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PEER INFLUENCES ON LEVELS OF OCCUPATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION*

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IN RECENT years there has been considerable research concerning social factors influencing levels of occupational and educational achievement.[1] Generally these studies assume (1) that occupational and educational achievement are influenced strongly by the person's level of oc-

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[1] Philip J. Allen, "Childhood Background of Success in a Profession," *American Sociological Review*, 20 (April 1955), pp. 186–190; Howard W. Beers and Catherine Heflin, *Rural People in the City*, Kentucky AES Bulletin 478 (Lexington) 1945; Ralph F. Berdie, *After High School—What?* (Minneapolis) University of Minnesota Press (1954); Ralph F. Berdie, "Why Don't They Go to College?" *Personnel and Guidance Journal*, 31 (March 1953), pp. 352–356; Gunnar Boalt, "Social Mobility in Stockholm," *Transactions of the Second World Congress of Sociology*, II (London) International Sociological Association (1954), pp. 67–73; William Arthur Bradley, Jr., "Correlates of Vocational Preferences," *Genetic Psychology Monographs*, 28 (1943), pp. 99–169; Ely Chinoy, "Social Mobility Trends in the U. S.," *American Sociological Review*, (April 1955), pp. 180–186; R. R. Dynes, *et al.*, "Levels of Occupational Aspiration: Some Aspects of Family Experiences as a Variable," *American Sociological Review*, 21 (April 1956), pp. 212–215; LaMar T. Empey, "Social Class and Occupational Aspiration: A Comparison of Absolute and Relative Measurement," *American Sociological Review*, 21 (December 1956), pp. 703–709; Ronald Freedman and Deborah Freedman, "Farm-Reared Elements in the Non-Farm Population," *Rural Sociology*, 21 (March 1956), pp. 50–61; A. O. Haller, "Research Problems on the Occupational Achievement Levels of Farm-Reared People," *Rural Sociology*, 23 (December 1958), pp. 355–362; A. O. Haller, "The Influence of Planning to Enter Farming on Plans to Attend College," *Rural Sociology*, 22 (June 1957), pp. 137–141; A. O. Haller and W. H. Sewell, "Farm Residence and Levels of Educational and Occupational Aspiration," *American Journal of Sociology*, 62 (January 1957), pp. 407–411; J. A. Kahl, "Educational and Occupational Aspirations of 'Common Man' Boys," *Harvard Educational Review*, 23 (Summer 1953), pp. 186–203; Robert Kroger, and C. M. Loutitt, "The Influence of Father's Occupation on the Vocational Choices of High School Boys," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 19 (April 1935), pp. 203–212; Seymour Martin Lipset, "Social Mobility and Urbanization," *Rural Sociology*, 20 (September–December 1955), pp. 220–228; T. M. Livesay, "Test Intelligence and Future Vocation of High School Seniors in Hawaii," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 25 (December 1941), pp. 679–686; T. M. Livesay, "Test Intelligence and College Expectation of High School Seniors in Hawaii," *Journal of Educational Research*, 35 (January 1942), pp. 334–337; Raymond W. Mack, Raymond J. Murphy and Seymour Yellin, "The Protestant Ethic, Level of Aspiration, and Social Mobility: An Empirical Test," *American Sociological Review*, 21 (June 1956), pp. 295–300; Raymond A. Mulligan, "Socio-Economic Background and College Enrollment," *American Sociological Review* (April 1951), pp. 188–196; Leonard Reissman, "Levels of Aspiration and Social Class," *American Sociological Review*, 18 (June 1953) pp. 233–242; William H. Sewell, Archie O. Haller, and Murray A. Straus, "Social Status and Educational and Occupational Aspiration," *American Sociological Review*, 22 (February 1957), pp. 67–73; Joseph Stubbins, "The Relationship Between Level of Vocational Aspiration and Certain Personal Data," *Genetic Psychology Monographs*, 41 (1950), pp. 327–408; R. M. Stephenson, "Mobility Orientation and Stratification of 1,000 Ninth Graders," *American Sociological Review*, 22 (April 1957), pp. 204–212.

