A Study of the Social Background of Students in University College Dubiin

(Read before the Society on January 27th, 1967)

By MONICA NEVIN

INTRODUCTION

This paper forms part of a study undertaken to ascertain the social background of the students in the Irish universities, to assess the factors which determine their entry to the university and the influences at work in determing their choice of course.

When the study was begun in the Michaelmas term of 1964 little or nothing was known of the distribution of university students in Ireland among the different social classes. Since then, data on the student population of Queen's University, Belfast, have been given in the Report on Higher Education in Northern Ireland, submitted by the Lockwood Committee. More recently some information on university students in the Republic of Ireland has been published in the Irish-O.E.C.D. report presented by the survey team appointed by the Minister for Education, under the direction of Professor Patrick Lynch.

To collect information for the survey a questionnaire was issued to the first year full-time day students of all Faculties in University College, Dublin, for the session 1964–65. It was assumed that first year students are representative of the general student body. Furthermore, restricting the sample to first year students meant that undue weight was not given to the disciplines needing a long period of study in the university, for example, Medicine. These same considerations had led Bourdieu and Passeron[1] to take first year students as a basis for their calculations when carrying out a series of enquiries at the Centre de Sociologie Européenne, into the social background of students in the French universities.

It proved possible to distribute copies of the questionnaire to approximately 1,800 full-time day students out of a total of 1,903, i.e. to 95 per cent of the total. The failure to distribute to all the full-time day students is explained partly by the difficulty of contacting Arts and Commerce students since first year students in these Faculties have a wide variety of classes and partly because some students would have been absent from lectures or classes on the day of distribution.

A covering note was attached to every questionnaire describing the purposes of the study and the importance of a good response. The note also made clear to the students that the answering of the questionnaire

was entirely voluntary and completely anonymous. It was felt that students' answers would be more valid if they were assured they could not be identified individually.

Of the 1,800 questionnaires distributed, 1,147 were returned satisfactorily completed, a 64 per cent response, giving information about 60 per cent of the total of 1,903 first year students. The report of the President of University College for 1964–65 shows that 5,449 out of 6,108 full-time day students, 89 per cent had homes in the Republic. The data for the home residence of first year students is not separately available. For the purpose of this paper it is assumed that 89 per cent of the total or 1,700 reside in the 26 Counties thus giving a 62·5 per cent response from first year students living in the Republic. The impression made by the completed questionnaires was that the students who replied had treated the matter very seriously and had made every effort to be helpful and accurate and only two frivolous replies were received.

Table 1 shows the distribution in U.C.D. of first year full-time day students and the total number of students in each Faculty who completed and returned questionnaires. The response from students domiciled in the Republic of Ireland is shown separately.

When the coding and editing of the questionnaires had been completed the data were punched on I.B.M. cards and processed on the I.B.M. computer in University College. An SPS programme specially written for this work by the Reverend Professor Ingram, S.J., was used to analyse the data.

A few checks can be made on how well the survey with a 62·5 per cent response mirrors the actual position in the College. The 575 first year women students in the session 1964–65 comprised 30·2 per cent of the total. Of the 1,147 students in the sample 307 or 26·8 per cent were women. The number of women students varies widely between Faculties and when the data are corrected by the procedure described later to allow for the different response in the different Faculties the survey gives the percentage of first year women as 28·1. Examination of the results for the Arts Faculty gives the calculated number of women students as 242 out of a total of 693 compared with the actual number 291. For other Faculties the agreement was satisfactory. In the sample, 13·5 per cent of students from the Republic were scholarship holders compared with 14·4 per cent for all years for the College as a whole. The percentage of first year scholarships should be lower than the general figures since a substantial number of scholarships are awarded by the College itself to post-first year students.

ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL GROUPS

The 86 questionnaires answered by students from outside the Republic were withdrawn leaving a total of 1,061. The question dealing with parental occupation had been left ' open ' in the sense that students were not compelled to make a choice between social class categories but were left free to state their father's profession or job. In coding the questionnaires for processing, parental occupations were classified in the approp-

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF FIRST-YEAR FULL-TIME STUDENTS AMONG FACULTIES IN 1964 AND FACULTY RESPONSE TO QUESTIONNAIRE

Faculty	No. of Students	Republic of Ireland Response	Total Response	
		No.	No.	%
Agriculture	71	48	48	68
Architecture	46	29	31	67
Arts	693	340	372	54
Commerce	200	98	100	50
Engineering	147	134	136	92·5
Law	46	29	32	70
Medicine and Dentistry	238	139	155	65·2
Pharmacy	46	20	24	52
Science	220	124	134	61
Social Science	101	52	62	61
Veterinary Medicine	95	48	53	56
Response		1,061	1,147	60·3
Number of Students	1,903	1,700*		

* Estimated

riate social group according to the classifications used by the Central Statistics Office. The Central Statistics Office uses twelve categories in the coding of occupations, which are given for convenience in Appendix A. I have at times in the text used popular terms such as ' middle-class ' and ' working-class '. These I define as follows:

(1) Middle-class — Higher professional and lower professional, managerial, executive, senior salaried employees and intermediate non-manual workers, such as clerks, shop assistants, garda.

(2) Working-class — Manual workers of all kinds, skilled, semi- and un-skilled, agricultural workers and also transport and service workers.

The breakdown of parental occupation by social group is given in Table 2. It will be noted from Table 1 that the percentage response to the questionnaire varied from one Faculty to another. To eliminate any bias which this might introduce, data from the various Faculties have been scaled up by multiplying the actual response in each Faculty by a weighting factor equal to the number of first year students in the Faculty divided by the actual response. For example, the weighting factor for the Arts Faculty is 633/340, the number of students from the Republic divided by the response from the Republic. The data in columns 2 and 3 of Table 2 have been derived from the data in Table 1 by this weighting procedure. It may

TABLE 2

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS DOMICILED IN THE REPUBLIC CLASSIFIED BY PARENTAL SOCIAL GROUP

Social Group	Number of Respondents	Estimated Number of Students	Percentage of Students
12—Farmers	146	237	13·9
1—Agricultural workers, fishermen, etc.	7	12	0·7
2—Higher professional	138	221	13·0
3—Lower professional	127	204	12·0
4—Managerial and executive ...	225	368	21·6
5—Senior salaried employees ...	82	125	7·3
6—Intermediate non-manual	210	341	20·1
7—Other non-manual	33	58	3·3
8—Skilled manual	56	94	5·5
9—Semi-skilled manual	6	10	0·6
10—Unskilled	4	7	0·4
11—Other	16	25	1·5
Total	1,050*	1,702	99·9

* Social Group not known for 11 respondents

be said that the resulting percentage distribution of students is practically the same as the distribution of respondents in column 1.

There are two social groups with a high representation in University College, Dublin, the managerial and the intermediate non-manual groups. The numbers coming from each of the professional groups and from the farming community are almost equal. The numbers in the manual groups are low. When all the manual groups are classed together and the transport and service workers added to them they form about 10 per cent of the student population, while the professional, managerial and senior salaried employees form over 54 per cent of the student population. Another 20 per cent belong to that heterogeneous group which includes civil servants below the higher executive grade, shop assistants, shopkeepers, garda and clerical workers.

Table 3 gives the number of students in each social group as a percentage of the estimated number of potential students. The Census of Population, 1961, gives the number of children under 14 whose parents fall in the various social groups in Table 7. If the number of children in each group

is divided by 14 there is obtained what may be described as the number of ' potential students ' from each group. I have taken as a basis for a comparison of the distribution of university students with the distribution of potential students among social groups, the number of potential students for the province of Leinster since Table 4 which gives the geographical distribution of full-time students in University College, Dublin, shows that 75·6 per cent of all students from the Republic are domiciled in Leinster.

