

A Survey of Adult Basic Education

A desire for general self-improvement motivated about two-thirds of the students who enrolled in the Adult Basic Foundation Program administered by the U. S. Office of Education, a national survey shows. Most of the remaining one-third of the students wanted to prepare themselves for employment or a better job.

The survey also shows that more than 63 percent of the 406,000 persons enrolled in the program live in urban areas, and 60 percent have incomes of less than \$3,000 per year.

The survey, made through the joint efforts of the Office of Education and State and local public school systems, involves 94,000 persons, about one-fourth of the enrollment in the program authorized by the Adult Education Act of 1966. All the States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands were included.

Among the survey findings:

- Of the students surveyed, 56.6 percent are white, 35.3 percent Negro, 11.1 percent Puerto Ricans, 5.5 percent Mexican-Americans, 2.3 percent Orientals and 0.8 percent American Indians.
- More than half of the students, 56.1 percent, are female. Of the whites in the program about half are male; among Negroes only 33 percent are male.
- About 58 percent of the enrollees are married and 48 percent are either heads of families or the principal wage earner in the family.

- Student family incomes range from 45.4 percent under \$3,000 a year, 35.9 percent between \$3,000 and \$6,000 and 18.7 percent over \$6,000 while the incomes of individual students range from 59.8 percent under \$3,000 a year, 23.2 percent between \$3,000 and \$6,000 and 7 percent over \$6,000.

- Approximately 55 percent of the students are employed—43 percent full-time and 12 percent part-time. Of those unemployed, 14 percent are actively seeking jobs and 26 percent are not.

- About 11 percent are 55 years or older, 17.5 percent are between the ages of 18 and 24 and 46.5 percent are between 25 and 44. Of the enrollees in the 18-24 age group, 68 percent are white and 25 percent are Negroes.

- Nearly 20 percent of those in the program are welfare recipients. Welfare recipients are about evenly distributed among the various age groups.

- Grade levels of students in the program show that 26.7 percent are in first to third grade classes, 33.6 percent in fourth to sixth grade classes and 39.7 percent in seventh or eighth grade classes.

In fiscal year 1967, a total of \$26.3 million was granted to the States and territories to operate the Adult Basic Education Program. This year the total is \$30.6 million.

