others may need to repeat the experience two or more times. Moreover, some students because of their different academic or work background may be ready for a practical section at the end of their first year of training whereas others may not be ready until the second or third year of training.

In nursing partial recognition of the need for longer training for some students than a three year programme is to be found in the case of a few students repeating blocks of the training programme. This, however, is an unsophisticated, graded system, when compared to the proposals just outlined. In many respects what is being recommended is a form of open education, with much more emphasis on the individual. Moreover, the hospital in particular needs to show that the pattern of ward duty has some sort of coherent plan, a fact which seemed to elude most of the students.

Support for a more flexible approach is to be found in the James Report, and also in the comments of Meighan and Chambers (1971). In recommending a phased system, they said:

... a phased system could cater for ... varieties of experience and allow variable entry according to previous experience and qualifications by permitting candidates to miss intermediate phases or parts of phases.

(Meighan and Chambers, 1971, pp.161-162)

In the United States the most recent report, while not specifically referring to this point, also seemed to be suggesting greater flexibility when it recommended increased funding so as to "enhance access" and thus "promote diversity" (Study Commission on Undergraduate Education, 1976).

Location of Training

Perhaps the major question in nurse education at the present time relates to the location of training. Would removal of the training from hospitals increase the vocational commitment of nurse trainees generally? The evidence from this research, which revealed serious discontent with the training process and the apprenticeship style, as well as some confusion regarding the role of the student nurse, may be interpreted as an affirmative answer to this question. However, before supporting Briggs (Command Paper, 1972) or Carpenter (1971), who both recommended the transfer of nurse education to either polytechnics or other tertiary institutions, some reservations should be expressed. The major problems identified by student nurses in the apprenticeship style training were, first the likelihood of being asked (or ordered) to perform 'non-nursing duties' and, second, the heavy work load interfering with continuous study. There is evidence to support the view that student nurses in the present sample often carried out chores which could be competently performed by orderlies, and that their study suffered because of long and arduous working hours. This is by no means a new phenomenon; as long ago as 1932 the Lancet Commission recommended that nurses be relieved of domestic duties not directly concerned with the patient. In 1943 the Horder Committee in recognising the dangers of apprenticeship training recommended a "clear separation" between the training process and the obligation to provide nursing services for hospital patients, but, significantly also suggested the retention of schools of nursing in hospitals, albeit with increased autonomy (Royal College of Nursing, 1943). In 1947 in Scotland the Wood Report emphasised that trainee nurses should be "*bona fide*" students for the first two years at least (Ministry of Health, 1947); and in 1953 the Nuffield Report remarked that the bulk of "basic nursing" was performed by student nurses with little supervision, being 'students' in name only. However, the problem has persisted and in 1964 the Platt Committee (Royal College of Nursing, 1964) recommended independent schools of nursing, with 2 years theoretical and practical preparation followed by an internship under controlled supervision.

This movement culminated with Briggs (Command Paper, 1972) and Carpenter (1971), who independently recommended the establishment of monopurpose colleges of health studies, completely autonomous from hospitals, and in many respects similar to teachers colleges.

The removal of nurse education from hospitals would, of course, lessen the likelihood of confusion over the role and duties of student nurses; a point made by Corwin (1961) who commented that nurses trained in university medical schools may experience less role conflict than those introduced early into the bureaucratic regime of the hospital wards. In the present research it did appear that greater role incompatibility appeared more amongst the student nurses than the student teachers. This may relate to the organisational structure of the two institutions. The hospital, largely because of the nature of its task, had a well established set of strictly adhered to rules and regulations. While the teachers college also had a well known set of rules and regulations, they were rather more flexible. Thus the observation of Paloli (1967) that emphasis on work rules may be associated with the frequency of role incompatibility, finds some confirmation in this study.

However, it was also observed that many student teachers had a poorly conceived notion of what the job of teaching entails, even at the end of a period of three years training which included a substantial element of practice teaching. This finding confirms the conclusions of Watson's New Zealand study and also the Australian study of Walker (1963, p.74) who has commented "... some students gained an inadequate or inaccurate impression of teaching as a career during their period of preparation". Obviously, then, for young teachers the first year of teaching may be as crucial as the first lengthy ward duty was for nurses.