As the number of students from Leinster I have taken 75 per cent of the number of students in the social groups given in Table 2. The actual number of students from Leinster in the various social groups is not known since in the survey students were not asked to state the province in which they resided. However, the percentages in column 4 of Table 3 are correct relative to one another and quantitatively must be reasonably close to the true values. Between one in four and one in five of the potential students

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN LEINSTER IN EACH SOCIAL GROUP AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE NUMBER OF POTENTIAL STUDENTS IN LEINSTER

Social Group	Number of Potential Students in Leinster	Number of Students in U.C.D. from Leinster	Number of Students in each Social Group as percentage of Potential Students
12—Farmers	3,373	178	5·3
1—Agricultural workers and fishermen	2,326	9	0·4
2—Higher professional	683	166	24·3
3—Lower Professional	618	153	24·8
4—Managerial and executive ...	1,326	276	20·8
5—Senior salaried employees ...	786	94	12·0
6—Intermediate non-manual	3,254	256	7·9
7—Other non-manual	3,386	44	1·3
8—Skilled manual	5,351	71	1·3
9—Semi-skilled manual	2,819	8	0·3
10—Unskilled	3,150	5	0·2
11—Others	1,436	19	1·3
Total in all groups	28,508	1,282	4·5

TABLE 4

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF FULL-TIME STUDENTS, 1965–66

Geographical Area	Number of Students
Dublin City	2,709
Dublin County	990
Rest of Leinster	1,076
Leinster	4,775
Munster	861
Connaught	389
Donegal ...	
Monaghan }	287
Cavan }	
Total from Republic	6,312
Six Counties N. Ireland	225
Great Britain	145
Elsewhere	227
Total	6,909

in the higher and lower professional and managerial groups in Leinster come to University College, Dublin, compared with one in eighty from the skilled manual group. Possibly the most striking feature of the table is the very high participation rate of the lower professional group which includes teachers. Of the total of 8,040 males in Leinster in this group 39·5 per cent are teachers and 54 per cent of the respondents in this group said their fathers were teachers. In other words the teachers forming about 40 per cent of the group provide 54 per cent of the students, the 60 per cent who were not teachers providing the other 46 per cent. This is surely a pointer indicating that access to higher education depends at least as much on parental education as on parental income, a point discussed in more detail later.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE SOCIAL GROUPS WITHIN THE FACULTIES

Table 5 shows the distribution of the social groups among respondents in the various faculties, who completed the questionnaire, and Table 6 the percentage distribution. As might be expected, the dominant group in the Faculty of Agriculture is group 12 (Farmers). Farmers' children are well represented also in Veterinary Medicine though quite a few of the Veterinary students have either professional or managerial backgrounds. In the Faculty of Architecture the higher professional group predominates. In Law there are two dominant groups, higher professional and managerial. In Pharmacy the dominant group is lower professional, understandable since many of the Pharmacy students are themselves the children of pharmaceutical chemists.

In Medicine there is a fairly widespread of social groups and this is also the case in Science. At the same time it will be seen from Table 5 that the working classes are better represented in Science while the representation

TABLE 5

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS FROM THE REPUBLIC CLASSIFIED BY FACULTY AND BY PARENTAL SOCIAL GROUP

Faculty	Number who answered	*Social Groups												Parents' occupation not given
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Agriculture	48	1	2	4	3	2	5	1	1	—	—	—	28	1
Architecture	29	—	9	3	2	4	5	1	2	—	—	—	2	1
Arts	340	5	38	42	71	17	75	14	24	2	1	2	45	4
Commerce	98	—	5	6	31	10	26	4	5	1	1	1	6	2
Engineering	134	—	10	19	30	20	31	2	4	1	1	2	14	—
Law	29	—	11	1	10	3	2	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
Medicine and Dentistry ...	139	1	29	20	32	11	28	2	3	—	—	4	7	2
Pharmacy	20	—	3	13	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	2	—
Science	124	—	12	13	23	9	25	7	9	2	—	5	18	1
Social Science	52	—	11	4	11	6	7	2	4	—	1	1	5	—
Veterinary Medicine ...	48	—	8	2	12	—	5	—	1	—	—	1	19	—
Total	1,061	7	138	127	225	82	210	33	56	6	4	16	146	11

* See Appendix. Coding of Parental Social Groups.

TABLE 6
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL GROUPS WITHIN THE FACULTIES

Faculty	*Social Groups												Total	Dominant Group
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
Agriculture	2	4	9	6	4	10	3	2	—	—	—	60	100	Farmers
Architecture	—	32	11	7	14	18	4	7	—	—	—	7	100	Higher professional
Arts	1·5	11·3	12·5	21·1	5·1	22·3	4·2	7·2	0·6	0·3	0·6	13·3	100	Manager; int. non-manual
Commerce	—	5	6	32	11	27	4	6	1	1	1	6	100	Manager; int. non-manual
Engineering	—	7	14	22	15	23	1	3	2	1	2	10	100	Manager; int. non-manual
Law	—	40	4	30	10	8	—	8	—	—	—	—	100	Higher professional; managerial
Medicine and Dentistry	1	21	15	23	8	20	2	2	—	—	3	5	100	Higher professional; manager; int. non-manual
Pharmacy	—	15	65	—	—	5	—	—	5	—	—	10	100	Lower professional
Science	—	10	10	19	7	20	6	7	2	—	4	15	100	Farmers; Manager; int. non-manual
Social Science ...	—	21	8	21	12	13	3	8	—	2	2	10	100	Higher professional; manager
Veterinary Medicine ...	—	17	4	25	—	10	—	2	—	—	2	40	100	Farmer; Manager; higher professional

* See Appendix. Coding of Parental Social Groups.

of the professional classes is considerably lower than it is in Medicine. Two groups, managerial and the intermediate non-manual, are dominant in Arts, Commerce and Engineering. Social Science draws heavily on the higher professional and managerial groups. It should be noted that 90 per cent of the students in Social Science in the session 1964–65 were girls.

If we examine the distribution among the Faculties of the children of skilled manual workers we find them fairly evenly distributed although there is a high proportion in the Faculty of Arts. In Britain there is a tendency for the children of working-class parents to enter the Science and Technology Faculties, and one might have expected to find this pattern here. Perhaps the fact that Science and Technology (Engineering) courses take four years to complete as compared to three for Arts has a bearing on the popularity of Arts for the lower income groups here.

Engineering as a profession is more popular among the higher income groups here (especially among the managerial class) than it is in Britain.* Engineering also draws a large proportion of its students from the intermediate non-manual class. The fact that so many from this last group enter the Faculty of Engineering is largely due to the fact that a high proportion of them attend secondary schools conducted by the Christian Brothers, a religious order which has always given special attention to the teaching of mathematics and science.

Table 7 shows separately the distribution of the 256 women respondents and 794 men respondents among the social groups. The last column gives the percentage of women respondents for the larger social groups. The numbers in groups 1, 9 and 10 are too small to be significant. A girl whose father is in the higher professional group seems to have the best chance of going to a university and the proportion of girls in the farming group is surprisingly high.

TABLE 7

DISTRIBUTION OF MEN AND WOMEN RESPONDENTS AMONG SOCIAL GROUPS

Social Group	Number of Men	Percentage	Number of Women	Percentage	Women as a percentage of the Total Number
1	5	0·6	2	0·8	28
2	90	11·3	48	18·7	35
3	92	11·6	35	13·7	28
4	167	21·0	58	22·7	26
5	67	8·4	15	5·9	18
6	174	21·9	36	14·1	17
7	26	3·3	7	2·7	21
8	44	5·5	12	4·7	21
9	4	0·5	2	0·8	33
10	2	0·3	2	0·8	50
11	15	1·9	1	0·4	6
12	108	13·9	38	14·9	26
Total	794	100·-	256	100·-	24

* The graduate managerial class in Ireland are predominantly Engineering and Science graduates.