cupational and educational aspiration, and (2) that these levels of aspiration are determined largely by the interpersonal situation within which the individual was socialized.[2] At least two studies appear to provide evidence supporting the first aspect of this assumption. One of these was recently conducted on boys from a semi-urban county in Wisconsin. High school junior and senior boys were studied in 1948 and re-studied in 1955. Levels of occupational and educational *aspiration* were measured in the 1948 part of the study, and levels of occupational and educational *achievement* were measured in the 1955 part of the study.[3] In agreement with the first aspect of the assumption, all of these variables were found to be positively intercorrelated. The other study tentatively reaches a similar conclusion. Parsons remarks that the "motivation to mobility" is unexpectedly important among the Boston youth studied by Harvard sociologists.[4]

Other studies provide information on the second aspect of the assumption, that levels of occupational and educational aspiration are correlated with certain elements of the situation within which the person was reared. In one way or another, these all appear to concern the family as the socializing agent. Many studies have shown that the positions the person occupies as a result of the positions of his family in the larger social system influence his levels of occupational and educational aspiration. For example, some report that levels of occupational and educational aspiration are positively correlated with the position of the family in the class system.[5] Then, too, there is a certain amount of evidence to show that attitude toward education is correlated with ethnic origin[6] and that having a high level of educational aspiration is negatively correlated with farm residence of the family.[7] Besides these, there are a few studies which indicate that factors *within* the family influence levels of occupational and educational aspiration. For example, Dynes and others have demonstrated that if one has unsatisfactory relations with his parents he is likely to have high levels of occupational aspiration.[8] Also, it is reported that the degree to which the youth's parents are ambitious for his success influences his level of occupational and educational aspiration.[9]

These studies provide clear evidence of the general adequacy of the assumption that differences in levels of occupational and educational aspiration may be attributed to differences in socialization. Specifically, they identify the family as one source of such differences. But there is a certain amount of information suggesting that there is still another source of variation in levels of occupational and educational aspiration. Building on a long tradition of sociological thinking and observation, Sherif has shown experimentally that attitudes of youth are developed in part as a result of interaction with each other.[10]

[2] See, for example, Talcott Parsons, "A Revised Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification," in Reinhard Bendix and Seymour Martin Lipset, eds., *Class, Status and Power: A Reader in Social Stratification* (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1953), p. 127; Seymour M. Lipset, *op. cit.*, A. O. Haller, "Research Problems on the Occupational Achievement Levels of Farm-Reared People," *loc. cit.*, A. O. Haller and W. H. Sewell, *loc. cit.*, and A. O. Haller, "Planning to Farm: A Social Psychological Interpretation," *Social Forces*, 37 (March 1959), pp. 263–268.

[3] Unpublished data from Jefferson County, Wisconsin, on file with W. H. Sewell, Department of Rural Sociology, University of Wisconsin. Parts of these data have been reported in A. O. Haller, "Research Problems on the Occupational Achievement Levels of Farm-Reared People," *loc. cit.*

[4] "A Revised Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification," *loc. cit.*

[5] Philip J. Allen, *loc. cit.*, J. A. Kahl, *loc. cit.*, R. Kroger and C. M. Loutitt, *loc. cit.*, R. A. Mulligan, *loc. cit.*, L. Riessman, *loc. cit.*, W. H. Sewell, A. O. Haller, and M. A. Straus, *loc. cit.*

[6] James A. Duncan and Burton W. Kreitlow, "Selected Cultural Characteristics and the Acceptance of Educational Programs," *Rural Sociology*, 19 (December 1954), pp. 349–357; W. H. Sewell, *et al.*, "Factors Associated with Attitude toward High School Education in Rural Wisconsin," *Rural Sociology*, 18 (December 1953), pp. 359–365.

[7] A. O. Haller and W. H. Sewell, *loc. cit.*, A. O. Haller, "Research Problems on the Occupational Achievement Levels of Farm-Reared People," *loc. cit.*

[8] R. R. Dynes, *et al.*, *loc. cit.*

[9] J. A. Kahl, *loc. cit.*, A. O. Haller, "Planning to Farm: A Social Psychological Interpretation," *op. cit.*

[10] Muzafer Sherif, "A Study of Some Social Factors in Perception," *Archives of Psychology*, 187 (1935). This and later studies have been summarized in Muzafer Sherif and Caroline W. Sherif, *An Outline of Social Psychology* (rev. ed.; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), pp. 280–331.

The general hypothesis of the present study, that interaction with peers influences levels of occupational and educational aspiration of American adolescent boys, is based on this conclusion. Since attitudes are developed in interaction and since a great deal of the interaction of American youth is with others of the same age, it should follow that levels of occupational and educational aspiration (two types of attitudes) should be partly due to the influence of other youth. Data summarized below, while not conclusive, suggest that the hypothesis may be at least partly tenable.

