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## Reasons For Non-Enrollment and Low Attendance in LDS Early Morning Seminary at Minneapolis-St. Paul

Wayne P. Smith  
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2008  
S. 18

REASONS FOR NON-ENROLLMENT AND LOW ATTENDANCE  
IN LDS EARLY MORNING SEMINARY AT  
MINNEAPOLIS - ST. PAUL

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Church History and Doctrine

Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

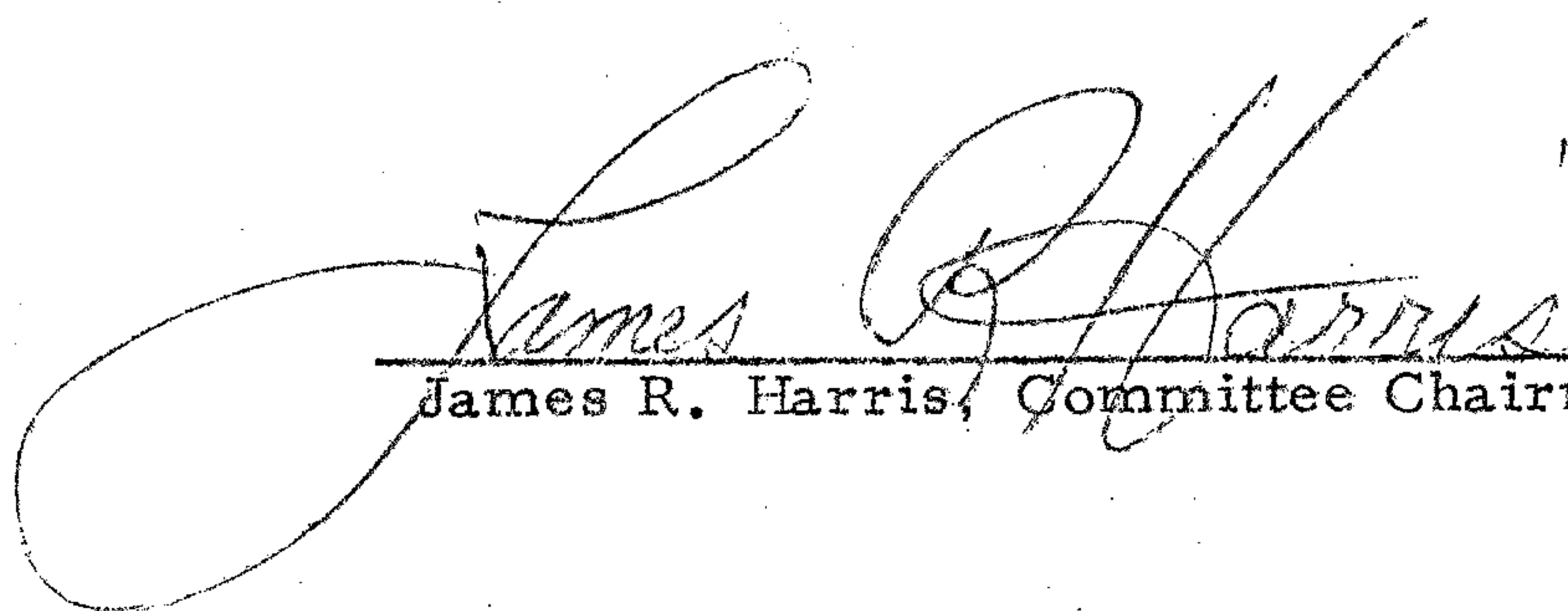
Master of Religious Education

by

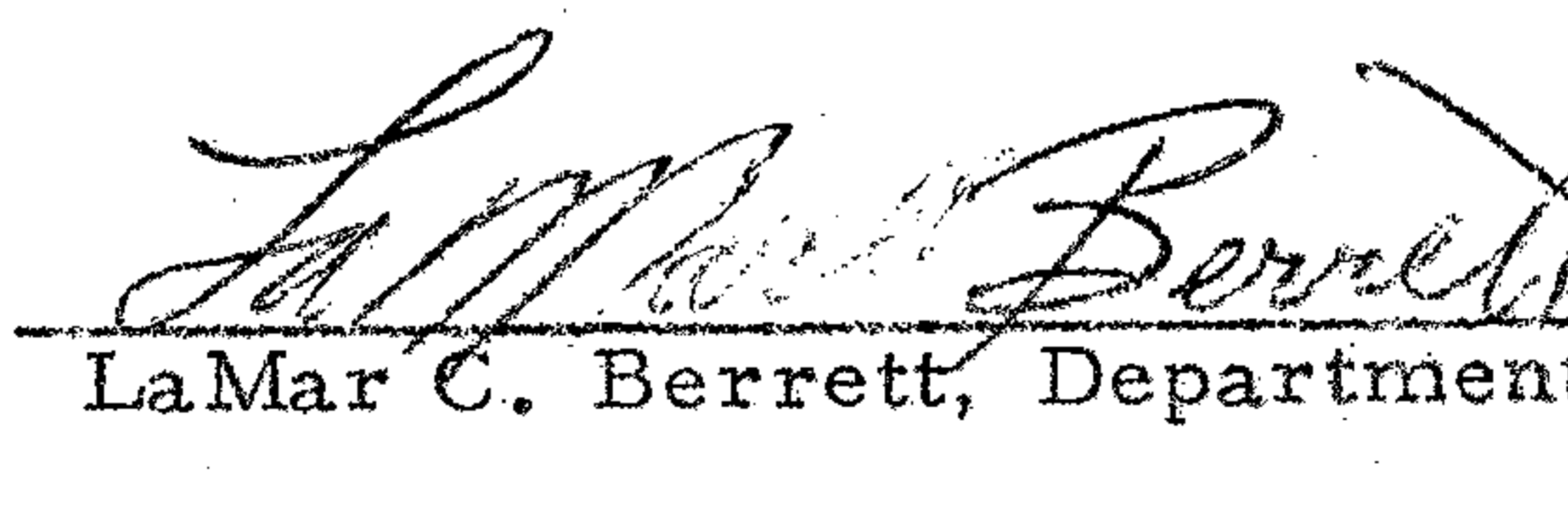
Wayne Platt Smith

April 1975

This thesis, by Wayne Platt Smith, is accepted in its present form by the Department of Church History and Doctrine in the College of Religious Instruction of Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis requirements for the degree of Master of Religious Education.

  
James R. Harris, Committee Chairman

  
Richard O. Cowan, Committee Member

  
LaMar C. Berrett, Department Chairman

  
Date of Department Chairman's Signature

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

LDS CHURCH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

From its beginning The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS, or Mormon Church) has fostered numerous educational programs for its members of all ages.

In the early 1830's the Prophet Joseph Smith, first president of the Church, indicated a broad base for these programs when he taught, as recorded in The Doctrine and Covenants, that members of the Church should:

. . . Teach one another . . . that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand;

Of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms--

That ye may be prepared in all things . . . .

. . . .  
. . . And study and learn, and become acquainted with all good books, and with languages, tongues, and people.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The Doctrine and Covenants (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1959), 88:77-80; 90:15.

Over the years these continuing educational endeavors have included encouragement for personal study, regular meetings, a wide range of publications and periodicals, adult education programs, colleges and universities, and a varying number of parochial schools.

During the early 1900's, as the Church turned its parochial schools in the United States over to local public school systems, it continued to encourage a well rounded education. This was made possible in many areas by providing weekday religious education programs for its student members.

For college age students, "institutes of religion" offered classes compatible with college and university schedules. For younger students, "seminaries" were organized. Grades nine through twelve of these seminary programs eventually became daily classes during school hours wherever state laws provided "released time" for religious instruction and there was a sufficient LDS population to justify erecting a building adjacent to public school facilities.

Later, in states without enough church members to make released time seminary practical, or where there were no released time provisions in the law, classes were offered each morning before school in conveniently located chapels or homes. As this phase of the program caught on it became known as "early morning" seminary.

During the 1972-73 school year there were 230,491 students enrolled in some kind of seminary or institute of religion program in all fifty states of the U.S. and thirty-seven foreign countries. Early

morning seminary accounted for 51,264 of these students in forty-three states, four provinces of Canada, and three additional foreign countries.<sup>2</sup>

### LDS CHURCH IN MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL

The first LDS missionaries to proselyte in Minnesota apparently came in 1868. This was a few years after the Mormons had begun colonizing in the rocky mountains following persecution and removal from several midwestern states. Progress in Minnesota was good and many of the converts migrated to Utah Territory. In 1876 a Scandinavian congregation, the first branch of the Church in Minnesota, was organized in Isante County. By 1885 LDS emigration from the state had subsided. In 1930 there were 967 members in the state and four chapels were owned by the Church.<sup>3</sup>

By 1960 there were about 2600 members concentrated in Minneapolis-St. Paul and four other cities within about one hundred miles, and the first stake<sup>4</sup> in Minnesota was organized.<sup>5</sup> It was named the

---

<sup>2</sup>"1972-73 Seminaries and Institutes Annual Report" (unpublished report of the Church Educational System), pp. 2, 27-149.

<sup>3</sup>Andrew Jenson, Encyclopedic History (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Publishing Co., 1941), p. 514.

<sup>4</sup>A "stake" is an ecclesiastical administrative unit with local church leaders presiding over several congregations, or "wards."

<sup>5</sup>Deseret News, Church News [Salt Lake City], November 29, 1960, pp. 3, 15.

Minnesota Stake until early 1974 when its name was changed to the Minneapolis, Minnesota Stake to reflect the geographical location of its headquarters.

About the same time the stake was organized, early morning seminary was introduced in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. During 1973-74 there were over two hundred students enrolled in thirteen classes. The author, a native of Utah, is presently employed full-time by the Church as Area Director of this seminary program and has lived in Minneapolis since June, 1972.

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

For the last few years only about 50 percent of the potential LDS students in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area have been enrolling in early morning seminary. Most of those who enroll have been completing the year with credit.

During 1973-74 the usual 50 percent of the potential students enrolled, but this time fewer than one half of them even came close to 80 percent attendance to receive credit for the year.

This study will attempt to determine why only 50 percent of the potential LDS students in grades nine through twelve enroll, why so many students attended poorly or discontinued part way through 1973-74, and what effect the significant increase in the price of gasoline during the year had on attendance.

Several studies have been made on enrollment or attendance

among LDS seminary or institute students. The author found three dealing with early morning seminary and applicable to the questions of the present study. Of these three studies, two dealt with enrollment and one with attendance.

### Differences in LDS Church Population

The enrollment studies were done in geographical areas (Utah, 1959, and southern Alberta, 1972), where the LDS Church is much more populous than in Minnesota, and they reached different conclusions about the reasons for non-enrollment. This suggested the possibility of broadening the sample and perhaps adding new findings.

The attendance study was conducted in Montana in 1965. At that time the LDS Church population was comparable to Minnesota's, but there must have been some differences, because since then the number of church members in Montana has increased almost 300 percent while in Minnesota it has only gone up about 50 percent.

Utah is about 72 percent LDS.<sup>6</sup> The figures below compare the relative LDS Church population in Alberta, Montana, and Minnesota at the end of 1964 and 1973:<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> 1974 Church Almanac (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, in cooperation with the Church Historical Department, [n.d.]), p. 197.

<sup>7</sup> "Recapitulation of Form E" (unpublished reports located in the LDS Church Historical Department Archives, Salt Lake City, 1964, 1973).