PARENTAL EDUCATION

Table 8 shows that the fathers of more than half the respondents had received full secondary education and that a quarter had left school between the years of 15 and 18. At the bottom of the scale between 20 and 21 per cent of the respondents were the children of fathers who had left school before the age of 15 years.

As far as university education is concerned, the great majority of the respondents are ' first generation ' since only 27 per cent had fathers who were graduates. The high percentage of first generation students is an indication of the constantly increasing number of young people who in this generation complete full-time secondary education and so come within reach of the universities—a world-wide phenomenon.

TABLE 8

PARENTAL EDUCATION—I, AGE AT WHICH PARENTS COMPLETED FULL-TIME EDUCATION

	18 years or over	Between 15 and 18	Under 15	Total
Father	488 53·27%	238 25·98%	190 20·74%	916 100%
Mother	397 44·9%	321 36·31%	167 18·89%	884 100%

TABLE 9

PARENTAL EDUCATION—II, PARENTS WHO ARE GRADUATES

	Graduates	Number in Sample	Percentage
Fathers	288	1,061	27%
Mothers	107	1,061	10%

Table 8 also shows that just on 45 per cent of the mothers of respondents had reached the age of 18 years or over before completing their secondary education. This is lower than for the fathers. On the other hand the percentage remaining in school between 15 and 18 was higher—36 per cent as against 26 per cent. The percentage who left school under 15 was very slightly lower than in the case of fathers.

Table 9 shows there were considerably fewer graduates among the mothers of respondents, 10 per cent as compared to 27 per cent.

The two factors, parental occupation and parental education are, of course, closely related. When an analysis by social group is made of the age at which the fathers finished education the expected picture emerges. All the fathers in the higher professional group had reached the higher levels of education, as had all but a few of those in the lower professional group. On the other hand 34 per cent of the fathers in the managerial

group had left school between 15 and 18 years of age. As one goes down the social scale the numbers remaining at school to 18 years drops and in the groups composed of manual workers none of the fathers had been educated to the age of 18. The farming group was the only one where a higher percentage of mothers had been educated to a level higher than their husbands. This fits with the statement in the Irish-O.E.C.D. report that the rate for female participation in post-primary education is higher in rural areas than for male.

Table 10 shows the distribution among Faculties of respondents whose *fathers* remained in education to 18 years or over. I have excluded any student who said he did not know at what age his father completed his education.

TABLE 10

PARENTAL EDUCATION—III,(ANALYSED BY FACULTY) AGE AT WHICH FATHER COMPLETED EDUCATION

Faculty	Under 15	Between 15 and 18	Over 18	Total
Agriculture	16 (40·0%)	8 (20·0%)	16 (40·0%)	40
Architecture	3 (12·0%)	5 (21·0%)	16 (67·0%)	24
Arts	65 (21·4%)	77 (25·3%)	162 (53·3%)	304
Commerce	16 (21·0%)	29 (37·0%)	33 (42·0%)	78
Engineering	32 (26·0%)	37 (31·0%)	52 (43·0%)	121
Law	2 (8·0%)	6 (22·0%)	19 (70·0%)	27
Medicine and Dentistry	12 (10·0%)	25 (22·0%)	78 (68·0%)	115
Pharmacy	—	1 (6·0%)	15 (94·0%)	16
Science	26 (25·0%)	27 (25·0%)	53 (50·0%)	106
Social Science	10 (21·0%)	11 (24·0%)	26 (55·0%)	47
Veterinary Medicine ...	8 (21·0%)	12 (32·0%)	18 (47·0%)	38
Total	190 (20·7%)	238 (26·0%)	488 (53·3%)	916

The proportion of respondents coming from homes where at least one parent had been educated to the age of 18 or over was highest in the Faculties of Medicine and Dentistry, Law, Architecture and Science (Pharmacy). The very high proportion in Science (Pharmacy) is explained by the fact that the students taking this course are predominantly the children of pharmacists and teachers.

TABLE 11

PARENTAL EDUCATION– IV (ANALYSED BY FACULTY), AGE AT WHICH MOTHER COMPLETED EDUCATION

Faculty	Under 15	Between 15 and 18	Over 18	Total
Agriculture	11 (29·0%)	16 (42·0%)	11 (29·0%)	38
Architecture	6 (26·0%)	7 (30·0%)	10 (43·0%)	23
Arts	56 (19·0%)	104 (35·1%)	136 (46·0%)	296
Commerce	17 (21·0%)	31 (39·0%)	32 (40·0%)	80
Engineering	29 (26·0%)	44 (39·0%)	40 (35·0%)	113
Law	—	12 (48·0%)	13 (52·0%)	25
Medicine and Dentistry	11 (10·0%)	37 (32·0%)	67 (58·0%)	115
Pharmacy	1 (7·0%)	5 (33·0%)	9 (60·0%)	15
Science	22 (23·0%)	40 (42·0%)	34 (35·0%)	96
Social Science	8 (18·0%)	15 (34·0%)	21 (48·0%)	44
Veterinary Medicine ...	6 (15·0%)	10 (25·0%)	24 (60·0%)	40
Total	167 (18·9%)	321 (36·3%)	397 (44·9%)	884

OTHER FACTORS BEARING ON ACCESS TO UNIVERSITY

It was hoped to make some assessment of financial factors facilitating access to university education. Students were asked to indicate whether they held scholarships or not. It was found that 13 per cent approx. of the students in the sample were scholarship holders (Table 12). The majority of the scholarships were held between three Faculties, Arts, Engineering and Science. It should be borne in mind, however, that many County Council Authorities confine their scholarships to the Faculties of Arts, Commerce, Science and Engineering.

The number of scholarships at present available for potential university students is too low to have much effect in facilitating the participation of the lower social groups in higher education. What is surprising in view of the paucity of scholarships is the creditable participation rate of such a relatively low social group as the Intermediate Non-Manual. This group is best represented in U.C.D. by the children of lower civil servants and of garda.

An analysis was also made of the distribution of scholarships by Social Class (Table 13). Quite a high proportion of the scholarships went to two

TABLE 12
SCHOLARSHIPHOLDERS—I, ANALYSED BY FACULTY

Faculty	Corporation	County Council	College Entrance	Any other type	Total	Number of respondents in sample	Percentage
Agriculture	1	2	—	9	12	48	25·0
Architecture	3	1	—	—	4	29	13·8
Arts	16	16	4	5	41	340	12·0
Commerce	1	3	—	1	5	98	5·1
Dentistry	—	—	—	—	—	16	—
Engineering	14	23	—	3	40	134	29·9
Law	—	—	—	3	3	29	10·3
Medicine	—	3	1	2	6	123	5·0
Pharmacy	—	—	—	1	1	20	5·0
Science	7	20	1	4	32	124	25·8
Social Science	—	—	—	—	—	52	—
Veterinary Medicine ...	—	—	—	—	—	48	—
Total	42	68	6	28	144	1,061	13·5

TABLE 13

SCHOLARSHIPHOLDERS—II, ANALYSED BY SOCIAL GROUP

Group	Corporation	County Council	College Entrance	Any other type	Total	Number of respondents in sample	Percentage
1	—	1	—	1	2	7	28·6
2	2	—	1	—	3	138	2·2
3	4	15	2	3	24	127	18·9
4	8	8	1	2	19	225	8·4
5	3	3	—	2	8	82	9·8
6	15	17	1	6	39	210	18·6
7	5	5	—	—	10	33	30·3
8	1	2	—	5	8	56	14·3
9 and 10	—	1	—	1	2	10	20·0
11	1	2	1	—	4	16	25·0
12	—	14	—	8	22	146	15·1
Total	39	68	6	28	141	1,050	13·4

groups, the lower professional and the intermediate non-manual group. The total number of students in some of the groups are too small for the percentage of scholarship holders to be significant.

