

Minnesota Studies in Vocational Rehabilitation:

VI. A Survey of the Physically Handicapped in Minnesota

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Preface

This is the sixth bulletin in the current series of Minnesota Studies in Vocational Rehabilitation. These bulletins have dealt with two major problem areas: (1) extent and magnitude of employment problems of vocationally handicapped persons, and (2) principles, policies and techniques for improved effectiveness of job placement procedures. Research underlying this series of bulletins was supported in large measure by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation in the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Support for the research study described in this bulletin was provided largely by the State of Minnesota Interim Commission on Employment of Handicapped Persons, thereby providing an excellent example of close and effective research cooperation between federal and state government agencies, and a state university.

The Interim Commission, under the chairmanship of the Honorable Mr. Curtis B. Warnke, sought to obtain facts concerning the number of handicapped persons in Minnesota, their age, sex, type of disability and employment status. Such basic facts were needed in their attempts to evaluate effectiveness of existing state laws relating to employment of handicapped persons. Available evidence proved to be inadequate, and they turned to the Industrial Relations Center for assistance.

Fortunately, the IRC was already at work on similar problems for the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and thus had the nucleus of a trained professional staff with special interest and competence in this area. Drs. George W. England and Lloyd H. Lofquist provided leadership and supervision for the additional personnel selected for a special survey team. A research contract was signed in the middle of June and the report was completed in September of 1958. Dr. Kenneth E. Clark, Chairman of the Department of Psychology, served as special consultant to the project. Mr. Sidney Goldish, Director of the Research Department of the Minneapolis Star and Tribune, and his statewide staff of professional interviewers played a signal role in the success of the survey. The IRC Survey Directors were James H. Koplín, Stephen J. Carroll, Jr. and Allan C. Yater, graduate students in psychology and industrial relations. IRC staff members Professor Donald G. Paterson and Rene V. Dawis, and Interim Commission members Larry W. Binger of Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Co., and Donald Savelkoul of the Minnesota (AFL-CIO) Federation of Labor, provided valuable counsel. Materials and data gathered in prior and concurrent OVR-sponsored IRC surveys greatly facilitated the survey design for the State of Minnesota project. The IRC provided administration,

general direction, facilities and a nucleus of professionally trained staff members for the supervision of the project.

It is worth repeating that the survey described in this bulletin was indeed a cooperative research venture, underscoring the role of the IRC as an agency to integrate and coordinate team research in employment and industrial relations. It provides also an outstanding example of the advantages of mutual cooperation between state and federal agencies. Experience from the OVR studies greatly facilitated the Interim Commission survey; results from the Interim Commission survey will benefit not only the citizens of Minnesota, but will be of much value in advancing the continuing basic research probes of OVR. The Industrial Relations Center has been able to continue its role as a catalytic agent in providing the public with a growing body of current knowledge and understanding of employment relations. The IRC is grateful to the Interim Commission and to OVR for their cooperation in making this bulletin possible.

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