	<u>Alberta</u>	<u>Montana</u>	<u>Minnesota</u>
1964	25,366	8,513	5,262
1973	31,049	23,317	8,077

### Price of Gasoline

In the fall of 1973, after a summer of rumors and fluctuating prices, there began to be a steady rise in the cost of gasoline in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. It started at about thirty-six cents a gallon and stabilized at about fifty cents a gallon early in 1974.

Many people wondered about the reality of the "shortage" but they were repeatedly and convincingly assured that it was real and could remain for several years.

### HYPOTHESIS TO BE TESTED

It was felt that some factors in the present study would be comparable to the findings of the three previous studies, but there would also be significant differences. A hypothesis was developed that distance from seminary classes would be the major reason for non-enrollment, and the higher price of gasoline would be cited as a hardship, and the biggest reason for decreasing or discontinuing attendance.

### Research Design

An attempt was made to survey each LDS student in grades nine through twelve in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area during 1973-74, and his parents, through the mail. Over four hundred letters were

sent out, student and parent surveys together.

About two hundred questionnaires went to students not enrolled in seminary, about one hundred went to students who enrolled but then attended poorly or discontinued, and about one hundred went to students who attended regularly.

The eight bishops<sup>8</sup> and thirteen early morning seminary teachers in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area were also surveyed. The author intended that the bishops' and teachers' evaluations could be compared with the responses to some items on the questionnaires of students who were not enrolled, and students who attended poorly or discontinued, and their parents. He also intended that the responses of students who attended regularly, and their parents, could be compared with some of the responses of the other students and parents, particularly on the distance and gasoline items.

### Delimitations

About twenty-five students in an isolated area away from Minneapolis-St. Paul and about six other students, all of whom participated in home study seminary rather than early morning, were not included.

### DEFINITION OF TERMS

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<sup>8</sup>A "bishop" is a lay ecclesiastical leader who presides over a "ward," or congregation, within a stake. A "ward" consists of anywhere from about two hundred to about seven hundred members.

For purposes of this study the following terms will be used to identify students (except in Chapter II, Review of the Literature, where each author had used his own terms):

Non-enrollee

An LDS Student enrolled in grades nine through twelve during 1973-74, but not enrolled in seminary.

Dropout

LDS seminary student who paid for his materials and started to come, but even with some excused absences did not reach 80 percent attendance during the year.

Attender

LDS seminary student who attended 80 percent or better during the year.



## Chapter II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Some reading was done by the author to begin to determine why only one half of the students in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area enroll in early morning seminary; why so many attended poorly or discontinued part way through 1973-74; and the effect, if any, of the recent increase in the price of gasoline.

The literature yielded some valuable information, but the author felt that new research was justified. Particularly the effect of higher priced gasoline has apparently never been studied in the LDS seminary and institute system, because it is such a recent development.

Many studies have been compiled on high school enrollment and attendance, but potential LDS seminary students are enrolled in school and attending, so there has been a feeling that these studies would not be exactly applicable.

Several enrollment and attendance studies of LDS seminary students were read. A total of nine were found which had findings or conclusions focusing on non-enrollment or non-attendance. Of the nine, eight were concerned with enrollment and only one with attendance. Each of these studies will be reviewed, followed by a summary.

## SEMINARY ENROLLMENT

Eight enrollment studies contained findings or conclusions on non-enrollment in LDS seminaries. Five were conducted with released time students in Utah and Idaho; and three with early morning students in Utah, Alberta, and Arizona.

Released Time

In 1961 Hatch queried 125 Utah students no longer enrolled in seminary and spoke of the ". . . difficulty encountered in finding the real reasons for the students dropping seminary. Many of the students did not say why they had quit the class."<sup>1</sup>

His lengthy "profile of the seminary dropout" noted ". . . less than 45 percent of the dropouts participated in athletics or extracurricular activities, regularly or occasionally."<sup>2</sup> Continuing, he said:

. . . the dropouts seemed to like physical activities, class participation, and to be challenged, . . . a feeling of accomplishment . . . help with their personal problems, . . . a teacher who has a sense of humor, helps them with their classwork, and has variety in his lessons. The dropouts dislike "busy work, studies which do not apply to their lives, and teachers who will not allow them to express their own opinions."<sup>3</sup>

He found about one half of the parents and students active in the LDS Church and about 40 percent of the mothers working.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Roy F. Hatch, "A Study of Drop-outs from Twelve Seminaries in Utah Conducted During 1960-61" (unpublished Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1961), p. 100.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 101.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 102.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 103-104.

Students were asked to write in why they were "not presently enrolled in seminary," but since almost all the reasons given were also included in the checklist that followed this question, no complete tabulation of the responses was given. A summary of the incomplete listing of responses reported in his appendix<sup>5</sup> follows (paraphrased):

Unaccounted for	50%
Other class needed or desired	31%
Negative response to seminary class	10%
Negative response to seminary teacher	8%
Other conflicts	1%

Hatch did summarize the most frequently checked reasons for dropping out of seminary.<sup>6</sup> The top eleven are paraphrased below:

Felt other classes more important	58%
Class conflict, couldn't work seminary in	52%
Too many required high school classes	46%
Too much stress on journal work	38%
Would have taken seminary if seven periods	36%
Learned little, lost interest, and quit	34%
Too much repetition from sunday school, MLA	29%
See little value in religious education	24%
Plan to register for seminary next year	23%
Seminary too routine, not enough challenge	22%
Did not feel at home in seminary	21%

Hatch concluded:

1. Many of the students who are not enrolled in seminary would like to be enrolled, but because of the increased state requirements, it was difficult for many of the students to take seminary and some of the other electives that they desired, and still graduate from high school in the normal number of years. . . .

8. If the students desire to take seminary, many of the excuses offered . . . were not valid.

9. Many of the teachers are not recognizing the individual differences of their students. . . .

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 113.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 82, 83, 86, 88.

10. Where there is only one teacher at a seminary, sometimes personality conflicts develop and some of the students refuse to take seminary from that particular teacher. . . .

12. The attitude of the parents in the home influenced the lives of the students more than any other single factor.<sup>7</sup>

In 1963 Schramm surveyed 101 students in grades nine and ten who were pre-registered in Pocatello, Idaho, schools for the following year but not pre-registered in seminary; and 368 students pre-registered in both.<sup>8</sup> He postulated six major areas of possible differences in attitudes between the two groups:

. . . Satisfaction in terms of seminary goals, personal harmony with certain LDS religious principles, family pressure to continue or discontinue seminary training, peer group pressure to continue or discontinue seminary training, student interest in the seminary program, and students [sic] interaction with the seminary faculty.<sup>9</sup>

He found "the continuing students' mean responses were nearer the positive end of the scale; those of the non-continuing students nearer the negative end of the scale," in all six areas, and ". . . greater variance in the responses made by the non-continuing than the continuing students."<sup>10</sup>

After a lengthy analysis, Schramm concluded as follows:

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 106-107.

<sup>8</sup>Clarence F. Schramm, "A Study of Differences in Attitudes of Continuing and non-continuing Seminary Students at the Pocatello, Idaho LDS Seminary" (unpublished field project, Brigham Young University, 1963), p. 17.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 48-49.

. . . 2. The probability of a seminary student continuing or discontinuing the prescribed course of study was significantly influenced by the extent to which the student felt that seminary classes were interesting, that his family and friends expected him to enroll in seminary, that he was experiencing personal satisfaction in the seminary program, that he had a favorable association with the seminary teacher, and that his personal life was harmonious with church standards.

3. The non-continuing seminary student, his friends, nor his family did not identify as closely with the church as did the continuing student, his friends, and his family.

4. Factors within the seminary program, or adult expectations, or public school scheduling resulted in a greater proportion of girls (than boys) continuing seminary instruction.<sup>11</sup>

In 1964 Taylor studied 181 students, in grades ten through twelve, enrolled in the Ogden-Weber LDS seminary and one hundred students enrolled in the Weber High School but not enrolled in seminary.<sup>12</sup> He postulated eight areas of possible differences in attitudes between the two groups; five appear to have come from Schramm.

. . . Association with the seminary faculty, student situation in the high school, attitude of peers toward seminary, student attitude toward extracurricular activities, influence of the family, student attitude toward the church, student interest in seminary, and attitude toward church leaders.<sup>13</sup>

He found that the differences were significant in all areas except "attitude toward extracurricular activities." The area with the most significant differences was "influence of the family." "In the

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 51-52.

<sup>12</sup>Gerald F. Taylor, "A Study of the Differences Between Seminary and Non-seminary Students at the Ogden-Weber Seminary 1963-64" (unpublished Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1964), pp. 3-4.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

. . . area 'student interest in seminary,' the non-seminary students responses were more positive than negative. Over 50 percent indicated a positive interest in seminary."<sup>14</sup>

Taylor also gave students an opportunity to write in "the most important reason" why they were or were not enrolled in seminary. His findings<sup>15</sup> are paraphrased below:

Unaccounted for	9%
Other class needed or desired	50%
Negative response to seminary class	18%
No reason, or blank	12%
Negative response to teacher	3%
Negative response to religion	3%
Did not feel need after graduating	2%
Lacked information	2%
New convert	1%

He concluded ". . . the factors which determine the probability of a student enrolling in seminary are: the association with the seminary faculty, the student's situation in the high school, . . . ." <sup>16</sup>

In 1965 Salisbury compared sixty-six seniors enrolled in the Burley, Idaho, high school, but not enrolled in seminary, with sixty-one seniors enrolled in both. Like Hatch, he found it difficult to get to the real reasons for students discontinuing seminary because some ". . . did not respond well to the section listing reasons . . . ." <sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 100-101. <sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 89-92. <sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 102-103.

<sup>17</sup>Charles D. Salisbury, "A Study to Determine What Caused Students to Discontinue Attending the Burley Seminary Before Obtaining a Fourth-year Certificate 1961-65" (unpublished Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1965), pp. 6-7.

He asked the students to write in what they considered their ". . . most important reason for discontinuing seminary before obtaining a fourth-year certificate." His findings<sup>18</sup> are paraphrased:

Other class needed or desired	45%
Negative reaction to the teacher	17%
Did not feel need after graduating	14%
Quit school or got married	11%
Moved, seminary not available	4%
Did not answer	4%
Negative reaction to seminary class	3%
Negative influence of peers	2%

He also found that:

. . . thirty-one percent of the students who had discontinued in this study did it at the conclusion of their third year of seminary. . .

Nearly one third of the students . . . indicated a preference for physical education rather than seminary. . . .

Parents of seminary students who discontinued seminary generally had not taken seminary themselves or they had discontinued. . . . Brothers and sisters of students who had discontinued seminary usually had similar records of discontinuance. . . .

Seminary students expressed a desire to participate in seminary activities. Those who had discontinued seminary had participated in fewer seminary functions than did those who had remained in seminary."<sup>19</sup>

He drew no separate conclusions.

In 1966 Cutler used ninety-eight seminary dropouts, in grades nine through twelve, in the Salt Lake Valley for his study,<sup>20</sup> He asked them to write in why they had withdrawn from seminary. His

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., pp. 68-69.

<sup>20</sup>Daniel W. Cutler, "A Study of Seminary Dropouts in the Salt Lake Valley Seminary District 1964-66" (unpublished field project, Brigham Young University, 1966), p. 56.

findings<sup>21</sup> are paraphrased below:

Other class needed or desired	48%
Negative response to teacher	25%
Negative response to class	19%
Negative response to religion	4%
Negative influence of peers	4%

Additional findings included:

. . . out of those students who were categorized under the heading of other class needed or desired, 37 percent took elective classes such as Physical Education (P.E.), Study Hall, Arts and Crafts and Shop. . . .