Students were also asked if their mother worked to contribute to the family income and 23 per cent answered ' yes '.

An analysis by social class was made and it was found that the lower professional group contains the highest proportion of mothers contributing to the family income, 37–38 per cent (Table 14). A fair number of the mothers in this group may well be teachers. In the total sample of students, 75 stated their mothers were trained teachers.

The next highest proportion of mothers contributing to the family income falls to the intermediate non-manual group (27–28 per cent).

In the skilled manual group a quarter of the mothers work and about 20 per cent of the wives of senior salaried employees.

A small percentage (16–17 per cent) in the other three groups, professional, managerial and farming, also work.

The question was asked in the hope of assessing how far the child's chance of going to university depended on the mother's earnings. Obviously the earnings of mothers in the higher professional and managerial groups have little or no bearing on whether a child with this kind of background goes to university. However, in the lower professional group the mother's contribution could be a factor and may account for the high participation rate of this group. It may be a factor also in another group (intermediate non-manual) which has a high participation rate in U.C.D.

TABLE 14

MOTHER WORKING TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE FAMILY INCOME—I

Mothers working	244
Number in sample	1,050
Percentage	23·23

MOTHERS WORKING TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE FAMILY INCOME—II, ANALYSED BY SOCIAL CLASS

	Social Groups											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Number in each group (N=1,050)	7	138	127	225	82	210	33	56	6	4	16	146
Number who said mother worked (N=239)	1	23	48	39	17	57	8	14	2	—	5	25
Percentage	14·28	16·66	37·79	17·33	20·73	27·24	24·24	25·00	33·33	—	31·27	17·12

When an analysis by Faculty is made (Table 15), no great difference in the proportion of mothers working occurs. The highest proportion, almost 32 per cent, occurs among the mothers of respondents in the Faculty of Medicine. This is a reasonable finding. Medicine is an expensive course and a mother's earnings could be an important factor in the decision to enter this Faculty. For example, parents who were teachers and both working would find it financially easy to educate a boy or girl to be a doctor, whereas a family where the father was a teacher and the mother did not work would find they had to make substantial sacrifices to see a child through such a long and expensive course. It should also be borne in mind that some of the students who elect to study medicine may have mothers who are doctors and are in fact following in their mothers' footsteps.

SIZE OF FAMILY TO WHICH RESPONDENTS BELONG

In general the financial burden of keeping a student at university in this country falls on parents. A reasonable hypothesis would be that members of large families are at a disadvantage with regard to access to university. It was hoped that the answers to the question dealing with size of family would show how far this hypothesis was borne out.

For convenience in assessing the data from students' answers families were divided into three categories, small 1–2 children, medium 3–4 and large 5 or more.

Fifty-five students out of the sample of 1,061 from the Republic did not answer this question. This left 1,006 who answered. The following is the analysis of the answers.

TABLE 15

MOTHERS CONTRIBUTING TO FAMILY INCOME—III, ANALYSED BY FACULTY

Faculty	Number of Mothers contributing	Number in Faculty who answered	Percentage
Agriculture	12	48	25·0
Architecture	6	29	20·7
Arts	77	337	22·8
Commerce	25	98	25·5
Engineering	29	131	22·1
Law	4	29	13·8
Medicine and Dentistry ...	44	138	31·9
Pharmacy	5	18	27·8
Science	22	124	17·7
Social Science	8	50	16·0
Veterinary Medicine	12	48	25·0
Total	244	1,050	23·2

TABLE 16 — I

SIZE OF FAMILY TO WHICH RESPONDENTS BELONG

	Small Family	Medium Family	Large Family	Total
Number	144	376	486	1,006
Percentage	14·31	37·38	48·31	100·0

From the Census of Population, it is possible to classify the children in the following types of family, (i) man, wife and one or more children (of any age), (ii) one parent and one or more children (of any age), according to the number of children in family.

TABLE 16 — II

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FAMILY, CLASSIFIED BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION IN APRIL 1961[4]

Household	Number of Children (000s)	Percentage Distribution
1–2 children	239·0	24·6
3–4 children	333·7	34·2
5+ children	401·1	41·2
Total	973·8	100·0

The low participation 14·3 per cent for children from small families which comprise 24·6 per cent of the total is very remarkable. The fact that the distribution is so strongly biased away from small families seems to suggest that in Ireland contrary to expectation children from larger families in the groups which dominate in higher education are not at a disadvantage as regards access to university.

To obtain further information bearing on this matter I have collated the answers to this question on family size with the answers to a question on the position of the student in his family. The results are shown in Table 17 for family sizes from two to nine. The results for families with 7 to 9 children have been grouped together for greater statistical accuracy.

To facilitate comparison, the results normalised to 100 first children for all family sizes are shown in Table 18. In all families the first child predominates. Allowing for statistical fluctuations all family sizes show a remarkably similar distribution with the possible exception of the largest families where the number of fourth children is low. One might have expected that in the larger families the distribution would have peaked at the later children but this is clearly not so. The results seem to show that the opportunity of going to a university is not influenced markedly either by the size of the family or the child's position in the family. Clearly, too,

TABLE 17

RESPONDENTS CLASSIFIED BY SIZE OF FAMILY AND BY POSITION IN FAMILY

Postion in Family	Size of Family					
	2	3	4	5	6	7–9
1	67	63	74	55	42	37
2	46	52	58	36	23	20
3		38	50	25	15	29
4			41	29	16	6
5				26	12	19
6					14	16
7						14
Number in sample ...	113	153	223	171	122	141

TABLE 18

RESPONDENTS CLASSIFIED BY SIZE OF FAMILY AND POSITION IN FAMILY, WITH THE NUMBER OF FIRST CHILDREN NORMALISED TO 100

Position in Family	2	3	4	5	6	7–9
1	100	100	100	100	100	100
2	69	83	79	65	55	54
3		60	74	45	36	78
4			55	53	38	16
5				47	29	51
6					33	43
7						28

the second and later children if of sufficient ability may be expected to follow the first child into the university.

There is plainly a very strong motivation to providing university education for their children on the part of parents in the various social groups who predominate in the Irish university population. In view of the absence of scholarships the sacrifices involved in sending the eldest of a family of several children to university should not be underestimated.

In Table 19 I have given the number in family for the various social groups and in Table 20 the place of the student in the family for the various social groups. The first and second children predominate in all social groups.

SUMMER EMPLOYMENT

The small number of scholarships available means that some students must be largely dependent, and others dependent to some extent on what they earn from vacation jobs. The replies to the question on summer employment show that between 78 and 79 per cent of the students intended

TABLE 19

NUMBERS IN FAMILY (ANALYSED BY SOCIAL GROUP)

Group	Size of Family			Number who answered
	Small (1–2)	Medium (2–3)	Large (3–4)	
1—Agricultural workers ...	1	3	3	7
2—Higher professional	19	48	64	131
3—Lower professional	17	44	65	126
4—Managerial and Executive ...	29	90	95	214
5—Senior salaried workers ...	9	38	31	78
6—Intermediate non-manual ...	39	79	88	206
7—Other non-manual	5	12	15	32
8—Skilled workers	11	16	25	52
9—Semi-skilled workers ...	1	2	2	5
10—Unskilled	—	—	—	—
11—Persons who cannot be allocated to above groups or 12	2	5	7	14
12—Farmers	11	39	91	141
Total	144	376	486	1,006

TABLE 20

PLACE IN FAMILY (ANALYSED BY SOCIAL GROUP)

Group	Place			Number who answered
	1st–2nd	3rd–4th	5th upward	
1—Agricultural workers ...	5	2	—	7
2—Higher professional	81	33	17	131
3—Lower professional	65	42	19	126
4—Managerial and executive ...	148	44	22	214
5—Senior salaried workers ...	52	18	8	78
6—Intermediate non-manual ...	124	58	24	206
7—Other non-manual	19	9	4	32
8—Skilled manual	40	6	6	52
9—Semi-skilled man	2	—	3	5
10—Unskilled man	—	—	—	0
11—Persons who cannot be allocated to above groups or 12	6	4	4	14
12—Farmers	62	33	46	141
Total	604	249	153	1,006

to take summer jobs. Of those who planned to work in the summer 73–74 per cent said they would use the money they earned towards meeting their fees or for other academic expenses. Table 21 shows the analysis by Faculty of respondents who intended to take summer employment.