The question arises, of course, as to when it is appropriate to expose prospective teachers and nurses to the realities of their careers. Continued cushioning from 'reality shock' may serve only to defer eventual drops in vocational commitment. Indeed, it is interesting to note that one of the most frequent suggestions for changes to teacher education is a period of 'pupil teaching' prior to entry, which is almost a reversal of current proposals for nurse education in New Zealand.

It must also be admitted that there is no logical reason why, given appropriate staffing, facilities and attitude changes, that nurse education cannot be successfully performed in the hospital precincts. What is needed, purely and simply, is recognition of the student as a student (Jahoda, 1961), a major modification of the apprenticeship-style programme, and the encouragement of the belief that every nurse is in some respects a nurse educator. There are some very real dangers in the development of monopurpose colleges. In order to maintain their own security, there will almost certainly be some isolation from the workforce. This is the exact criticism levelled at teachers colleges by participants at successive teachers' conferences in New Zealand; isolation, it has been claimed has led to a lack of appreciation of what is needed in the classroom. It would be a pity if the same criticism is incurred in nurse education. However, the placement of nurse training as a department in multi-purpose technical institutes may counter such a possibility.

Another major reason for removing nurse education from the hospitals relates to the desirability of providing broader 'education' for nurses (Baly, 1973). This may have some relationship to the development of vocational commitment, especially in the case of those few students who found the courses intellectually sterile. Certainly, in line with the value judgements outlined above, the present writer would support the notion of providing more than professional training for this particular age group. However, once again, he cannot see any reason, given appropriate staffing and attitudes and changes in procedures, why nurse preparation needs to be moved out of the hospital to achieve this goal. Reorientation rather than whole-scale relocation seems to be an appropriate step to take, especially in the present economic conditions in this country. In line with the flexibility of training argument presented above, though, there is a case for both schemes to operate, especially if suitable evaluatory research projects can be mounted.

Human Relationships and Counselling

Finally, the difficult problem of poor human relationships in parts of the hospital and the college must be acknowledged. 'Personality clashes' are most difficult to legislate against. However, if the student comments cited in this research are accurate, then some

measures need to be taken to counter what appears to be illegitimate use of power by a few senior staff members in both institutions — a point emphasised by Lamond (1974) in her Scottish study, when she drew attention to the importance of interpersonal relationships in the socialisation of student nurses. The present research data indicate that early confrontations with senior staff in the wards, coupled with the clash of expectations with actualities discussed above, caused early disillusionment with nursing. This decline in vocational commitment tended to plateau in the second year of training, and while, as is reported above, major fluctuations continued, these related to other emotional incidents rather than continued clashes. The evidence suggested that those who failed to learn avoidance behaviour were those whose commitment had dropped sufficiently enough to make resignation not uncongenial; the rest conformed to the demands and activities of senior staff, or in other words, situational adjustment occurred. If this kind of 'wastage' is to be avoided, then there appears to be a need in the hospital for both a complaints structure and a counselling service. The college provides an adequate model here. Accordingly, it is suggested that the hospital should, first develop a staff-student representatives board to allow for an exchange of ideas and a common resolution of problems. Second, a formal complaints committee to investigate more serious matters seemed desirable. Third, an advisory system similar to that operating in the teachers college should be developed, and perhaps most importantly, the appointment of a full-time counsellor independent of the hospital hierarchy would serve to nip many incipient problems in the bud. This was one of Carpenter's (1971, p.31) more important suggestions, but is unfortunately not included in her final recommendations. The tendency of student nurses to brood over problems and to consult friends, and too often to receive inappropriate advice, was perhaps one of the more telling factors in drops in vocational commitment. The appointment of a counsellor would overcome many of these difficulties.

Both the hospital and the college also need to take more notice of the influence of peer groups and 'group figures'. It is noteworthy that 80% of those who left the course of training voluntarily, discussed leaving in the first instance with friends. In Chapter 5 evidence supportive of the influence of 'group figures' was given. It suggested that a relationship existed between drops in EVC scores and

the informal 'Lucy style' counselling of SN 415.