PROCEDURE

Sample. Data to test the hypothesis were collected from all 17-year old boys in school in Lenawee County, Michigan in the spring of 1957. The test forms and questionnaires were administered by trained social psychologists. In all, 442 persons were questioned. (The sample is somewhat weighted with high aspirers because about 10 percent of the age group had already left school.) Lenawee County offers a good site for such a test. About one-third of its population lives on farms, another one-third are rural-nonfarm, and the last one-third live in Adrian, a city of about 20,000 people, which is the geographic, economic, and administrative center of the county. While there appear to be no sharp breaks in the class structure, a full range of American class levels is present. There are a few wealthy families, a number of professionals, and many families of clerical, skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled workers. The county is near the Detroit industrial area and has a fairly well-developed light industry itself. This means that the general area has an unusually large variety of occupations visible to youth. There is a small college in Adrian, a university in nearby Toledo, a few colleges and three universities in and around Detroit. Some of these are within daily commuting distance of parts of the county. Hence the area's facilities for higher education are excellent. This affords the youth of the county the possibility of a high degree of exposure to knowledge about advanced education.

Definition of peers. The hypothesis calls for a test situation in which youth may influence one another through direct interaction. Not all youth groups have this characteristic. This means that an adequate test should use only youth who are exceptionally close to each other. In addition to this limitation of the definition, the difficulties of controlling extraneous variables require that subjects be studied two at a time. For these reasons, then, the peer-pair was selected as the unit of analysis. Operationally, the concept is defined for present purposes as a pair of subjects who named each other when asked to list all those they considered to be their best friends.

Control variables. The hypothesis was tested under varying conditions of certain factors which previously have been thought to be influential both in forming close friendships and in the development of levels of occupational and educational aspiration. These factors are: (1) the social class status of the subject's family (SCS); (2) the measured general intelligence of the subject (G); and (3) the degree to which the parents desire high-level social achievement for the subject (PAD). These variables are not the only ones which could have been controlled, but they probably are the most important. Social class status and measured intelligence have both been shown to be correlated with levels of occupational and educational aspiration.[11] Social class status doubtless influences the choice of friends, and one may guess that general intelligence does also. As noted earlier, the degree to which the parents desire high-level achievement for the youth has been reported to influence his level of aspiration.[12] This attitude may also influence the peer associations of young people; parents often control the friendships of their children.

The effects of the control variables were minimized by classifying each peer-pair according to the level of each member on each control variable. This was accomplished by dividing each of the control variable scores into three equal-sized groups of persons, high, middle, and low; and then by classifying peer-pairs according to the level of both members. Thus for each control variable there are pairs in which (1) both members are high (HH); (2) one member is high and the other is middle (HM), (3) one is high and the other is low (HL); (4) both are middle (MM); (5) one is middle and the other low (ML); and

[11] See W. H. Sewell, A. O. Haller, and M. A. Straus, *loc. cit.*, for tests of both hypotheses and for a review of literature.

[12] J. A. Kahl, *loc. cit.*, and A. O. Haller, "Planning to Farm: A Social Psychological Interpretation," *loc. cit.*

(6) both are low (LL). This process was repeated for each control variable, resulting in six categories of peer-pairs for each control variable. The subsample sizes are complex because there is no necessary relation between the number of peer-pairs and the number of persons. In some instances a person appears in more than one pair because he may name and be named by more than one person. Moreover a given person may appear in more than one category of peer-pairs. Over all there are six groups of peer-pairs for each of the three control variables for each of the two types of aspiration. This pattern is presented in Table 1, which includes the subsample sizes for peer-pairs (regular type) and for persons (italic type), and the mean aspiration scores (parentheses). The total sample size was reduced to 245 persons, largely because many were not members of peer-pairs as the concept is operationally defined.[13]

Variables. The dependent variables of the study are level of occupational aspiration and level of educational aspiration. *Level of occupational aspiration* was measured by scores on the *Occupational Aspiration Scale* (OAS).[14] The OAS consists of eight questions, in each of which the subject is instructed to select one of ten alternative occupations. The eight questions are designed to tap the person's realistic and idealistic levels of aspiration at each of two career periods, initial and mature. In questions referring to realistic levels the subject is instructed to choose the job "I'm sure I can get," while in questions referring to idealistic levels he is instructed to choose "the job I'd prefer if I had my choice." In questions referring to the initial career period the subject is instructed to choose a job for the time "when my schooling is finished," while in questions referring to the mature career period he is instructed to choose a job for the time "when I'm 30 years old." Each question simultaneously taps one level and one career period. This means that four questions exhaust all the possible combinations. This number is doubled by repeating each question once, to give the total of eight questions.