TABLE 21

RESPONDENTS WHO INTEND TO TAKE SUMMER EMPLOYMENT

Faculty	Number who answered 'Yes'	Number in sample	Percentage
Agriculture	44	48	91·7
Architecture	26	29	85·7
Arts	238	340	70·0
Commerce	87	98	88·7
Engineering	129	134	96·3
Dentistry	14	16	87·5
Law	18	29	62·1
Medicine	102	123	82·9
Pharmacy	17	20	85·0
Science	90	124	72·6
Social Science	35	52	67·3
Veterinary Medicine	36	48	75·0
Total	836	1,061	78·8

URBAN OR RURAL BACKGROUND

In asking the question, 'Do you live in a town of 3,000 population or over?' it was hoped to find what proportion of the students had what might be termed an urban background. Anyone living in a town having a population below 3,000 would be classed as 'rural'. As can be seen from Table 22 just over 70 per cent of the respondents can be classed as urban. This is in keeping with the figures in Table 4 showing the geographical distribution of the full-time students for the session 1965–66.

Table 22 also shows that in only two Faculties, Agriculture and Veter-

TABLE 22

RESPONDENTS WHO LIVE IN A TOWN OF 3,000 POPULATION OR OVER

Faculty	Number	Number in sample	Percentage
Agriculture	18	48	37·5
Architecture	25	29	86·2
Arts	240	340	70·6
Commerce	51	70	72·8
Dentistry	14	16	87·5
Engineering	101	134	75·4
Law	26	29	89·7
Medicine	88	123	71·5
Pharmacy	13	20	65·0
Science	90	124	72·6
Social Science	35	43	81·4
Veterinary Medicine	20	48	41·7
Total	721	1,024	70·4

inary Medicine, do the numbers coming from a rural background exceed the numbers coming from an urban background. This was to be expected from the findings shown in Table 6 (percentage distribution of the social groups within the Faculties).

CHOICE OF COURSE AT UNIVERSITY AND ATTITUDES TO STUDY

The motivation of a student is as important as his intellectual ability in the successful completion of a university course. To make some assessment of motivation questions were included in the questionnaire aimed at discovering (*a*) the influences which had led to a student entering a particular Faculty, (*b*) his attitude to his studies and (*c*) the number of hours he could study profitably.

Fifty-six per cent of the respondents stated they had made their own choice of Faculty and 26 per cent said they had been influenced by their parents or by parents in conjunction with some other factor. A few had been influenced either by school staff or school friends and fewer still by either career guidance talks or by reading, T.V., etc.

A plausible assumption would be that a student who made his own choice of university course, based on interests, would answer ' yes ' to the question, ' Do your studies stimulate and satisfy you?' The fact that only 52 per cent of the respondents admit to taking pleasure in their studies seems at first glance disturbing. It is important to remember, however, that we are dealing with first year students and their attitude to study may reflect largely the difficulty of adjusting to the university situation. Young people pass from a sheltered school environment in which they were pupils to the more exposed university milieu in which they become students. It takes time to become adjusted to the new and heady atmosphere of freedom and to the fact that responsibility for his work belongs to the student himself. He may not resolve these difficulties until he has spent a year at college.

There is also the fact that some students view going to a university solely as a means to achieving a vocational goal and seem to be without intellectual curiosity. They look on their studies as a period of suffering they must undergo before entering the paradise of a well-paid job.

However, the fact that many students view their studies with moderate rapture does not prevent them working conscientiously. Answers to question 20 of the questionnaire show that over 81 per cent work either two or three hours at a stretch. Forty-eight per cent of the respondents work in the college libraries, 28 per cent at home and 24 per cent in lodgings.

Considerations of the student's approach to study and the time he devotes to it touch only the fringe of the problem of learning at university. This is a complex problem and merits a special survey in which study methods and attitudes would be analysed against personality and level of attainment or intellectual ability.

TABLE 23
FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCED RESPONDENT IN HIS CHOICE OF COURSE

Faculty	Number in sample	Own choice	Percentage	Parents, or Parents plus another factor	Percentage	School, Career Guidance, Reading, etc.	Percentage	Total Percentage
Agriculture	48	32	66·7	16	33·33	—	—	100
Architecture	29	17	58·7	9	31·0	3	10·3	100
Arts	340	197	58·0	90	26·5	53	15·5	100
Commerce	98	47	48·0	35	35·8	16	16·2	100
Dentistry	16	11	68·7	5	31·3	—	—	100
Engineering	134	66	49·2	35	26·1	33	24·7	100
Law	29	17	58·7	9	31·0	3	10·3	100
Medicine	123	76	61·8	25	20·3	22	17·9	100
Pharmacy	20	14	70·0	6	30·0	—	—	100
Science	124	63	50·8	23	18·6	38	30·6	100
Social Science	52	20	38·5	13	25·0	19	36·5	100
Veterinary Medicine ...	48	35	73·0	13	27·0	—	—	100
Total	1,061	595	56·0	279	26·3	187	17·7	100

TABLE 24

RESPONDENTS ATTITUDES TO STUDIES

Attitude	Number	Percentage
Students who like their studies	610	53·08
Students who work conscientiously even though they may not like their studies	345	30·07
Students who dislike their studies	192	16·73
Total	1,147	99·88

COMPARISON OF SOCIAL BACKGROUND WITH OTHER COUNTRIES

I have attempted in Table 25 to give a comparison of the social class composition of the student population of the various European countries. This information is not available from all countries. The figures for France have been published by the Bureau de Statistique Universitaire. The figures given in Table 25 for the Federal Republic are those furnished by the delegation from the Federal Republic of Germany to the Committee for Higher Education of the Council of Europe, meeting in Florence in October, 1965. The figures given for the Netherlands were communicated to me privately last March by Madam Koch of the Ministry of Education at the Hague. They are from a survey carried out in 1959 by the Netherlands Central Bureau for Statistics and are the most recent available. In a covering letter Madame Koch stated that no radical changes have taken place in Holland since 1959 in the social class distribution of university students.

It is not possible to make a completely satisfactory comparison between the various countries since in no two countries are the social divisions classified identically. Germany makes a special division of the higher professional group and also a separate division for independent business men but it lists civil servants and salaried white-collar workers in one large category. Both the Netherlands and Switzerland give only three large general divisions, upper, intermediate and lower classes. The lower class refers to peasants and manual workers and the upper to professional, managerial and executive personnel. The classification in Britain and Northern Ireland more closely resembles the classification of our own Central Statistics Office except that farmers are not listed separately.