The percentage of students who were engaged in extracurricular activities at the high schools was 75 percent. . . . 37 percent were engaged in more than one. . . .

Seminary dropouts were above average in attendance at their church meetings. . . .

Less than 45 percent of the students indicated that they were employed . . . during the school year.<sup>22</sup>

He concluded:

1. Many students are faced with the difficult problem of fulfilling course requirements for high school graduation and of finding time and opportunity for classes at seminary. Apparently this is a particular concern of students who are following college preparatory programs.

2. The fact that thirty-five students took such classes as Arts and Crafts, Shop, Study Hall and Physical Education, suggests a motive other than conflict of schedule . . . .

3. Seminary dropouts were generally active in time-consuming extracurricular activities at the high schools, but were not engaged in such other time-consuming activities as after-school employment, driving, or working on cars.

4. Even though students withdrew from seminary, they still had an active interest in the meetings and affairs of the Church. Some students expressed the desire to serve on a mission for the Church.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., pp. 60, 134.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., pp. 108-110.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., pp. 112-113.



### Early Morning

Three early morning seminary enrollment studies were reviewed. One was done in Utah in 1959, one in Arizona in 1963, and one in southern Alberta in 1972.

In 1959 Janson questioned 102 ninth grade seminary students, sixty-eight of their parents, forty non-enrolled students, and forty-three of their parents, in Salt Lake City.<sup>24</sup> He found 97 percent of the enrolled students' parents and 86 percent of the non-enrolled students' parents "desired" their children to attend,<sup>25</sup> with 65 percent of the enrollee parents and 35 percent of the non-enrollee parents "strongly" desiring their children to attend.<sup>26</sup> But he also found only about one half of the enrollee parents, and very few non-enrollee parents knew very much about the seminary program in their area.<sup>27</sup>

Students were asked to mark the "most important" reason they were not enrolled in seminary in a list of ten options with blank lines for write-in answers. The results<sup>28</sup> are paraphrased below:

Unaccounted for	29%
Negative response to religion	23%
Lack of transportation	20%
Disliked early (7:45) class time (47% "a" reason)	17%
Lack of information (30% "a" reason)	11%

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<sup>24</sup>Donald G. Janson, "Factors Influencing Student Enrollment in the LDS Church Early Morning Seminary Program in the Irving Junior High School Area" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Utah, 1959), p. 10.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 15. <sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 17. <sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 30. <sup>28</sup>Ibid., pp. 21, 32.

Concerning these results he observed:

. . . it is singular that 20 percent of non-attenders /and 14 percent of attenders<sup>29</sup> lived well beyond two miles from the seminary building, most of them somewhat scattered and isolated from eligible students. . . .

Thirty percent also indicated, in answer to another question, that they might have enrolled had they known more about the program, with 17.5 percent indicating that a personal contact might have influenced them to attend. . . .

Only 15 percent of the non-attenders indicated that they would not have enrolled in seminary regardless of how they had been approached. . . .<sup>30</sup>

He further found that:

. . . Not more than 20 percent of non-attendance could be accounted for in terms of lack of church conviction or activity either on the part of the non-attenders or on the part of their parents.

. . . Students could probably be more effective than adults in enlistment work. . . .

Attendance seemed to be significantly greater among children of families of four or more children. . . .

There were no significant differences in church activity between attenders and eligible non-attenders. . . .

The early hour of class time was universally disliked and mentioned as a reason for non-enrollment.<sup>31</sup>

He drew no separate conclusions.

In 1963 Loosle compared the early morning seminary enrollment of thirty wards in Arizona; fifteen with, and fifteen without, organized ward education committees.<sup>32</sup> He wanted to see if wards

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., pp. 35-36.

<sup>32</sup>A small "ward education committee" was responsible to keep track of the seminary activity of all potential seminary students in their ward, encouraging them to enroll and attend, and helping to arrange transportation. These committees have now been superceded by one executive secretary in each ward who is assigned the same responsibilities, along with other duties he has.

with organized committees had a higher percentage of enrollment.<sup>33</sup>

He found that there were no significant differences.<sup>34</sup> But one of his conclusions was that ". . . contacting students does [slightly] increase enrollment if they are contacted before they register for seminary."<sup>35</sup>

In 1972 McClung surveyed eighty-one students not enrolled in LDS seminary in southern Alberta, their bishops, and seventy-four of their parents. (He had a mixture of released time and early morning students but did not give a breakdown. The present author assumes the majority were early morning students.)<sup>36</sup> Six students were in the ninth grade, fourteen in tenth grade, seventeen in eleventh grade, and twenty-one in twelfth.<sup>37</sup>

He said education in Canada was very different from the United States and that some of the seminary programs in Alberta were "very unstable" during 1970-71 when he was making his study.<sup>38</sup>

He asked the students to write in why they were "not presently

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<sup>33</sup>Gordon S. Loosle, "A Study to Determine the Influence of Ward Education Committees on Non-released Time Seminary Enrollment" (unpublished Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1963), p. 6.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>36</sup>Robert O. McClung, "A Study to Determine Reasons Why LDS Students Were Not Enrolled in LDS Seminary in the Southern Alberta Seminary District During 1970-71" (unpublished Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1972), pp. 3, 13, 20.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., pp. 2, 3.

enrolled in seminary." Instead of compiling the responses he simply quoted about one half of them as samples.<sup>39</sup> Our summary of these samples follows:

Unaccounted for	58%
Negative influence of peers	21%
Negative response to seminary teacher	4%
Negative response to religion	4%
Lack of transportation	4%
Negative response to seminary class	2%
School starts too early	2%
Lacked information	2%
Illness	2%
Outside influence	1%

A check list followed the write-in question. A paraphrased summary of the fourteen most frequently checked reasons for not being enrolled<sup>40</sup> is presented below along with the approximate percentage of students who checked each one. Most of the questions were taken from Hatch's 1961 questionnaire.

Too early in the morning	54%
Too much repetition from sunday school, MIA	44%
Hard to wake up in time	43%
Not enough study time if take seminary	42%
Couldn't work seminary in	41%
Did not feel at home in seminary	40%
Seminary not helpful	31%
See little value in religious education	31%
Seminary too routine, not enough challenge	28%
Did not have transportation to seminary	26%
Had I done my part, S would have been enjoyable	26%
Seminary is only for the religious few	19%
I plan to register for seminary next year	14%
Too much emphasis on journal work	14%

For the parents he found 49 percent of the mothers working

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., pp. 41, 52, 54.      <sup>40</sup>Ibid., pp. 45, 51.

outside of the home.<sup>41</sup> He found 78 percent of the parents "wanted" their children to attend seminary, and 77 percent felt they understood what seminary was.<sup>42</sup> And "about 61 percent of the families were holding family home evening regularly or occasionally. . . ."<sup>43</sup>

But then he concluded:

1. The lukewarm attitude of parents towards the Church causes an unfavorable attitude in youth towards enrolling in seminary.

2. Improving conditions under which youth attend seminary will improve seminary enrollment.

3. Adoption of in-service training for parents regarding the real purposes and benefits of seminary will result in increased enrollment. . . .

5. Very little change needs to be made in the quality of instruction or in the seminary teacher's approach. . . .<sup>44</sup>

#### SEMINARY ATTENDANCE

There was only one seminary attendance study. In 1965 Arnold surveyed eighty-three attenders and thirty-nine non-attenders of early morning seminary, in grades nine through twelve, in Montana.<sup>45</sup>

He asked the students to write in their "reasons" for not attending seminary. His findings<sup>46</sup> are paraphrased below:

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>45</sup>Richard J. Arnold, "Factors Contributing to Attendance and Non-attendance of LDS Public High School Students to Non-release Time LDS Seminaries" (unpublished Master's thesis, Montana State University, 1965), pp. 2, 3, 17.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., pp. 26-27.

Unaccounted for	10%
Too hard to get up that early	25%
Simply not interested in seminary	20%
Too many other responsibilities	12%
Other conflicts	10%
Negative response to teacher	7%
Negative response to class	5%
School starts too early	5%
Negative influence of peers	3%
Lack of information	3%

In response to the scales that followed this write-in question, over one half of the non-attending students "agreed" that religion was important, seminary was held at a time they could attend, they got along well with seminary students, had a testimony, and transportation was not a problem (28 percent gave some indication that it was).

By "disagreeing" at the other end of the scales, they further granted that their parents had not discouraged attendance, they did not live too far away, were concerned about religion, got along with the teacher, did not have other obligations during seminary, were encouraged by someone to attend, and got along with seminary students.<sup>47</sup>

He concluded:

1. Students who want to attend seminary will be able to do so.
2. Students who don't want to attend seminary will find interests or responsibilities . . . which conflict with the time of seminary instruction.
3. The time of class instruction is not a deterrent to attendance. Students who attend regularly indicate that getting up in the morning is hard for them as frequently as do those who do not attend seminary. . . .
5. Transportation . . . can be obtained for students who are really interested in attending seminary.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid., pp. 19, 20, 43, 44.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 31.

## SUMMARY

One attendance study and eight enrollment studies concerning LDS seminary students have been reviewed to discover areas of emphasis by previous researchers in trying to determine why students do not enroll or attend regularly. Findings or conclusions focusing on reasons for non-enrollment or low attendance were noted.

Hatch (1961), was apparently the first to study released time enrollment. He encountered difficulty getting at the real reasons for non-enrollment. But by asking the students directly through a write-in question and a check list, he produced evidence that many students were choosing other classes over seminary, either because high school graduation credit was needed or some negative experience with seminary had made other elective classes seem more desirable.

Twenty-three percent of the students said they planned to register (try seminary again?) the next year. He noted about 40 percent of the mothers of non-enrolled students working outside the home.

Schramm (1963), did not ask the students directly why they were not enrolled but did find evidence that many of his subjects had had a negative experience in seminary.

Taylor (1964), did ask the students directly why they were not enrolled and the answers confirmed Hatch's findings that they were choosing other classes, and for the same reasons found by Hatch.

Salisbury (1965) and Cutler (1966) continued to ask the students

directly and confirm Hatch's findings. Salisbury noted parents of non-enrolled students tended to have discontinued or not taken seminary. Cutler noted a high 75 percent participation by non-enrolled students in extracurricular activities, and above average attendance and interest in church affairs.

Table 1, page 27, is a summary of the write-in answers by students. It shows repeated confirmation for Hatch's original conclusion that released time students, in Utah and Idaho, choose other classes over seminary, either because of needing high school credit or because of some negative experience in seminary.

The early morning enrollment studies presented a different and not so consistent picture. (See table 1, page 27). Janson (1959), was apparently the first to make inquiry. He was also apparently the first to consult the parents, and although they didn't seem to know much about the seminary program, practically all of them wanted their children to participate.

His study was limited to ninth graders with no previous seminary experience. He asked them directly why they were not enrolled. Their answers indicated disinterest, either in religion or the early hour of class, or a lack of transportation or information.

Janson found that about the same number as indicated lack of transportation also lived more than two miles from the class. He found no significant difference in church activity between enrolled and non-enrolled students. He noted enrollment did seem to be significantly



higher in families with four or more children.

McClung (1972), had a mixture of released time and early morning students, an unstable program, and did not give a very complete accounting of student answers to the direct question of why they were not enrolled. Extreme disinterest in the early hour of class and some negative reaction to seminary experience came out in the summary of his check list.