Eighty appropriate[4] occupations, taken from the NORC study of the prestige of 90 occupations,[15] were distributed among the 8 questions, 10 occupations per question. The highest prestige occupation is in Question 1, the second highest is in Question 2, and so on down to the 80th which is in Question 8. Thus the alternatives for each question systematically span the entire range of occupational prestige. On any one question a person scores zero points if he chooses the lowest-ranked occupation, or up to nine points if he chooses the highest-ranked. The highest possible score is 72 and the lowest possible score is zero. In this study the mean OAS score is 36.2 and the standard deviation is 13.0. The 28 intercorrelations of the question scores range from +.238 to +.460 ($r \geq .155$ is significant beyond the .001 level).

Level of education aspiration. This was measured by a series of questions concerning the number of years of college or university training each subject planned to complete. In preliminary studies it has been found to be impossible to measure distinctions as fine as one year among boys of this age. For this reason the subjects were asked to estimate within two years the total number of years they planned to attend college. Possible scores on this index, therefore, were zero, two, four, six, and eight. These may be roughly interpreted as the number of years the subjects plan to attend college, but they are more accurately interpreted simply as differential levels of educational aspiration.

The control variables are social class status (SCS), measured general intelligence (G), and the degree to which the parents desire high-level achievement for the youth (PAD). The *SCS scores* consist of actual or interpolated prestige ratings of the subjects' fathers' occupations based upon the NORC study.[16] *The G scores* were measured by the Cattells' *Test of G Culture Free*, which is relatively free of social class bias in measured intelligence.[17]

[13] It will be noted in Table 1 that the trends in mean aspiration scores by control variables follow the patterns predicted from previous research: in general, levels of occupational and educational aspiration increase with increases in SCS, G, and PAD scores. This confirms the utility of the control variables.

[14] A. O. Haller, *Occupational Aspiration Scale* (East Lansing, Michigan, 1957). Also see I. W. Miller, Jr. "Normalized Data for the *OAS* Raw Scores," mimeographed paper published by the Social Research Service of Michigan State University (East Lansing, Michigan, April 1958).

[15] National Opinion Research Center, "Jobs and Occupations: A Popular Evaluation," *Opinion News*, 9 (September 1947). Reprinted in Bendix and Lipset, *op. cit.*, pp. 411–426.

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] R. B. Cattell and A. K. S. Cattell, *Test of G—Culture Free*—Scale 3A, Institute for Personality and Ability Testing (1608 Coronado Drive, Champaign,

TABLE 1. MEAN LEVEL OF ASPIRATION SCORES, NUMBER OF PEER-PAIRS, AND NUMBER OF SUBJECTS, BY TYPE OF ASPIRATION AND BY CONTROL VARIABLE CATEGORIES*

Categories of Control Variables	Type of Aspiration					
	Level of Occupational Aspiration (OAS Scores)			Level of Educational Aspiration (Approx. years of college)		
	Control Variables					
	SCS	G	PAD	SCS	G	PAD
HH	35 *51* (45.03)	47 *54* (45.98)	36 *54* (45.62)	31 *45* (4.26)	43 *52* (4.38)	34 *50* (4.44)
HM	35 *56* (42.28)	31 *54* (43.59)	47 *72* (43.77)	30 *50* (3.64)	25 *44* (3.62)	35 *53* (3.88)
HL	36 *63* (35.84)	31 *53* (37.75)	24 *44* (34.61)	33 *57* (2.80)	25 *43* (2.54)	21 *39* (2.66)
MM	28 *47* (37.40)	25 *40* (39.00)	20 *38* (40.07)	23 *41* (2.28)	22 *34* (2.16)	18 *34* (2.94)
ML	45 *72* (36.62)	43 *75* (34.29)	40 *67* (31.50)	39 *58* (2.06)	37 *66* (2.02)	37 *62* (1.18)
LL	28 *44* (33.29)	30 *43* (29.97)	23 *37* (31.10)	23 *39* (1.48)	26 *37* (1.24)	22 *35* (1.30)
Totals.....	207 *244*	207 *245*	190 *234*	179 *213*	178 *210*	167 *199*

* The number of peer-pairs is in regular type, the number of persons composing the pairs is in italics, and the mean aspiration scores are in parentheses. The number of persons is not proportional to the number of pairs because the same person may be a member of more than one pair.