As can be seen from the table the student population is predominantly middle class in all the countries listed. Governments everywhere are faced with the same problem, how to design a system of education which will give equal opportunities to all. Even in the United Kingdom where there is free grammar school education for all who pass the 11+ and where there has been a system of university grants for all the ablest of the grammar school leavers, the percentage of the student population who come from working-class backgrounds has remained constant since 1928. Little[5] points out that over a quarter of the males who were born before

TABLE 25

THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION AMONG THE VARIOUS SOCIAL GROUPS OF THE STUDENTS OF THE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES

Social Group	Republic of Ireland (U.C.D.)[1]	N. Ireland	Britain	France	Germany	Netherlands	Switzerland
Higher professional	13·0	14·5	18·0	53·2[2]	10·7	49·0 (Upper group)	60·0 (Upper and upper-mid.)
Managerial and other professional and senior salaried officials	40·9	35·2	41·0		14·0[3]		
Clerical and other non-manual workers	23·4	22·1	12·0	26·6			
Skilled manual	5·5	21·4	18·0	6·4	5·3 (All manual classes)	43·0 (Middle group)	32·4 (Lower middle-class)
Semi- and unskilled	1·8	3·5	7·0				
Farmers	13·9	—	—	5·6	4·0		
Farm labourers	(included in semi- and unskilled)	—	—	0·6		8·0 (Lower group)	7·6 (Working class)
Unknown	1·5	—	4·0	7·6	—		
Civil Servants and salaried white-collar workers[3]	(Listed under managerial or clerical according to status)	(Listed under managerial or clerical)	(Listed under managerial or clerical)	(Listed under senior cadres or clerical)[2]	66·0[3]		

[1]The social grouping for the university institutions of the Republic as a whole are given in the Appendix.*
[2]This 53·2 per cent includes all professional and senior cadres and employers in industry and commerce.
[3]The 14·0 per cent includes independent business men only. *Civil servant* has a wide connotation in Germany (see text).
* Not yet available.

1910 and went to university, came from working-class backgrounds. Table 25 shows the present position in Britain. The figures are taken from the Robbins Report[6] and show that a quarter of the undergraduates come from the families of manual workers. Abbott[7] speaks of the tendency of the middle-classes rather than the working-classes to benefit from the expansion of educational opportunity which the 1944 Education Act was designed to bring about. She is of the same opinion as Little that such expansion in the proportion of working-class students which has taken place in Britain ' is neither large nor a unique phenomenon of the period after the 1944 Act '.

When we compare the distribution of the social groups here and in Britain we find it it not dissimilar, though the proportion of students whose fathers are skilled workers is substantially higher in Britain. This, of course, is the overall picture for Britain; the proportion differs from university to university. It is interesting to compare the figures given for Edinburgh, Durham and Newcastle in Abbott's investigation. Fifteen per cent of the students in Edinburgh are the children of manual workers, 20 per cent in Durham and 21 per cent in Newcastle. The Edinburgh figures show a preponderantly middle-class student population and are of particular interest to us since Edinburgh University has much in common with University College, Dublin.

In 1964–65 there were 8,000 students in Edinburgh, 75 per cent of whom came from the neighbourhood of Edinburgh.

TABLE 26

SOCIAL CLASS IN THREE NORTHERN UNIVERSITIES

Social Class of Origin	Edinburgh	Durham	Newcastle
Upper class	0·6%	0%	0%
Upper middle class	39%	29%	32%
Lower middle class	44%	46%	44%
Working class	15%	21%	20%
No occupation stated	2%	4%	4%
Total	100·6%	100%	100%

(Table reproduced from Abbott's study.)

Both Edinburgh and Dublin have flourishing medical schools with a long tradition of excellence. The cities in which both universities are situated and from which they draw the greater part of their student body, are largely comparable in social background. Both cities have a large middle-class comprising professional and business people. Their industries are light industries and service industries—no heavy industries. Even their history and traditions are largely similar. Furthermore, the educational system of Scotland resembles ours more closely than does that of England and Wales. What appears from Abbott's study to be happening

in Edinburgh is the expansion of the lower middle-class in the university rather than the working-class. This I think is what would happen here were more scholarships available. The figures for the small sample of U.C.D. evening students, given in Table 27 would seém to bear this out, that is if we accept (and I think it reasonable to do so) that evening students are largely made up of people who are prevented by financial reasons from coming to university straight from school and have to wait until they are in employment and can pay for their own tuition.

The figures for Northern Ireland in Table 25 are taken from the Lockwood Report and refer to the session 1963–64. They show that skilled manual workers' children are much better represented in Queen's University than in Edinburgh. The representation is on a level with that in Durham and Newcastle. But apart from the fairly high rate of participation of skilled manual workers' children, the distribution of the other social groups in Queen's University and in U.C.D. is much the same. Other statistics in the Lockwood Report[8] show that between 60 and 61 per cent of the university scholarship holders in Northern Ireland in the year 1962–63 belonged to either the professional or the managerial groups. Clerical and skilled manual workers' children held 32 per cent and semi- and un-skilled workers' children 7 per cent of the scholarships.

I have singled out the British universities for detailed consideration because in many ways opportunities for secondary and tertiary education in Britain are excellent. Secondary education is subsidised and there is a prodigal distribution of university grants. Of the students in British universities 85 per cent are in receipt of grants, only 15 per cent are self-supporting. Here in Ireland the converse prevails. According to statistics

TABLE 27

DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL GROUPS AMONG RESPONDENTS FROM SAMPLE OF FIRST AND SECOND COMMERCE EVENING STUDENTS. TOTAL SAMPLE 136

Group	Number in Sample	Percentage Distribution	Percentage Distribution among Day Students
1	—	—	0·7
2	6	4·4	13·0
3	18	13·2	12·0
4	15	11·0	21·6
5	3	2·2	7·3
6	41	30·2	20·1
7	4	2·9	3·3
8	15	11·1	5·5
9	—	—	0·6
10	6	4·4	0·4
11	4	2·2	1·5
12	25	18·4	13·9
Total	136		

given in the Irish-O.E.C.D. report only 15 per cent of the students in the Republic of Ireland have university scholarships. The proportion for U.C.D. itself is only 14·4 per cent. And yet, the fact remains that the distribution of students by social class is not greatly different in the two countries. We cannot escape the conclusion that lack of participation in university education by certain social groups is not just a matter of economics, the problem is much more complex. It stems in a large measure from the effect of family environment on learning and expectation of access to the higher levels of education.

Let us consider the position in the Continental countries, taking them in the order in which they appear in Table 25. The primary level of education in France, and the secondary level for those who qualify for entry to the Lycées, is free but study at the universities and in some of the Grandes Ecoles is not provided free of charge. However, Faculty fees are nominal and in addition about a quarter of all French students are in receipt of scholarships. Nevertheless, the demand for higher education in France still comes largely from the middle classes. In the two Grandes Ecoles which are at the top of the French educational ladder—the Ecole Normale Supérieure and the Ecole Polytechnique more than half the students are of upper middle-class origin, despite the fact that once entry to these two Ecoles has been gained the students live and are educated at the expense of the State.

	Composition of student body[9]
Ecole Normale	57% upper class
	26% lower-middle class
Ecole Polytechnique ...	51% upper class
	15% lower-middle class

In the academic year 1964–65, two-thirds of German students came from families of civil servants or salaried white-collar workers. The next largest group, 14 per cent, had fathers who were independent business men or tradesmen and about 10–11 per cent had fathers in the professions. Only 5·3 per cent came from working-class homes and 4 per cent were the children of independent farmers. The term ' civil servant ' in Germany has a very wide connotation. Teachers, professors, high officials of the State, the Länder and the Counties, are all civil servants as are postmen, policemen and other minor State employees. About 30 per cent of the university students in the Federal Republic are in receipt of grants.

In the Netherlands the sums available for Government grants to students has risen steeply since 1950. In that year only 2,370,000 guilders was spent on grants; by 1960 it had risen to 20,160,000 guilders. As in Germany, about 30 per cent of the students receive these grants. Yet, despite the high increase in grants over the past 15 years the Netherlands Ministry of Education notes that the increase in participation from children of working-class homes has lagged behind.