He confirmed Janson's high percentage of parents wanting their children to enroll, and found over 60 percent holding family home evening. Like Hatch, he noted a high 49 percent frequency of mothers of non-enrolled students working outside the home.

The present author feels his early morning enrollment study is justified to pursue the distance and transportation problems raised by Janson's 20 percent and McClung's 26 percent of students who said they lacked transportation, and as hypothesized as a major reason for non-enrollment in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area.

Another possible contribution would be to investigate the reasons for the negative reaction to early morning seminary experience missed by Janson because of his ninth grade sample but confirmed by McClung's check list. McClung may have been unable to pin down these reasons because of his mixed released time and early morning sample and the unstable program in Alberta during the year of his research.

The enrollment portion of the present study may be the first to be limited strictly to early morning students and have a complete

range of grades, nine through twelve.

A third possible contribution suggested by Janson's 47 percent and McClung's 54 percent of students who cited the early hour of class as "a" reason for non-enrollment, would be to see how much time, if any, is lost between early morning seminary and school. If it is significant then recommendations could be made for the latest possible seminary starting time.

Arnold's lone attendance study (1965), asked the students directly why they were not attending. Disinterest and laziness (after attending for awhile), and other negative reactions to seminary experience were predominant, suggesting again the need to investigate why.

Table 1

Summary of Student Write-in Reasons for Non-enrollment or Low Attendance From Previous Studies

Researcher Year Grades involved Location # of responses	Released Time				Early Morning		
	Hatch 1961 9-12 Utah 125	Taylor 1964 10-12 Utah 100	Salisbury 1965 12 Idaho 66	Cutler 1966 9-12 Utah 98	Janson 1959 9&P Utah 40	McClung 1972 9-12&P Alberta 81	Arnold 1965 9-12 Montana 39
Unaccounted For	50%	9%			29%	58%	10%
School Problems							
Other class needed or desired	31%	50%	45%	48%			
School starts too early						2%	5%
Seminary Problems							
Negative response to Sem class	10%	18%	3%	19%		2%	5%
Negative response to Sem teacher	8%	3%	17%	25%		4%	7%
Did not feel need after graduating		2%	14%				
Simply not interested in seminary							20%
Personal Problems							
Negative response to religion		3%		4%	23%	4%	
Negative influence of peers			2%	4%		21%	3%
Quit school or got married			11%				
Other conflicts	1%					1%	10%
Lack of transportation					20%	4%	
Dislike early (7:45) class time					17%		
Too hard to get up that early							25%
Too many other responsibilities							12%
Illness						2%	
Other Problems							
No reason, or blank		12%	4%				
Lacked information		2%			11%	2%	3%
New convert		1%					
Moved, seminary not available			4%				

## Chapter III

### RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to find out why only about one half of the potential LDS students in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area enroll in early morning seminary, why so many attended poorly or discontinued part way through 1973-74, and what effect the increase in the price of gasoline during 1973-74 had on attendance.

A hypothesis was developed that distance from seminary classes would be the major reason for non-enrollment, and the higher price of gasoline would be cited as a hardship and the biggest reason for decreasing or discontinuing attendance.

Reviewing the literature also suggested an investigation of reasons for negative response to early morning seminary, and the efficiency of school morning transportation schedules.

### QUESTIONNAIRES

The author reviewed the instruments used by the researchers cited in this study and noted Cutler's finding in the preliminary testing of his instrument that a "brief" questionnaire would be best.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cutler, op. cit., pp. 53-54.

Using some of the Hatch and McClung questions, and comments from the early morning seminary teachers in the area on the reasons for non-enrollment and low attendance, the author developed four one-page questionnaires with different questions for students, parents, bishops, and seminary teachers. Samples of these questionnaires, and the cover letters, can be found in the appendix.

### Student and Parent Questionnaires

Most of the student and parent questions could be answered by placing a check mark by the most correct option, and many of the items had a blank line or space to write in additional options. Each question was set up so that non-enrollees, dropouts, and attenders could respond.

The students were asked to give their grade and school starting time and then check the best description of their transportation procedures and timing each school morning, their work schedule, extra-curricular activities, church attendance, and seminary experience prior to 1973-74. One question asked them to check everyone who had invited or encouraged them to attend seminary the past year.

After checking the best description of their seminary activity during 1973-74, they were asked directly why they did what they did. Immediately following was a check list of possible additional factors applying to their situation. Most of the questions in the check list were adapted from the Hatch and McClung check lists. They were

intended to elicit reaction to several areas of the students' 1973-74 seminary experience.

There was a separate question to indicate their seminary or institute of religion enrollment plans for the next year, and an open question asking for ideas or suggestions to improve seminary.

The parents were invited to indicate the prior seminary experience of other family members, their general feelings about the value of seminary, the general effect of the increased price of gasoline on their driving habits, and the distance to seminary.

They were then asked to check the best description of their student's seminary activity during 1973-74 and then write in why they thought each one did as he did. The same check list followed for parents to check additional factors they thought applied to their students.

Again there was a separate question for indicating their feelings about student plans for seminary or institute of religion enrollment the next year, and a request for ideas or suggestions.

#### Bishop and Teacher Questionnaires

Bishops were given the names of the non-enrollees, dropouts, and attenders in their wards and asked to generalize church attendance patterns for each group of students and their parents, and write in why they thought each group of students did as they did. At the bottom was a request for ideas or suggestions to improve seminary.

Seminary teachers were given a list of all the students in their

classes and asked to tell why they thought each one performed as he did. At the bottom was a request for ideas or suggestions.

### MAILING AND ACCEPTANCE

Using the ward rosters and seminary rolls, current addresses were obtained for 412 students in 286 families who could have enrolled in early morning seminary in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area during 1973-74. Each student and set of parents was sent a questionnaire.

The student and parent questionnaires were mailed in the same envelopes, with a cover letter on top, on June 14, 1974. The bishops' and teachers' questionnaires were mailed on June 17, 1974. Each envelope also contained a stamped and self-addressed envelope for convenient reply.

In about a week most of the bishops, teachers, and families were contacted by phone with a follow-up request to return the questionnaires. A very few were interviewed over the phone during this follow-up call.

### Response

Attenders and dropouts, and their parents, responded very well, but because of the low response from non-enrollees twenty more of them were interviewed by phone early in July.

Replies were eventually received from all eight bishops, all thirteen teachers, 163 students, and 112 parents. This represented

40 percent of the total number of students and parents who were sent questionnaires, and included 21 percent of the non-enrollees, 42 percent of the dropouts, and 76 percent of the attenders.

Table 2, page 33, gives a breakdown by grade, sex, and category of the students who were sent questionnaires and the total number of responses received in each category.

For non-enrollees, the grade in school was determined by noting the average range of birth months in each grade among the students whose grades were known, and then assuming that on an average those non-enrollees whose births fell in the same months as most ninth graders would also be in the ninth grade, and so on.

Twenty-one families had students in more than one category. This represents only 7 percent of the total sample. Responses were received from nineteen of these families.

### Acceptance of Questionnaires

The students and parents in each family returned their questionnaires in the same envelope. They were told in the cover letter that it was not particularly intended that answers be compared, but the author has no way of knowing how many were compared or what effect this may have had on the honesty of responses. Most of the questionnaires appeared to have been stacked together and then folded as a unit before being placed in the return envelope.

The responses were tabulated manually and the author noticed



Table 2

## Summary of Questionnaires Mailed and Received

Grade	Non-enrollees			Dropouts			Attendees			Total
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	
8							1	1	2	2
9	17	26	43	18	18	36	12	17	29	108
10	29	30	59	13	18	31	10	14	24	114
11	31	21	52	22	15	37	7	8	15	104
12	22	18	41	11	14	25	9	10	19	84
Total Mailed	99	95	194	64	66	130	39	50	89	412
Student Replies			40			55			68	163
Percentage			21%			42%			76%	40%

only two obvious cases of changed answers. Since they were answers to factual questions they were accepted. Nine parents or students filled in questionnaires for the other, in their absence. In these cases answers to the factual questions were accepted, and answers that expressed feelings were rejected.

On questions two and three of the parent questionnaire where they indicated their feelings about seminary, and the effect of gas price on their driving habits; if more than one option was checked, indicating something in between, the lower option was taken. The author felt that if the higher option had been true it alone would have been checked. Question four on the student questionnaire, concerning attendance at church activities, received the same interpretation.

## Chapter IV

### ANALYSIS OF THE NON-ENROLLMENT DATA

Questionnaires were mailed to 412 students and their parents in 286 families, and eight bishops in order to determine why about one half of the potential LDS students in grades nine through twelve in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area do not enroll in seminary.

Responses were received from all the bishops, 163 students, and 112 parents, representing a 40 percent return for students and parents. This included 21 percent of the non-enrollees, 42 percent of the dropouts, and 76 percent of the attenders. The responses of the bishops, dropouts and attenders, and their parents were intended to serve as comparisons for the responses of non-enrollees and their parents.

Distance to seminary classes, school conflicts, work conflicts, negative reaction to previous seminary experience, and inactivity in the LDS Church were investigated as possible reasons for non-enrollment.

#### DISTANCE TO SEMINARY

Parents were asked to indicate the approximate number of miles, one way, to seminary. Although only fourteen non-enrollee

parents responded to this question, table 3, page 37, does appear to show that non-enrollees tend to live further away from seminary classes than dropouts and attenders. Fifty percent of the non-enrollee parents who responded said they lived ten miles or more away from a class, compared to 28 percent of the dropouts and only 10 percent of the attenders.

The bishops were asked why they thought the non-enrollees in their wards were not enrolled in seminary. All eight of them, as shown in table 4, page 38, cited inactivity in the LDS Church, but four of them also thought distance was a factor in some cases.

Students and parents were asked to write in the "biggest reason" for the students' seminary performance. Table 5, page 39, summarizes their answers. Interestingly, none of the non-enrollees or their parents, who responded, wrote in "distance."

A small 7 percent of the non-enrollees and 11 percent of their parents did say "transportation" was the major reason for non-enrollment, but this is not unique to non-enrollees because a similar 9 percent of the dropouts and 8 percent of their parents said the same thing.

Besides their "biggest reason," students and parents also checked additional factors applying to their situation. Table 6, page 41, shows the responses to the transportation option. Only eight non-enrollees and eleven of their parents responded to the check list so it may be inconclusive.