Raw scores rather than the Cattells' "IQ" scores were used. *The PAD scores* consist of the sum of scored responses to questions the subject was asked about the degree to which his parents "encouraged" him to continue his education and quality of the occupation his parents wanted for him. Four questions were used, one for occupation and one for education, each asked one for each parent. The answers to each question were assigned arbitrary scores from zero to four, depending upon which of the five ranked alternatives the subject believed to be the most accurate representation of his parents' ambition for him. The total scores could vary from zero to 16.

It will be recalled the peer-pair is the unit of analysis, and that the pairs were grouped according to each member's score on each control variable. The cutting points for the control variables were determined by ranking all the persons for whom data were available, and then dividing the persons into three equal-sized groups: High, Middle, and Low thirds. (As shown above, this classification of individuals into equal-sized control variable groups does not imply that the paired control

Illinois, 1950). Also see Institute for Personality and Ability Testing, *Handbook for the Individual or Group Culture Free Intelligence Test* (1602 Coronado Drive, Champaign, Illinois, n.d.).

variable groups—HH, HM, etc.—will also contain equal numbers of peer-pairs.) In the few instances where the cutting points fall within a score rather than between scores, the persons with that score were arbitrarily assigned to one of the appropriate categories. The scores defining category boundaries are as follows: SCS—High: 88 to 73 points; Medium: 73 to 60 points; Low: 60 to 35 points; G—High: 33 to 24 points; Medium: 23 to 19 points; Low: 19 to 6 points; PAD—High: 16 to 14 points; Medium: 14 to 10 points; Low: 10 to 6 points. These boundaries were adhered to even where some persons were dropped for a particular calculation.

Statistical Technique. The hypothesis was tested by computing the intraclass correlation (R) of the levels of aspiration of pairs of persons for each category of SCS, G, and PAD, and for each type of aspiration.[18] The hypothesis may be rejected unequivocally if all intraclass correlations are zero or negative, or if all intraclass correlations for any one control variable are zero or negative. A large proportion of zeroes or negatives will tend to reject the hypothesis. On the other hand, the hypothesis may be accepted tentatively if all or most intraclass correlations are positive. The case of positive correlation means that, irrespective of their SCS, G, or PAD similarities or differences, boys who choose each other as best friends tend to have similar levels of occupational and educational aspiration.

RESULTS

The tests of the hypothesis are presented in Table 2. Similarly to Table 1, the cells are defined by SCS, G, PAD categories of peer-pairs and by levels of occupational aspiration and educational aspiration. There are a total of 36 tests of the hypothesis, one for each of the six categories of peer-pairs (HH, HM, etc.) by each of three control variables, by each of two types of aspiration. The figure in each cell is the intraclass correlation coefficient (R), the correlation of levels of aspiration of pairs of persons who choose each other as best friends.

TABLE 2. INTRACLASS CORRELATION (R) OF PEER-PAIRS' LEVELS OF OCCUPATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION, BY CATEGORIES OF SCS, G, AND PAD CONTROL VARIABLES

Categories of Control Variables	Type of Aspiration					
	Level of Occupational Aspiration (OAS Scores)			Level of Educational Aspiration (Approx. years of college)		
	Control Variables					
	SCS	G	PAD	SCS	G	PAD
HH	.646	.405	.351	.322	.130	.194
HM	.483	.324	.344	.392	.259	.114
HL	.484	−.054	.348	.192	−.075	−.108
MM	.380	.288	.513	−.011	.379	.470
ML	.005	.123	.063	.083	.210	−.163
LL	.329	.560	.047	.565	.079	.299

In general, the table shows that 17 of the 18 R's concerning levels of occupational aspiration are positive, while 14 of the 18 R's concerning levels of educational aspiration are positive. Some of these are low: ten are either negative or are less than $R = +.10$. The negative R's tend to be concentrated among the tests regarding levels of educational aspiration. Also, the mean R for levels of educational aspiration ($\bar{R} = +.19$) is considerably lower than the mean R for levels of occupational aspiration ($\bar{R} = +.31$).[19] (Both of these facts are consistent with the findings of previous research, which appear to show that level of educational aspiration is not as stable a variable as is level of occupational aspiration.[20]) Other than the fact that there are more negative R's in the educational aspiration side of

[18] All intraclass correlation coefficients (R) were calculated from the formula, $[1 + R(K\text{-}1)]\,\sigma^2 = K\sigma^2_m$, in G. Udny Yule and M. G. Kendall, *An Introduction to the Theory of Statistics* (13th ed. rev.; London: Charles Griffin and Company, Ltd., 1949), p. 256. See also Ernest A. Haggard, *Intraclass Correlation and the Analysis of Variance* (New York: The Dryden Press, Inc. 1958). Tests of significance were not used because there appear to be none available for this specific problem.