The figures for Switzerland[10] given in Table 25 show that the demand for higher education is even more weighted on the side of the upper–middle classes than it is in Holland. The upper–middle classes in Switzerland form only 15 per cent of the entire population but they contribute 60 per

cent of the university students. The Swiss psychologist Roger Girod[11] who made a study of the educational progress of children from the various social groups came to the conclusion that selection for higher studies began in the primary schools.

The same problem of lack of participation in higher studies among certain social groups exists in Sweden and has been the subject of much intensive study by Swedish educational psychologists. The overall conclusion is that entry to the higher levels of education is closely linked with family motivation and aspiration.

In the United States, secondary schools are numerous and practically all children in the Northern and Western states can obtain a secondary education. Furthermore, children must remain at school until they are sixteen. Nevertheless, there is a big ' drop-out ' of talented young people before higher education is reached. Two of the reasons given for this drop-out of able students are (*a*) the excellent opportunities for immediate employment of high-school graduates and (*b*) lack of interest. To the factors given above should be added the educational background of parents. American college students come from all levels of society but the professional group supplies a larger proportion of their own number than does any other social group. Next to the professional group come other white-collar groups. A United States Census Bureau study of high school graduates carried out in 1960 showed that among the children of white-collar workers 63 per cent of the high school graduates went to college the year after graduating, 30 per cent of the children of fathers in manual or service occupations and 28 per cent of the children of farmers or agricultural workers.

In Australia also, the tendency has been noted for the universities to draw their students from a somewhat narrow social range. Discussing the problem Adams[12] stresses the importance of the level of aspiration of adolescents and says that this is closely related to the occupation of the father and exercises a deep influence on the age at which a boy or girl leaves school. Like the Swiss psychologist Girod, Adams argues that selection for university begins earlier than the closing years of secondary education.

A common conclusion from any study is that more research is needed. Plainly we need to know why two groups (the skilled workers and the intermediate non-manual workers) should differ so greatly in the numbers they send to university. The disparity is already evident at the post-primary level as can be seen from table 6.28 of the Irish-O.E.C.D. report. The differences in earning power between these two groups is far from being so great as to be mirrored in their respective contributions to the university population. How far is the low representation of the skilled manual class due to a lack of mobility aspirations? Parents' ambitions for their family and willingness to assume responsibility for an education which will give their children a good start in life are among the imponderables which affect a child's chance of reaching university. A parent's motivation is often bound up with his own educational background and the results of this study point to a closer correlation between parental education and the

child's chance of going to a university than between parental income and opportunity.

It is also possible that a lower level of educational attainment is one of the causes of the low representation of the skilled manual group. We have become increasingly aware of the dependence of intelligence on environment and it may be that the cultural background of a child from the manual class handicaps him in the academic race. We need a systematic study of the reasons for the educational drop out from the skilled workers' group.

It is a mistake to concentrate solely on the economic obstacles to transfer from a lower to a higher level of education and to ignore the psychological and social factors which intervene. As I have mentioned already, the psychological aspect of willingness or inclination to remain in education is of great importance. In this connection it was very encouraging to read the speech delivered last June by Mr. John Conroy to the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union Liberty Study Group in which he urged all workers who had children of school-going age to make every reasonable sacrifice to keep them at school until they had obtained the Leaving Certificate.

So far equal educational opportunity has proved in every country to be something of a will-o-the-wisp. Given the necessary financial support the economic obstacles are relatively easy to overcome, it is the hidden inequalities stemming from the culture and aspirations of the social group which present the difficulty. Until we take them into account and make some effort to remove them we will not make much progress in the levelling-out of social class differences in access to university.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Luce: Speaking in support of the vote of thanks, complimented Mrs. Nevin for her pioneering contribution in an important field of study. He drew attention to the high proportion of first year students who intended to subsidise their university course out of the proceeds of vacation jobs, and suggested that this was bound to have an adverse effect on the quality of their studies. He also drew attention to the regrettably high proportion (17%) of students who actively dislike their studies. He contrasted American State universities and continental universities, with their large impersonal classes, and British universities, with their much more advantageous staff/student ratio and better staff/student contact in tutorials and seminars. In view of the trend towards more specialisation in the revised syllabuses for the Intermediate and Leaving examinations he suggested that Irish university development ought to incline more to the British than to the continental model.

Fr. Andrews: Thank you, Mrs. Nevin. Your paper impressed two thoughts on me: first the inequality in educational opportunity at university level, so evident from your figures; and secondly the wastage: more than half the brighter children of the country are children of manual workers, but we have seen what diminished possibilities they have of developing their abilities fully. The country can ill afford to leave this

talent unused, as it can ill afford the drop-outs in the early years of secondary and vocational schools, and the failures in the first year of university, all implying a waste of educational effort.

Mr. O'Donoghue has suggested one remedy, the economic one. It is necessary also to educate people to want education. I have seen this effected in a comprehensive school where, over several years, children and their parents come to appreciate the relevance of education, and to stay on after the school-leaving age—in a working-class area where at first practically none stayed at school beyond this age. In Germany they are advertising education, to try to overcome these social barriers to its spread.

Mrs. Nevin suggested many other lines of thought: the implications of the higher educational level of the wife in rural areas; the possibility that guidance, or testing of interests and personality, could reduce the number who waste time in university and drop out before getting a degree. For all these we are most grateful.

APPENDIX

KEY TO SOCIAL GROUP CODE NUMBERS IN THIS STUDY

Social Group

1—Agricultural labourers, forestry labourers, fishermen turf-workers.

2—Higher professional; physicians, surgeons and other medical practitioners, veterinary surgeons, members of the legal profession, engineers, foresters (Department of Lands, Forestry inspectors), analytical chemists and other scientists, accountants (professional).

3—Lower professional; teachers, pharmacists, librarians, journalists, authors, actors, musicians, painters, nurses, opticians.

4—Administrative, executive and managerial workers; members of the Dail and Senate, Civil Service officials of higher executive rank or above, Local Authority senior officials, Garda inspectors, superintendents, directors, managers, proprietors of large concerns, managers, buyers of wholesale or retail trade.

5—Senior salaried employees; commissioned officers in army, commercial travellers, manufacturers agents, auctioneers, valuers, transport inspectors and supervisors, ships' engineering officers, aircraft pilots, stationmasters.

6—Intermediate non-manual workers; clerks, civil servants of executive officer or junior rank, Local Authority officers of junior rank, shop assistants, shopkeepers (own account), Garda sergeants and lower ranks, detectives, garage proprietors (own account).

7—Other non-manual workers; bus conductors, postmen, post office assistants, fire brigade men, stewards, cooks (hotel and restaurant), hairdressers, barbers, photographers, physical training instructors.

8—Skilled manual workers; engine drivers, firemen (railway), painters and decorators, tailors, upholsterers, millers, bakers, printers, dental mechanics, masons, plasterers, plumbers, electricians.

9—Semi-skilled; kiln-operators, foundry-labourers, electrical and television assemblers, spinners and knitters, sugar refiners, meat curers, dock labourers, stevedores, lorry drivers, packers.

10—Unskilled; contractors' labourers, road labourers, general labourers.

11—Persons who cannot be allocated to above groups or to group 12; for example, widows.

12—Farmers, farm managers, farm foremen.

REFERENCES

[1]Bourdieu, P. et Passeron, J. C. (1964). Les Héritiers. Les Editions de Minuit, Paris.
[2]The Management of Irish Industry, Table 4.14, p. 51. Irish Management Institute, 1966.
[3]Investment in Education: Irish-O.E.C.D. Report, 1965, p. 171. Government Publications Office, Dublin.
[4]Table furnished by the Central Statistics Office.
[5]Little and Westergaard 1964. The trend of class differentials in educational opportunities in England and Wales, *B.J.S.*, Vol. 15, No.4.
[6]Higher Education: Cmnd. 2154, Appendix II(B), 1964. H.M.S.O. (Robbins Report).
[7]Abbott, Joan (1965). Social Class in Three Northern Universities, *B.J.S.*, Vol. 16, No. 3.
[8]Higher Education in Northern Ireland (Lockwood Report), Cmnd. 474, pp. 303–304, Tables 90 and 91. 1964, H.M.S.O., Belfast.
[9]Bourdieu, P. et Passeron, J. C. Op. cit., p. 21.
[10]Jaccard, P. (1962). Sociologie de L'Education, Paris pp. 207–208.
[11]Girod, R. Retard Scolaire. Etudes Pédagogiques, pp. 42–55. Lausanne.
[12]Adams, R. S. Vestes, Vol. 4, No. 4. December, 1963.