A similar 45 percent of non-enrollee parents and 43 percent of

Table 3

Comparison of Distance to Seminary for  
Non-enrollees, Dropouts, and Attenders

Miles	Non-enrollees			Dropouts			Attenders		
	#	%	%	#	%	%	#	%	%
0				1	2%		5	9%	
1				3	6%		7	13%	
2	1	7%		3	6%		7	13%	
3	3	21%		6	12%		9	15%	
4			29%	2	4%	31%	2	4%	57%
5	2	14%		6	12%		7	13%	
6				4	8%		4	8%	
7				3	6%		5	9%	
8	1	7%		5	10%		2	4%	
9			21%	2	4%	41%			34%
10	2	14%		6	12%		2	4%	
11	1	7%		1	2%		1	2%	
12	2	14%		2	4%				
13				1	2%				
14			36%	1	2%	22%			6%
15	1	7%		2	4%		2	4%	
20	1	7%	14%	1	2%	6%			4%
Total	14			49			53		

Table 4

Summary of Bishops' Generalized Reasons for  
the Respective Seminary Performance of  
Non-enrollees, Dropouts, and Attenders

Suggested Reasons		#	%
For Non- Enrollment	Inactive in LDS Church	8	100%
	Distance	4	50%
	Lack of Parent Support	1	12%
For Low Attendance	Lack of Parent Support	6	75%
	Distance	4	50%
	Get Worn Out	2	25%
	Too Early in Morning	1	12%
For High Attendance	Parent Support or Pressure	7	88%
	Personal Desire	5	63%
Number of Responses		8	

Table 5

Summary of Write-in Responses Explaining "Biggest Reason"  
For the Respective Seminary Performance of  
Non-enrollees, Dropouts, and Attenders

Write-in Reasons	Non-enrollees		Dropouts		Attenders	
	S	P	S	P	S	P
Blank, or don't know	30%	36%	18%	14%	26%	19%
<b>SCHOOL</b>						
Activities	5%			6%		
Starts too early		6%	2%			
<b>SEMINARY</b>						
Too early	5%	11%	9%			
Lost interest			20%	20%		
Overcame P pressure			11%	2%		
Negative reaction to T			5%	4%		
Enjoyed it!					12%	9%
<b>PERSONAL</b>						
Inactive in LDS Church	37%	17%		2%		
Disinterest	10%					
Changed 3-yr grad rule	2%	6%				
Rebellion against auth		6%				
Needs more sleep than most		6%				
No friends in seminary		6%		2%		
Too tired			22%	35%		
Health			2%	2%		
Personal desire					34%	42%
Parent expectation					7%	13%
Felt obligated					7%	2%
To see friends					4%	4%
Parent pressure					3%	4%
Habit					3%	
Graduate early (8th gr <sup>r</sup> )					3%	
Class in home						6%
<b>OTHER</b>						
Transportation	7%	11%	9%	8%		
Work	2%	6%				
Moved				2%		
Gas price				2%		
Promised a car						2%
Number of Responses	40	18	55	49	68	53

dropout parents did check a transportation problem as compared to only 21 percent of the attender parents, and 18 percent of both non-enrollee and dropout parents checked "too far" as compared to 10 percent of attender parents, so distance problems are not unique to non-enrollee families. But it does appear that non-enrollees had a little bit harder time finding dependable rides since 36 percent of non-enrollee parents checked "undependable ride" compared to 25 percent of dropout parents and only 10 percent of attender parents.

After the check list, students and parents indicated student enrollment plans in seminary or institute of religion classes for the following year. Table 7, page 41, summarizes their projections. The fact that 11 percent of the non-enrollee parents said "yes" they thought their students would enroll, and 12 percent of their students said "maybe," suggests that there were, and will be again, a few non-enrollees looking for dependable rides to seminary.

With 50 percent of the non-enrollees living 10 miles or more from seminary classes, but only 11 percent of non-enrollee parents citing transportation as the biggest reason for non-enrollment, and the only unique difference between the transportation problems of non-enrollee families being the 11 percent difference in finding dependable rides, it appears that transportation, as a function of distance, is not a significant factor in non-enrollment in more than 11 percent of the cases.



Table 6

Summary of Responses to the Transportation Options in the  
Check List of Additional Factors Applying to  
Non-enrollees, Dropouts, and Attenders

Options	Non-enrollees		Dropouts		Attenders	
	S	P	S	P	S	P
Trans problem	63%	45%	42%	43%	25%	21%
Too far	25%	18%	14%	18%	6%	10%
Gas price	12%		22%	18%	17%	13%
Undependable ride	37%	36%	20%	25%	5%	10%
Number of Responses	8	11	50	44	65	42

Table 7

Summary of Seminary or Institute of Religion Enrollment  
Projections of Students and Parents

Projection	Non-enrollees		Dropouts		Attenders	
	S	P	S	P	S	P
Yes		11%	55%	67%	90%	89%
Maybe	12%		11%		1%	4%
No	42%	39%	18%	10%	9%*	
Blank	45%	50%	16%	22%		8%
Number of Responses	40	18	55	49	68	53

\*7% were seniors

## SCHOOL CONFLICTS

Table 5, page 39, shows 5 percent of the non-enrollees and 6 percent of their parents wrote in a school problem as the biggest reason for non-enrollment, but similar percentages of dropouts and their parents also wrote in a school problem.

Table 8, page 43, summarizing the school options in the check list, is inconclusive for non-enrollees but again shows possible similarities in the school problems of non-enrollees and dropouts, with 64 percent of non-enrollee and dropout parents checking a school problem. Forty-nine percent of the attenders and 44 percent of their parents also checked a school problem as being applicable to their cases.

In a separate question students were asked to check the best description of their extracurricular school activities. Table 9, page 44, summarized the responses and shows 58 percent of the non-enrollees said they participated. But they were not as busy as the dropouts and attenders with 71 and 78 percent participation respectively.

About 16 percent of all three groups of students said they participated before school, but if this didn't hinder the dropouts and attenders from enrolling it shouldn't have hindered very many non-enrollees either.

School conflicts do not appear to be a significant factor in non-enrollment. In fact it appears that the most active students in school also do well in seminary.

Table 8

Summary of Responses to the School Options in the  
Check List of Additional Factors Applying to  
Non-enrollees, Dropouts, and Attenders

Options	Non-enrollees		Dropouts		Attenders	
	S	P	S	P	S	P
School Problem	63%	64%	60%	64%	49%	44%
Studies	50%	27%	28%	18%	28%	27%
Activities	12%	9%	16%	25%	18%	12%
Starting time	12%	36%	32%	36%	15%	17%
Number of Responses	8	11	50	44	65	52

Table 9

Summary of Extracurricular School Activities of  
Non-enrollees, Dropouts, and Attenders

Responses	Non-enrollees	Dropouts	Attenders
None	42%	29%	22%
One	42%	49%	53%
Two	16%	15%	19%
Three		5%	6%
Five		2%	
Before school	16%	16%	15%
During school	16%	35%	38%
After school	42%	65%	59%
All year	47%	31%	41%
Four or more times wkly	21%	40%	37%
Number of Responses	19	55	68

## WORK CONFLICTS

Students were asked to describe their work schedules. Table 10, page 46, shows 47 percent of the non-enrollees, 34 percent of the dropouts, and 47 percent of the attenders working. The only significant difference in the three groups is a very small 6 percent of the non-enrollees and 2 percent of the dropouts who reported working before school, which would preclude their attendance at seminary regularly.

Table 5, page 39, shows only 2 percent of the non-enrollees citing work as the biggest reason for non-enrollment. Work conflicts do not appear to be a significant factor in the non-enrollment of more than 2 percent of the non-enrollees.

## NEGATIVE REACTION TO PREVIOUS SEMINARY EXPERIENCE

Students were asked to describe their own previous seminary experience and parents were asked to describe it for their families. Table 11, page 47, summarizes the responses. It shows 50 percent of the non-enrollee families had previous seminary experience compared to 71 and 78 percent of dropout and attender families, respectively. Only 12 percent of the non-enrollees themselves had previous seminary experience compared to 60 percent of the dropouts and 63 percent of the attenders.

Table 5, page 39, shows none of the non-enrollees or their

Table 10

Summary of Work Schedules of Non-enrollees,  
Dropouts, and Attenders

Responses	Non-enrollees	Dropouts	Attenders
Didn't work	53%	65%	53%
Before school	6%	2%	
After school	41%	32%	37%
Weekends only			10%
All year	29%	11%	21%
Four or more times wkly	18%	16%	19%
Number of Responses	17	55	68

Table II

Summary of Previous Seminary Experience of Non-enrollees,  
Dropouts, Attenders, and Their Families

Experience	Non-enrollees	Dropouts	Attenders
<b>STUDENT</b>			
Blank	12%		4%
Completed one or more yrs	5%	36%	60%
Attended	7%	24%	3%
Available but didn' go	65%	11%	3%
Unavailable	2%	7%	3%
Not old enough	7%	22%	26%
Number of Responses	40	55	68
<b>FAMILY</b>			
Blank	6%	2%	7%
One or both P graduated	22%	20%	30%
One or both P attended		6%	6%
One or more children att'd	28%	45%	42%
None	44%	27%	15%
Number of Responses	18	49	53

parents felt like a seminary subject or teacher problem was the most important reason reason for non-enrollment, and almost one half of the students with previous seminary experience, 5 percent, simply thought seminary was "too early."

Table 12, page 49, summarizing the seminary options on the check list, does show some negative reaction to previous seminary experience as a possible secondary factor in non-enrollment. Though the figures are inconclusive for non-enrollees, because of the small number of their responses to the check list, 25 percent of them, and 18 percent of their parents, appear to have experienced a subject problem or heard about one from other family members. And 37 percent of the non-enrollees, with 18 percent of the parents, appear to have experienced or heard about a teacher problem.

The fact that 35 percent of the attenders also checked most of the same problems shows these problems are probably real, but not significant as a factor in non-enrollment.

Parents were asked to check the best description of their feelings about seminary. It is assumed that many of these feelings would be based on previous seminary experience. A summary of their responses is found in table 13, page 51.

It shows that 55 percent of non-enrollee parents felt seminary was "extremely valuable" or "probably good," compared with 82 and 87 percent respectively of dropout and attender parents who felt this way. Seventeen percent of the non-enrollee parents felt that school



Table 12

Summary of Responses to the Seminary Options in the  
Check List of Additional Factors Applying to  
Non-enrollees, Dropouts, and Attenders

Options	Non-enrollees		Dropouts		Attenders	
	S	P	S	P	S	P
Subject Problem	25%	18%	26%	14%	35%	8%
Scripture chase	12%	9%	16%	7%	18%	4%
Text	12%		12%	5%	6%	2%
Filmstrips			4%	7%	6%	4%
Worksheets		9%	18%	7%	14%	
Teacher Problem	37%	18%	28%	23%	35%	38%
Personality	25%	18%	10%	14%	12%	17%
Discipline	25%	18%	10%	7%	12%	19%
Methods	12%	18%	22%	14%	26%	15%
Great Subject	37%	9%	52%	18%	71%	37%
Scripture chase	12%	9%	12%	9%	23%	17%
Text			8%	7%	18%	17%
Filmstrips			34%	11%	32%	21%
Discussions	25%	9%	32%	14%	46%	21%
Great Teacher	25%	9%	46%	30%	75%	37%
Personality	25%	9%	32%	27%	54%	29%
Preparation	12%		30%	16%	48%	33%
Interest outside class		9%	16%	14%	46%	17%
Spiritual Boost	12%		38%	34%	69%	63%
Testimony	12%		22%	25%	61%	54%
Mission goal	12%		16%	9%	26%	31%
Temple marriage goal	12%		32%	18%	52%	44%
Number of Responses	8	11	50	44	65	52

was more important than seminary, compared to 12 percent of the dropout parents and 9 percent of attender parents.

This suggests that non-enrollee parent feelings would have an effect on non-enrollment in some cases, perhaps where a student was wondering about seminary and came to his non-enrollee parents for advice. But in many case it appears he would be advised to try it.

Fifty percent of the non-enrollee families, but very few of the non-enrollees themselves, indicated previous seminary experience. They had heard about or experienced no more seminary subject or teacher problems than attenders, and in many cases would have been advised to try seminary. So negative reaction to previous seminary experience does not seem to be significant to non-enrollment.

#### INACTIVITY IN THE LDS CHURCH

Table 5, page 39, indicates that 37 percent of the non-enrollees said the biggest reason why they did not enroll was inactivity in the LDS Church. Ten percent of the non-enrollees wrote in "disinterest," as their biggest reason, and an additional 30 percent did not answer this question.