In some ways the January intake of the school of nursing exhibited behaviour similar to that labelled "hysterical contagion" by Kerkhoff, Back and Miller (1969). In describing hysterical contagion, they commented that "... the links between the affected women and other affected women were more common than between controls (non-affected women) and affected women". This, of course, could explain the case study cited above. Thus Kerkhoff and his colleagues' conclusion that "... an epidemic [such as the one described by them] begins when one or more persons, due to idiosyncratic characteristics ... exhibits symptoms which serve as a model for at least a number of others ..." (*ibid*, p.13) is confirmed in the present study. Contact and close friendship with SN 415 for example was coincident with, and appeared to lead to, a lowering of EVC scores. However, this point, as always, must be qualified by the observation that drops and increases in EVC scores were related to a variety of factors, and not to one isolated incident of contact. It may be argued that an effective advising/counselling structure may have countered this contagion phenomenon, and may have led to a maintenance, rather than a drop in level of vocational commitment.

Related to these points is the question of peer group influence. Although no constant clearly-delineated group — such as that described in Kreuger (1972) emerged, several potentially important amorphous groups were identified in Chapter 5. None of these groups appeared to conform exactly to Kreuger's "Wild Ones", or "Goody Goods". However, the elements of the first were there in what many students referred to as the 'dolce vita' of the social fun group. In addition a keen group, known as the 'goodies' was mentioned in the school of nursing and the college. This group, it was claimed, sat towards the front of the class, and tended to dominate question and answer sessions. In late 1975 the researcher analysed the characteristics of this group. Almost all came from the religious group; all were above average in School Certificate marks, and all had held high EVC scores throughout or were upward movers. In the college, members of this group tended to be below the norm of the conservatism scale (i.e. at the liberal end) whereas in the nursing school, they tended to be well above the norm. The researcher suspects that the influence of this group, as a group, on the vocational commitment of its members was very great, but the

present data do not allow for any firm conclusion — once again more specific research would be required.

Human relationships may also have been affected by the challenging attitude of some students coming into conflict with the conservative views of senior staff. This point has been discussed above, but it is worth noting Kramer's (1974) view in this respect as cited by Tyro. She has suggested that the input of ideas from such students is beneficial, for without 'contamination' of the service with *avante garde* ideas there may be little progress. Thus she suggests an exploitation of this group of students. As she put it:

To assume that in a short time the newcomer will be assimilated into the system and have his standards adjusted, is perhaps as arrogant as we are apt to label those who go on questioning our standards. There is, after all, too little point in seeking the opinion of those who are brainwashed to our standards and ideas.

which led her to conclude:

If conflict is welcomed and cherished as an avenue for growth, improvements in patient care and staff morale and competence cannot help but result.

(Kramer, as cited by "Tyro", 1976, p.800)

What Kramer is arguing for here is improved communication between the people in the vocational setting. In many ways this is similar to what Mead (1934) argued for in the much neglected third section of *Mind, Self and Society* where he postulated that the ideal state should be a community which allows for perfection of communication — a point taken up latterly by Habermas (1971). If communication in the Mead sense can be achieved and the researcher is optimistic enough to believe it can — then the training programmes for nurses and teachers will be simultaneously happier, more rewarding and goal fulfilling. It is to be hoped in the light of the suggestions deriving from this research that the relevant authorities do not delay too long in taking appropriate action, thus avoiding the possibility, in the words of Francis Bacon, of time being the great innovator!

CONCLUSION

The most obvious outcome of this research is that the students in the sample are seeking, striving and endeavouring not to yield. They were 'seeking' in the sense that they sought satisfaction from their training; they sought pleasure from their work and leisure, and they sought company and reinforcement from their teachers and workmates. It is also true that many strived for success, and for many failure was a bitter experience. And, while some gave way to the forces around them, many refused to yield. The fact that many did not yield despite pressures to do so reveals that 'forces around them' are not always the telling factor. If one lesson was learnt from the present research, it was that while some people were able, chameleon like, to alter their beliefs and behaviours according to the environment, many others demonstrated characteristics of autonomy, planfulness and rationality. These are the areas the reflexive sociologists wish us to focus upon; it is the "something besides" enunciated by Simmel (1910/1911) that may guide us in our future research endeavours.