GENERAL REFERENCES

Access to Higher Education, Vol. II, 1965. A U.N.E.S.C.O. Publication.
Ability and Educational Opportunity. An O.E.C.D. Report, 1961.
The Year Book of Education, 1962.

APPENDIX—QUESTIONAIRE

INTRODUCTION

This questionnaire forms part of a student research project being undertaken in the Department of Psychology to study various aspects of the structure of the student population of the College and the motivation of students about which very little detailed information exists. Information of the kind which it is hoped to obtain is available for only two or three European countries.

Students are under no obligation to complete the form but in view of the potential interest and importance of the results it is hoped that the response will be really large. In fact, a large response is essential to enable statistical conclusions to be drawn from the results. The questions are asked in a form which will allow the answers to be punched on cards and studied with the aid of data processing equipment in the College.

Do not complete the form in a hurry. Study it carefully and consider carefully the answer to each question. Do not write your name or address anywhere on the form. When you have completed the form place it in the envelope and drop it in one of the two boxes specially provided. One of these boxes has been placed in the Porter's Office in the Cnetral Hall in Earlsfort Terrace, the other with the porters in the hall of the Physics Building in Belfield.

A STUDENT WHO RECEIVES MORE THAN ONE COPY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE SHOULD *COMPLETE AND RETURN ONLY ONE COPY.*

To help students to answer question 16, here is a list of towns which according to the 1961 census had a total population of 3,000 or more.

Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Galway, Dundalk, Drogheda, Sligo, Bray, Wexford, Kilkenny, Tralee, Clonmel, Athlone, Carlow, Ennis, Mullingar, Killarney, Thurles, Enniscorthy, Tullamore, Cobh, Ballina, Ballinasloe, Mallow Portlaoighse (Maryborough), Castlebar, Arklow, Navan, Dungarvan, Youghal, Tuam, Tipperary, Carrick on Suir, New Ross, Newbridge, Nenagh, Letterkenny, Longford, Naas, Cavan, Middleton, Birr, Athby, Bandon, Fermoy, Greystones-Delgany, Clondalkin, Roscrea, Buncrana, Wicklow.

QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE STUDENT POPULATION OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

For the purpose of this survey it is not necessary that students should be individually identifiable. They therefore should not write their name or give their address anywhere on the form. Individual questionnaires are confidential and remain the property of the Department of Psychology, University College, Dublin.

QUESTION 1
Give Faculty. (Write in box.) ☐

QUESTION 2
Give year. (Tick where appropriate.) First ☐ Second ☐ Third ☐

QUESTION 3
Give sex. (Tick where appropriate.) Male ☐ Female ☐

QUESTION 4
Where have you and your family resided in the last five years?
(*a*) In the 26 Counties of the Republic ☐
(*b*) In the six counties of Northern Ireland ☐
(*c*) Elsewhere ☐
(Tick where appropriate, if more than one applies.)
DO NOT GIVE ADDRESS.

QUESTION 5
Give your father's occupation, or former occupation if retired. (Write in box.) ☐

If your father is dead give the occupation of your guardian. (Write in box.) ☐

QUESTION 6
Do you reside during the university term
(*a*) in a hostel ☐
(*b*) in an ecclesiastical establishment ☐
(*c*) in lodgings ☐
(*d*) at home ☐
(Tick where appropriate.)

QUEST,ON 7
Does your mother exercise a profession or eccupation by way of contribution towards the family income? Yes ☐ No ☐
(Tick where appropriate.)

QUESTION 8
How many children are there in your family? (Write number in box.) ☐

QUESTION 9
Whre do you come in the family (e.g. first, second, etc.)? Count from eldest. (Write in box.) ☐

QUESTION 10
At what age did your parents finish their full-time education?

	Father	Mother
Under 15 years of age	1 ☐	1 ☐
15 but under 18	2 ☐	2 ☐
18 years of age or over	3 ☐	3 ☐
Do not know	4 ☐	4 ☐

(Tick where appropriate.)

QUESTION 11
Did either of your parents obtain a university degree?
Father Yes ☐ Mother Yes ☐
(Tick where appropriate.) No ☐ No ☐

QUESTION 12
Is either of your parents a qualified teacher? (primary, secondary or vocational).
Father Yes ☐ Mother Yes ☐
No ☐ No ☐
(Tick where appropriate.)

QUESTION 13
How many of your brothers and sisters have been at or are at
(*a*) University ☐
(*b*) Teacher Training College ☐
(*c*) Secondary School ☐
(*d*) Vocational School ☐
(*e*) Too young to fall into any of these categories ☐

QUESTION 14
Are you the holder of a scholarship?
(*a*) Corporation scholarship ☐
(*b*) County Council scholarship ☐
(*c*) College Entrance scholarship ☐
(*d*) Any other type of scholarship, bursary or Maintenance grant ☐
(Tick where appropriate.)

QUESTION 15
Do you expect to take summer employment?
Yes ☐ No ☐
(Tick where appropriate.)

QUESTION 15a
Do you intend to allocate some of the moneys so earned to paying your College tuition fees, for books, etc.? Yes ☐ No ☐
(Tick where appropriate.)

QUESTION 16
Do you live in a town of 3,000 population or over? (See attached list.) (Tick where appropriate.) Yes ☐ No ☐

QUESTION 17
Who, if anyone, or what, influenced you in deciding which course to follow at university?
(*a*) Your parents ☐
(*b*) Other relatives ☐
(*c*) School staff ☐
(*d*) School friends ☐
(*e*) Careers guidance talks ☐
(*f*) Reading, T.V. or other popular communication media ☐

Or

Did you make your own decision uninfluenced by any of the factors listed from (*a*)–(*f*)? ☐
(Tick where appropriate. You may wish to tick more than one.)

QUESTION 18
If you are in the Arts faculty have you based your choice of university subjects on subjects in which you did well at school? Yes ☐ No ☐
(Leave blank if not an Arts student.)

QUESTION 19
Do your studies stimulate and satisfy you?
Do you work conscientiously at your studies even though they may not satisfy you? ☐
Do you regard your studies as an unpleasant but necessary task? ☐
(Tick where appropriate.)

QUESTION 20
For how long in your estimation, can you *profitably* study at a stretch without losing interest? Hours 1 ☐
2 ☐
3 ☐
4 ☐
(Tick where appropriate.)

QUESTION 21
Where do you normally study?
(*a*) In the College ☐
(*b*) at home ☐
(*c*) In lodgings ☐
(Tick where appropriate.)

QUESTION 22
If at home or in lodgings do you have to study in a room in which other people carry on other occupations? Yes ☐ No ☐
(Tick where appropriate.)

QUESTION 23
Have you matriculated by
(*a*) National University Matriculation Examination at one attempt? ☐
(*b*) Leaving Certificate Examination at one attempt? ☐
(*c*) A combination of both Matriculation and Leaving Certificate? ☐
(*d*) Two attempts at either examination? ☐
(Tick where appropriate.)

QUESTION 24
Were you ar
(*a*) Primary School with a Secondary Top ☐
(*b*) Secondary Day School ☐
(*c*) Secondary Boarding School ☐
(Tick where appropriate.)