When the bishops in the Minneapolis - St. Paul area were asked why they thought the listed non-enrollees in their wards were not enrolling in seminary, table 4, page 38, shows all eight of them cited inactivity in the LDS Church.

There are several possible indicators of activity or inactivity

Table 13

Summary of Parent Feelings About  
the Value of Seminary

Feeling	Non-enrollee Parents	Dropout Parents	Attender Parents
Blank	28%	6%	4%
Extremely valuable	33%	45%	55%
Probably good	22%	37%	32%
School more important	17%	12%	9%
Number of Responses	18	49	53

among LDS Church members. Attendance at Sunday meetings, week-night MIA,<sup>1</sup> and family home evening<sup>2</sup> were investigated, and the mimeographed ward membership rosters were checked for completeness of the family, unity in religious affiliation of the parents, and progress in the priesthood<sup>3</sup> for LDS fathers.

Some secondary indicators, at least of interest or disinterest in the LDS Church and its seminary program were also noted in the percentage of response to the questionnaire, suggestions for improving the seminary program, and plans for enrollment in a seminary or institute of religion class for the next year, if available.

#### Attendance at Church Meetings

Members of the LDS Church are doctrinally obligated to attend regular church meetings every Sunday, and it is strongly urged by their leaders for each family to hold a regular family home evening each week, and for the youth to attend MIA weekly. Therefore

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<sup>1</sup>"MIA" is an abbreviation for The Mutual Improvement Association, an evening youth activity program which meets weekly.

<sup>2</sup>"Family home evening" is a strongly recommended program for individual families to meet together each Monday evening for a spiritual discussion and/or activity, and refreshments. No church activities of any kind are scheduled on Monday evenings.

<sup>3</sup>"Priesthood" in the LDS Church is authority to act in the name of deity in performing ordinances or giving blessings. It is conferred upon all worthy male members age twelve and over. With advancing age and continued worthiness the performance of an increasing number of functions is authorized, in several steps.

attendance at these meetings is one measure of church activity and harmony with its leaders.

Bishops were asked to generalize the Sunday meeting and MIA attendance patterns for non-enrollees, dropouts, and attenders in their wards. Students were asked to check the best description of their attendance at these same meetings plus family home evening. The results are compiled in table 14, page 54.

This table shows the bishops' evaluation of Sunday meeting attendance of students was very close to that of the students themselves. The bishops also felt that student attendance at Sunday meetings was about the same as their parents', the highest difference being 9 percent of the dropouts attended more than their parents. The rest of this study will assume students attend Sunday meetings about the same as their parents.

It will also be assumed that the percentage of student attendance at family home evening is an indication of the percentage of families holding family home evening.

Table 14, therefore, shows that by their own evaluation about 65 percent of the non-enrollee families were totally inactive in the LDS Church, because 67 percent never attended Sunday meetings, 64 percent never attended MIA, and 64 percent never held family home evening. This compares with only 5 percent of the dropouts and 1 percent of the attenders who never attended either their Sunday meetings or MIA, and about 17 percent of the dropouts and attenders who never

Table 14

Summary of Student Church Attendance as  
Reported by Students and Bishops

Responses	Non-enrollees		Dropouts		Attenders	
	S	B	S	B	S	B
<b>SUNDAY MEETINGS</b>						
Regularly	25%	11%	87%	92%	99%	100%
Occasionally	8%	11%	7%	8%	1%	
Never	67%	78%	5%			
Attend more than parents		4%		9%		4%
<b>MIA</b>						
Regularly	8%	10%	84%	88%	93%	100%
Occasionally	28%	12%	13%	12%	6%	
Never	64%	78%	4%		1%	
<b>FAMILY HOME EVENING</b>						
Regularly	8%		31%		51%	
Occasionally	28%		50%		32%	
Never	64%		18%		16%	
Number of Responses	36	8	55	8	68	8

attended family home evening. Table 11, page 47, shows 65 percent of the non-enrollees said seminary was "available but didn't go," implying inactivity or disinterest.

Possible confirmation of the earlier transportation problem of some non-enrollees, is shown in table 14, page 54, by the 8 percent who attend MIA regularly out of 25 percent who go on Sunday.

### Status of Parents

The mimeographed rosters of members of the wards involved in the study were checked to see how many families had one or both parents non-LDS, one or both parents missing, a father with no priesthood, or a father who had not advanced in the priesthood after about age fifteen.

If both parents were non-LDS this automatically implied some inactivity in the family. One parent being non-LDS implied the other parent was out of harmony with LDS Church doctrine which requires high church activity of both parents and a temple marriage.<sup>4</sup>

If one or both parents were missing it was assumed that even though death was a rare possibility, the most probable explanation was a divorce or separation. This implied either emotional or doctrinal disharmony in the family.

If the father held no priesthood or had not advanced in the

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<sup>4</sup>A "temple marriage" is one solemnized for time and eternity in one of several LDS temples throughout the world.

priesthood since about age fifteen, it implied that he was out of harmony with LDS Church doctrine which requires advancement in the priesthood for all worthy males over age twelve.

It is not assumed that all of the families described above would be totally inactive in the LDS Church, but it is assumed that many of them would be.

The figures below, compiled from the ward rosters, show 46 percent of the total number of students who received questionnaires came from families described above. There is no way to tell how many of these students responded, or to identify them precisely with findings of this study, but 71 percent of the non-enrollees, 27 percent of the dropouts, and 19 percent of the attenders came from these families.

	<u>NE</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>Tot</u>
Students in sample	194	130	89	412
Students in described families	138	35	17	190
Percentage	71%	27%	19%	46%

#### Response to Questionnaire

Even with a follow up phone call, only eighteen non-enrollee parents and twenty non-enrollees returned questionnaires through the mail, and they were not as consistent in answering all the questions as were students and parents in the other two categories. Twenty additional non-enrollee student responses were obtained over the phone,



but all of them seemed very disinterested and were also unwilling to take the time to answer each question.

### Suggestions for Improving Seminary

Only 7 percent of the non-enrollees and 22 percent of their parents offered suggestions for improving seminary, compared to 65 percent of the dropouts and 53 percent of their parents, and 57 percent of the attenders and 74 percent of their parents who showed high interest by offering suggestions. The suggestions are summarized in the appendix.

### Plans for Further Enrollment

Table 7, page 41, compares the enrollment plans for each group of students with what their parents thought. It seems to show 87 percent of the non-enrollees and 89 percent of their parents expressing disinterest by checking "no" or leaving the question blank.

### Summary of Inactivity

About 65 percent of the non-enrollees were totally inactive in the LDS Church, with 37 percent writing "inactivity" as their biggest reason for non-enrollment and 30 percent leaving it blank. An additional 10 percent simply indicated "disinterest" as their major reason.

Seventy-one percent of the non-enrollees came from families where one or both parents did not appear to be in complete harmony with the LDS Church.

## Chapter V

### ANALYSIS OF THE LOW ATTENDANCE DATA

Questionnaires were mailed to 412 students, and their parents, in 286 families, eight bishops, and thirteen seminary teachers to find out why so many students attended poorly or discontinued early morning seminary in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area during 1973-74, and what effect the increased price of gasoline had on attendance.

Responses were received from all the bishops and teachers, 163 students, and 112 parents, representing a 40 percent return for students and parents. This included 21 percent of the non-enrollees, 42 percent of the dropouts, and 76 percent of the attenders. The responses of the bishops, teachers, and attenders and their parents served as comparisons for the responses of dropouts and their parents.

Effect of the increased price of gasoline, distance to seminary classes, efficiency of seminary transportation schedules, school conflicts, work conflicts, negative reaction to current seminary experience, inactivity in the LDS Church, and lack of parent support were investigated as possible reasons for low attendance.

#### EFFECT OF GASOLINE PRICE

Parents were asked to check how gasoline price affected their

family's driving during the year. The results are given in table 15, page 60. Dropout families do appear to have been a little harder hit by the price increase than attender families, with 65 percent of the dropout parents reporting "slightly" or "much less" driving compared to 48 percent of attender parents.

The seminary teachers were asked why they thought each dropout in their classes had such low attendance. Table 16, page 61, summarizes their answers. They felt that only 2 percent of the students had low attendance because of gasoline price.

When the dropouts and their parents were asked to write in their biggest reason for low attendance, table 5, page 39, shows no dropouts and only 2 percent of their parents wrote "gas price."

A check list of additional factors applying to student situations followed the write-in question. Table 6, page 41, reports the responses to the transportation options. It shows a slightly higher percentage of dropouts and their parents checking "gas price" as a secondary factor than attenders and their parents. But the figures are low at 22 percent for dropouts and 18 percent for their parents, compared to 17 percent for attenders and 13 percent for their parents.

With only 2 percent of dropout parents citing gasoline price as the biggest reason for low attendance, and only 4 percent more dropout parents than attender parents checking it as a secondary reason, it appears that the increased price of gasoline was not a significant reason for low attendance.

Table 15

Summary of Effect of Increased Gasoline Price on  
Dropout and Attender Family Driving

Responses	Dropouts	Attendees
No effect	33%	53%
Slightly less driving	47%	36%
Much less driving	18%	12%
Blank	2%	
Number of Responses	49	53

Table 16

Summary of Early Morning Seminary Teacher's Suggested  
Reasons for the Respective Seminary Performance  
of Dropouts and Attenders

For Low Attendance of Dropouts		%
DON'T KNOW:	(Replacement teachers)	13%
	(Regular teachers)	6%
SCHOOL:	Sports	2%
	Too early	1%
SEMINARY:	Lost interest	15%
	Too early	5%
	Overcame parent pressure	1%
PERSONAL:	No desire to learn	8%
	Lost interest in religion	4%
	Too lazy	3%
	To spite parents	2%
	Health	1%
	Got married	1%
OTHER:	Lack of parent support	16%
	Transportation	12%
	Distance	2%
	Work	6%
	Gas price	2%
	Moved	2%
Number of Dropouts		130
For High Attendance of Attenders		%
	Personal desire	63%
	Parent support	23%
	Parent pressure	7%
	Be with friends	4%
	Attention from teacher	1%
	Graduate early (8th grader)	1%
Number of Attenders		89

## DISTANCE TO SEMINARY

Parents were asked to indicate the approximate number of miles, one way, to seminary. Table 3, page 37, compares these distances for each group of students. It shows dropouts living further away from seminary classes than attenders.

Sixty-nine percent of the dropouts live five or more miles away compared to 44 percent of the attenders, and 28 percent live ten or more miles away compared to only 10 percent of the attenders.

Bishops were asked why they thought dropouts in their wards had low attendance. Table 4, page 38, shows 50 percent of them cited distance. Table 16, page 61, shows the teachers felt distance or transportation was the major hindrance to 4 percent of the dropouts.

Table 5, page 39, shows no dropouts or dropout parents indicated "distance" as the biggest reason for low attendance. And only 9 percent of the dropouts and 8 percent of their parents wrote in "transportation" as the biggest reason.

The summary of transportation options in the check list, table 6, page 41, shows about 42 percent of the dropouts and their parents checking a transportation problem compared to about 23 percent of the attenders and their parents. Percentages for specific problems are lower. About 22 percent of the dropouts and their parents checked "undependable ride," and about 16 percent checked "too far."

With so many dropouts living further away from seminary than

attenders, but so few citing distance or transportation as reasons for low attendance, it would appear that transportation, as a function of distance, is not the major reason for low attendance, but seems to have been significant in about 9 percent of the cases and a secondary factor in about 19 percent of the cases.