[19] A recent unpublished study shows a similar degree of intraclass correlation ($R = +.33$) of OAS scores of intact sociometric clique members among boys 17 years old in a small city high school in Central Michigan. See Irwin W. Miller, "Occupational Aspiration, V-Achievement, and Peer Group Membership" (unpublished manuscript, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Michigan State University, 1959).

[20] This was found to be the case in the unpublished Jefferson County, Wisconsin data cited in footnote 3 above. The correlation coefficients from the latter study have been reported in A. O. Haller, "Research Problems on the Occupational Achievement Levels of Farm-Reared People," *loc. cit.*

the table, there is no striking pattern among the R's tending to reject the hypothesis. But there is a tendency toward a pattern in the most crucial categories of the control variables. The most rigorous tests of the hypothesis are among pairs formed of persons of different SCS, G and PAD scores. There are 18 tests on peer-pairs whose members differ from each other on the control variables (peer-pairs of HM, HL, or ML). Four of the five negative R's appear in these categories, and three of the five R's of less than +.10 are also in these categories. Conversely, among the 18 tests on pairs whose members are similar to each other (HH, MM, and LL) there is only one negative R and only two R's of less than +.10. This means that most of the evidence tending to reject the hypothesis appears among the categories of control variables which are the most stringent tests. In these categories there are a total of seven out of 18 outright rejections or near-rejections. On the other hand, in 11 out of 18 of the crucial categories, the evidence favors accepting the hypothesis.

Thus, the results of the analysis are somewhat inconsistent. Regarding level of occupational aspiration, there are only about four very low or negative R's, and these are unsystematically scattered throughout the tests. Moreover, the mean intraclass correlation of $\bar{R} = +.31$, though low, shows that, on the average, there is a degree of variance in levels of occupational aspiration shared by boys who choose each other as best friends. On the other hand, in some states of the control categories, the intraclass correlations are moderately high. For example, among boys who are both of high social class status $R = +.646$. For these reasons, it is concluded that these data are probably not sufficient to reject the aspect of the hypothesis which holds that peers tend to influence each others' levels of occupational aspiration. But the evidence is not conclusive.

The evidence regarding level of educational aspiration is even more tenuous. There are about six very low or negative R's, and the mean intraclass correlation of $\bar{R} = +.19$ is quite low. Yet, here again, there are some moderately high intraclass correlations such as the $R = +.565$ found among boys who are both of low social class status. In general, however, it is concluded that the data are probably sufficient to warrant tentative rejection of the aspect of the hypothesis which holds that peers tend to influence each others' levels of educational aspiration. But here, too, the evidence is not conclusive.

CONCLUSION

Thus the results regarding the hypothesis that interaction with peers influences levels of occupational and educational aspiration are not conclusive. The hypothesis was tested under varying conditions of parental social class status, peer-pair members' general intelligence, and parental desire for high-level social achievement for the youth. As predicted by the hypothesis, a positive intraclass correlation of close friends' levels of occupational and educational aspiration was found in most of the tests. This holds, but with less certainty, even under most of the more rigorous of the varying conditions. The evidence regarding the hypothesis appears to provide a small degree of support for the aspect referring to levels of occupational aspiration, but it appears to provide little or no support for the aspect referring to levels of educational aspiration. But because experimental research has produced the same generic phenomenon[21] and because the weight of the nonexperimental evidence presented here tends to support at least one aspect of it, the writers believe that the hypothesis is at least partially accurate. Nevertheless, the tenuous evidence presented, together with the possibility that youth might choose each other because of their similar levels of occupational or educational aspiration, suggests the need for experimental studies in which levels of occupational and educational aspiration are changed by arbitrary manipulation, and for longitudinal studies in which changes in levels of aspiration occur with changes in friendship patterns. This must be done before either aspect of the hypothesis can be considered to be more than tentatively established.

[21] Muzafer Sherif, *loc. cit.*