#### EFFICIENCY OF SEMINARY TRANSPORTATION SCHEDULES

During 1973-74 two seminary classes met from 6:15 a. m. to 7:05 a. m. and the others met from 6:00 a. m. to 6:50 a. m. On the questionnaire students checked a description of their method of transportation to seminary and school, and a description of what they did between seminary and school. Table 17, page 64, shows the results.

Practically all the students get to seminary in cars, with about 55 percent in car pools. About 78 percent of the students go home between seminary and school. About 50 percent ride a bus to school, 31 percent of the dropouts and 16 percent of the attenders walk, and 15 percent of the dropouts and 26 percent of the attenders go by car.

Twenty percent of those who ride the bus to school catch it at 7:15 a. m., and by 7:30 a. m. 69 percent are on their way. It would seem that if so many go home from seminary, presumably to eat breakfast, and then ride a school bus, that they need the ten to twenty-five minutes allowed by the 1973-74 class schedule to get home and eat.

There would be at least two ways to move the starting time of

Table 17

Summary of Student Transportation  
Schedules on School Mornings

Responses	Dropouts	Attenders
<b>TO SEMINARY</b>		
Car pool	60%	51%
Car alone	16%	15%
Car with parent	11%	24%
Walk		3%
Blank	13%	7%
<b>BETWEEN SEMINARY &amp; SCHOOL</b>		
Home first	80%	77%
Straight to school	11%	13%
Blank	9%	4%
<b>TO SCHOOL</b>		
Bus	44%	54%
Car	15%	26%
Walk	31%	16%
Blank	11%	3%
Number of Responses	55	68

Bus Time	#	%	School Time	#	%
6:55 a. m.	1	2%	7:40 a. m.	2	3%
7:00			7:45	8	13%
7:05	1	2%	7:50	13	21%
7:10	1	2%	7:55	5	8%
7:15	12	20%	8:00	10	16%
7:20	7	11%	8:05		
7:25	8	13%	8:10	3	5%
7:30	12	20%	8:15	1	2%
7:35	5	8%	8:20	10	16%
7:40	2	3%	8:25	2	3%
7:45	3	5%	8:30	6	10%
7:50	1	2%	8:35		
7:55	3	5%	8:40		
8:00	2	3%	8:45	1	2%
8:05	1	2%			
8:10	2	3%			
# of Responses	61			61	



seminary classes a little later: have the students eat breakfast before seminary and/or have the students transported directly to school from seminary. The transporting of students directly to school, especially if done by car pool, would possibly allow for a 6:30 a.m. to 7:20 a.m. seminary class schedule, with twenty minutes before the earliest school starting time, at 7:40 a.m.

With all the car pooling and parent driving already being done, and with 16 percent of the dropouts and 15 percent of the attenders driving alone to seminary, and 15 percent of the dropouts and 26 percent of the attenders getting to school by car, there ought to be enough cars that could go to each school to do the job.

In cases where school doesn't start until 7:50 a.m., a 6:40 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. seminary schedule might even be feasible.

Table 4, page 38, shows 25 percent of the bishops answered why dropouts had low attendance by saying they "get worn out." And 12 percent of the bishops said seminary was "too early."

Table 16, page 61, shows that the seminary teachers felt that only 5 percent of the low attendance of dropouts was due primarily to seminary being "too early."

Table 5, page 39, shows 5 percent of the non-enrollees, 11 percent of their parents, and 9 percent of the dropouts who wrote in that seminary being "too early" was the biggest reason for their performance. Another 22 percent of the dropouts and 35 percent of their parents wrote in "too tired" as the biggest reason for low attendance.

In the check list there was one option where students and parents could indicate if "tired a lot" applied to their situation. Sixty-two percent of the dropouts, 45 percent of their parents, 37 percent of the attenders, and 33 percent of their parents said "yes."

Among all these families there might be enough support to spark some interest in experimenting with transportation and breakfast schedules in exchange for a later seminary starting time.

It is difficult to assess the impact of seminary transportation schedules on low attendance. If students must eat breakfast after seminary then it may be a moot question. The 1973-74 schedule does appear to contribute to "tiredness," however.

#### SCHOOL CONFLICTS

Table 5, page 39, shows only 2 percent of the dropouts and only 6 percent of their parents wrote in a school problem as the biggest reason for low attendance. Table 16, page 61, shows the teachers felt only 3 percent of low attendance was due to school problems.

When students and parents checked options in the check list however, table 8, page 43, shows 60 percent of the dropouts, 64 percent of their parents, 49 percent of the attenders, and 44 percent of their parents felt that school problems applied to their situation.

The only significant difference between the school problems of dropouts and attenders seems to be "starting time." Thirty-two per-

cent of the dropouts and 36 percent of their parents, compared to 15 percent of the attenders and 17 percent of their parents, checked "starting time." However, since the latest seminary class was dismissed by 7:05 a. m. and the earliest school didn't start until 7:40 a. m., since table 17, page 64, shows 80 percent of the dropouts going "home first," and table 5, page 39 shows only 2 percent saying school starts "too early," a problem with "starting time" probably means not enough time between seminary and the bus for breakfast, and not a school conflict as such.

Table 9, page 44, shows almost equal percentages of dropouts and attenders participating in extracurricular activities in every phase investigated. About 75 percent of the students appear to participate, with about 25 percent participating in more than one activity. Nothing appears particularly unique in one group compared to the other. About 15 percent of each group even participate before school.

School conflicts do not appear to be a significant factor in low attendance except as the high participation in extracurricular activities might contribute to the "tiredness" discussed earlier.

#### WORK CONFLICTS

Table 10, page 44, shows slightly fewer dropouts working, in all phases investigated, than attenders, and no other significant differences. Although table 16, page 61, shows the seminary teachers thought work was the biggest reason for the low attendance of 6 per-

cent of the dropouts, table 5, page 39, shows no dropouts and none of the parents writing in "work" as the biggest reason for low attendance.

Although 34 percent of the dropouts were working on school days, compared to 37 percent of the attenders, work conflicts do not appear to be a significant factor in low attendance except as they may contribute to "tiredness."

#### NEGATIVE REACTION TO CURRENT SEMINARY EXPERIENCE

When writing in their biggest reason for low attendance, table 5, page 39, shows 31 percent of the dropouts expressed a negative reaction to seminary. Twenty percent said they "lost interest," and 11 percent said they "overcame parent pressure." An additional 5 percent wrote a negative reaction to the teacher.

None of the bishops mentioned a negative reaction to seminary in their generalizations for low attendance. Table 16, page 61, shows the seminary teachers felt that 15 percent lost interest in seminary and this was their biggest reason for low attendance.

Table 12, page 49 summarizes the seminary options in the check list and shows a similar or higher percentage of attenders checking every seminary subject or teacher problem checked by the dropouts, and the dropouts being less enthusiastic than attenders on all the positive options, particularly teacher interest outside class. Forty-six percent of the dropouts and 75 percent of the attenders

checked that they had a great teacher, but only 16 percent of the dropouts checked that the seminary teacher showed interest in them outside the class, compared to 46 percent of the attenders.

In another question students were asked to check everyone who had invited or encouraged them to go to seminary. Table 18, page 70, summarizes their answers. It shows 49 percent of the dropouts felt like they received encouragement from their seminary teacher compared to 65 percent of the attenders.

Table 19, page 71, summarizes the responses to the encouragement options in the check list. It shows 40 percent of the dropouts checked having received encouragement from their teacher compared to 58 percent of the attenders who felt this way.

It appears that about 17 percent fewer dropouts than attenders felt like the teacher encouraged them, and 30 percent fewer dropouts than attenders felt like the teacher was interested in them outside the classroom. This seems to correlate with the 31 percent of the dropouts who either "lost interest" in seminary or "overcame parent pressure." An additional 5 percent appear to have disliked the teacher, and let that keep them away from seminary.

Even so, it is interesting, as shown in table 7, page 41, that 55 percent of the dropouts indicated "yes," they planned to register for a seminary or institute of religion class for the next year. Some said maybe they would, some left it blank, and only 16 percent said

Table 18

Summary of Invitations or Encouragement to Dropouts  
and Attenders to go to Seminary

Responses	Dropouts	Attenders
Parents	78%	88%
Priesthood leader*	29%	28%
Seminary teacher	49%	65%
Friends	62%	53%
Home teacher**	13%	21%
None		1%
Number of Responses	55	68

\*"Priesthood leader" as used here would refer to a student's bishop or one of his close assistants.

\*\*"Home teachers" are pairs of male members assigned to be responsible for three to five families in the ward, including a monthly visit to the family and monthly report to one of the bishop's assistants.

Table 19

Summary of Responses to the Encouragement Options in the  
Check List of Additional Factors Applying to  
Non-enrollees, Dropouts, and Attenders

Options	Dropouts		Attenders	
	S	P	S	P
Encouragement	80%	66%	78%	75%
From parents	64%	61%	69%	67%
From friends	50%	39%	35%	27%
From teacher	40%	30%	58%	40%
Priesthood leader	18%	16%	20%	12%
Pressure	42%	36%	32%	37%
From parents	32%	27%	29%	29%
From friends	10%	18%	3%	4%
From teacher	4%	7%	5%	8%
Priesthood leader	8%	2%	6%	4%
Number of Responses	50	44	65	52

"no." This may indicate the willingness of many students to try again each year and see how seminary goes.

### INACTIVITY IN THE LDS CHURCH

Table 5, page 39, shows no dropouts and only 2 percent of dropout parents wrote inactivity in the LDS Church as the biggest reason for low attendance. Table 16, page 61, shows the teachers felt like only 4 percent of the dropouts had lost interest in religion. The bishops said nothing about church activity in their generalizations about dropouts.

Table 14, page 54, shows over 83 percent of the dropouts and over 92 percent of the attenders going to Sunday meetings and MIA regularly, with only about 5 percent of the dropouts saying they never went to Sunday meetings or MIA.

The difference in percentages of dropouts and attenders participating in family home evening regularly was greater. Only 31 percent of the dropouts had family home evening regularly, compared to 51 percent of the attenders. Then the percentages evened out so that 81 percent of the dropouts and 83 percent of the attenders had family home evening regularly or occasionally, and only 18 percent of the dropouts and 16 percent of the attenders never had family home evening.

It would appear that dropouts had about 10 percent less activity in Sunday meetings and MIA, and about 20 percent less activity in reg-



ularly held family home evenings than attenders.

The figures on page 54 indicated that 27 percent of the dropouts and 19 percent of the attenders came from homes where one or more of the following conditions existed: one or both parents were non-LDS, one or both parents were missing, the father held no priesthood, or he had not advanced in the priesthood since about age fifteen.

Inactivity in the LDS Church does not appear to be a significant factor in the low attendance of more than about 5 percent of the dropouts.

#### LACK OF PARENT SUPPORT

When the bishops were asked why they thought the dropouts in their wards had such low attendance, table 4, page 38, shows 75 percent of them suggested lack of parent support.

No students wrote this in as the biggest reason for their low attendance, and table 18, page 70, shows 78 percent of the dropouts and 88 percent of the attenders felt like they did receive encouragement from their parents to enroll in seminary. This correlates with table 13, page 51, which shows 82 percent of the dropout parents and 87 percent of the attender parents who felt that seminary was "extremely valuable" or "probably good."

Table 19, page 71, summarizing the encouragement options from the check list, shows 64 percent of the dropouts and 69 percent of the attenders saying they felt they received encouragement from

their parents. The lower percentages here may indicate about a 14 percent decrease in parent support to dropouts during the year, and about 19 percent decrease in parent support to attenders.

Seventy-five percent of the bishops felt that there was a significant lack of parent support to dropout students. But only 10 percent more dropouts than attenders did not check having received encouragement from their parents to enroll in seminary, and fewer dropouts than attenders seemed to indicate a decrease in parent support during the year. It would appear that lack of parent support was not significant to the low attendance of more than 10 percent of the dropouts.

## Chapter VI

### SUMMARY

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has fostered educational programs for its members of all ages throughout its history. Weekday religious instruction became a separate church program in the early 1900's and expanded to meet the needs and varying situations of LDS students all over the world.

Early morning seminary was introduced in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area in the early 1960's and by 1973-74 had over two hundred students enrolled in thirteen classes. However, only about 50 percent of the potential LDS students in grades nine through twelve were enrolling each year, and during 1973-74 more than 50 percent of those who enrolled either attended poorly or discontinued.

This study has sought to determine why only about 50 percent of the eligible LDS students enroll each year, why so many students decreased or discontinued their attendance during 1973-74, and what effect a significant increase in the price of gasoline had on attendance.

A hypothesis was developed that distance from seminary classes would be the biggest reason for non-enrollment, and the increased price of gasoline would be the biggest reason for low attendance. A survey of previous seminary enrollment and attendance studies

suggested that efficiency of the school morning transportation schedules of students, and negative reaction to seminary experience might also be applicable.

An attempt was made to survey all the potential LDS students in grades nine through twelve during 1973-74 in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. One-page questionnaires, largely adapted from the Hatch and McClung instruments, were mailed to 412 students and their parents in 286 families. The eight bishops and thirteen early morning seminary teachers also received one-page questionnaires.

Responses were received from all the bishops and teachers, 163 students, and 112 parents, representing a 40 percent return for students and parents. This included 21 percent of the non-enrollees, 42 percent of the dropouts, and 76 percent of the attenders. Comparisons were made between the responses of the bishops, teachers, and three groups of students and their parents.

Of the forty non-enrollees (21 percent) who responded, as few as eight (4 percent) gave answers to some of the questions, particularly the check list of additional factors applying to student situations. Therefore some of the findings concerning non-enrollees may be inconclusive.

Distance to seminary classes, school conflicts, work conflicts, negative reaction to previous seminary experience, and inactivity in the LDS Church were investigated as possible reasons for non-enrollment.

Effect of the increased price of gasoline, distance to seminary classes, efficiency of seminary transportation schedules, school conflicts, work conflicts, negative reaction to current seminary experience, inactivity in the LDS Church, and lack of parent support were investigated as possible reasons for low attendance.

## FINDINGS

### Non-enrollment

1. Fifty percent of the non-enrollee parents, who responded, said they lived 10 miles or more from a seminary class, compared to 28 percent of the dropouts and only 10 percent of the attenders.
2. Fifty percent of the bishops in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area felt that distance was a factor in non-enrollment.
3. None of the non-enrollees or their parents cited "distance" as the "biggest reason" for non-enrollment, and as many dropouts and their parents cited "transportation" as the major reason as did non-enrollees and their parents.
4. Thirty-six percent of the non-enrollee parents checked "undependable ride" as a secondary factor, compared to 25 percent of dropout parents and only 10 percent of attender parents.
5. Only 11 percent of the non-enrollee parents felt their students would enroll in a seminary or institute of religion class the next year, if available, and only 12 percent of the non-enrollees even said "maybe."

6. The only significant difference in the school problems and activities of students was in extracurricular activities, with 58 percent of the non-enrollees, 71 percent of the dropouts, and 78 percent of the attenders participating.

7. The only significant difference in work schedules of the students was a very small 6 percent of the non-enrollees who reported working before school, compared to 2 percent of the dropouts and none of the attenders. Only 2 percent of the non-enrollees said work was their biggest reason for non-enrollment.

8. Fifty percent of non-enrollee families had previous seminary experience, compared to 71 percent of the dropout families and 78 percent of the attender families.

9. Only 12 percent of the non-enrollees themselves appeared to have previous seminary experience, compared to 60 percent of the dropouts and 63 percent of the attenders.

10. none of the non-enrollees or their parents felt that a seminary subject or teacher problem was the most important reason for non-enrollment, and as many attenders as non-enrollees checked subject or teacher problems in the check list of additional factors.

11. Fifty-five percent of non-enrollee parents said they felt seminary was "extremely valuable" or "probably good," compared to 82 percent of dropout parents and 87 percent of attender parents.

12. Thirty-seven percent of the non-enrollees said the biggest reason why they did not enroll was inactivity in the LDS Church. Ten

percent said "disinterest," and an additional 30 percent left this question blank.

13. All eight bishops in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area cited inactivity in the LDS Church as a factor in non-enrollment, and felt that about 78 percent of the non-enrollee families were totally inactive.

14. About 65 percent of the non-enrollee families were found to be totally inactive in the LDS Church, in that they never participated in Sunday meetings, MIA, or family home evening. This compares with only 5 percent of the dropouts and 1 percent of the attenders who never attended Sunday meetings or MIA, and about 17 percent of the dropouts and attenders who never participated in family home evening.

15. Seventy-one percent of the non-enrollees, compared to 27 percent of the dropouts and 19 percent of the attenders, came from families where one or more of the following conditions existed: one or both parents were non-LDS, one or both parents were missing, the father held no priesthood, or he had not advanced in the priesthood since about age fifteen.

16. Only 7 percent of the non-enrollees and 22 percent of their parents offered suggestions for improving seminary, compared to 65 percent of the dropouts, 53 percent of their parents, 57 percent of the attenders, and 74 percent of their parents who showed a higher interest in seminary by doing so.

### Low Attendance

1. Sixty-five percent of the dropout parents reported "slightly" or "much less" driving due to the increased price of gasoline during 1973-74, compared to 48 percent of the attender parents.

2. No dropouts, and only 2 percent of the dropout parents and seminary teachers, said that "gas price" was the biggest reason for low attendance, and practically as many attenders and their parents checked "gas price" in the check list of additional factors applying to their situations, as did non-enrollees and their parents.

3. Sixty-nine percent of the dropouts live 5 miles or more from a seminary class, compared to 44 percent of the attenders; and 28 percent of the dropouts live 10 or more miles away, compared to only 10 percent of the attenders.

4. Fifty percent of the bishops cited distance as a factor in low attendance, but the teachers felt distance or transportation was the major hindrance to only 14 percent of the dropouts.

5. No dropouts or dropout parents indicated "distance" as the biggest reason for low attendance, and only about 9 percent of the dropouts and their parents felt "transportation" was the biggest reason.

6. About 42 percent of the dropouts and their parents checked a transportation problem in the check list, compared to about 23 percent of the attenders and their parents.

7. Practically all the students go to seminary by car, with about 55 percent coming in car pools. About 78 percent of the students



go home between seminary and school. About 50 percent ride a bus to school, 31 percent of the dropouts and 16 percent of the attenders walk, and 15 percent of the dropouts and 26 percent of the attenders go by car.

8. Twenty percent of the students who ride the bus to school catch it at 7:15 a. m., and by 7:30 a. m. 69 percent are on their way. The earliest reported school starting time was 7:40 a. m.

9. Twenty-five percent of the bishops felt students getting "worn out" was a reason for low attendance, and 12 percent suggested seminary was "too early."

10. Nine percent of the dropouts wrote in that seminary being "too early" was their biggest reason for low attendance, and another 22 percent of the dropouts and 35 percent of their parents felt being "too tired" was the biggest reason.

11. The seminary teachers felt only 5 percent of the low attendance of dropouts was due to seminary being "too early."

12. Twenty five percent more dropouts than attenders said they were "tired a lot" in the check list.

13. There was no significant difference in the school or work schedules of dropouts and attenders.

14. Thirty-one percent of the dropouts expressed a negative reaction to seminary as their biggest reason for low attendance. Of these, 20 percent said they "lost interest," and 11 percent were able to quit only after they "overcame parent pressure" to attend seminary.

An additional 5 percent wrote a negative reaction to the teacher.

15. The teachers felt that 15 percent of the dropouts lost interest in seminary as their reason for low attendance.

16. About 17 percent fewer dropouts than attenders felt that the teacher encouraged them, and 30 percent fewer dropouts than attenders felt the teacher was interested in them outside of class.

17. Fifty-five percent of the dropouts indicated they planned to register for a seminary or institute of religion class for the next year, if available, and only 16 percent said they were not planning to.

18. Only 5 percent of the dropouts never went to Sunday meetings or MIA, compared to no attenders who never went. But 18 percent of the dropouts and 16 percent of the attenders never had family home evening.

19. Seventy-five percent of the bishops felt lack of parent support was the biggest reason for low attendance.

20. No dropouts or teachers mentioned this as the biggest reason, and only 10 percent fewer dropouts than attenders said they did receive encouragement from their parents to enroll in seminary. Fewer dropouts than attenders seemed to indicate a decrease in parent support during the year.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study the following conclusions, about reasons for non-enrollment and low attendance in early morning seminary in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area were drawn:

### Non-enrollment

1. Contrary to the hypothesis, distance from seminary classes does not make much difference to the percentage of enrollment except in a few cases where it contributes to the difficulty of arranging dependable rides.

2. The major reason for non-enrollment in early morning seminary in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area appears to be disinterest and total inactivity in the LDS Church, including no attendance at Sunday meetings or MIA and no participation in family home evening by the families.

3. School conflicts, work conflicts, and negative reaction to previous seminary experience seem to be insignificant factors in non-enrollment.

### Low Attendance

1. Again, contrary to the hypothesis, the increased price of gasoline was not cited as a hardship; and was almost universally ignored by students, parents, bishops, and teachers as a factor in low attendance.

2. The three major reasons for low attendance at early morning seminary, in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, appear to be losing interest in seminary as the year goes by; getting too tired to get up every morning for seminary; and transportation problems, as a function of distance.

3. Lack of teacher interest in the students outside of the classroom seems to contribute to the loss of interest in seminary part way through the year.

4. The early starting time of seminary classes contributes significantly to the students feeling too tired to get up and come to seminary.

5. The fact that so many students go back home between seminary and school also contributes to low attendance because if a student misses seminary he usually has not jeopardized his way to get to school.

6. Lack of parent support contributes most to the transportation problems of students.

7. School activities, work conflicts, and activity in the LDS Church, including participation in family home evening, appear to be insignificant factors in low attendance.

#### COMPARISONS WITH EARLIER STUDIES

There were five released time and three early morning seminary enrollment studies, and one early morning attendance study.

The released time studies found about 50 percent of non-enrollment to be due to school conflicts, either scheduling and credit or classes being more desirable than seminary. Between 18 and 34 percent was because of negative reaction to seminary classes or teachers, and the rest due to miscellaneous factors. There are no released time seminaries in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area and there do not appear to be any significant comparisons of the non-enrollment data.

The previous early morning enrollment studies reached different conclusions, partly because of their sample. But of Janson's ninth graders 23 percent seemed to be disinterested, 20 percent lacked transportation, and 17 percent disliked the early seminary class time as their major reasons for non-enrollment. McClung did not summarize his students' write-in reasons for non-enrollment, but when his mixed released time and early morning sample checked secondary factors in his check list 26 percent said they lacked transportation, 54 percent said they disliked the early class hour, and about 30 percent checked several seminary class problems. They both found over 76 percent of the parents wanting their children to attend seminary, and average activity in the LDS Church.

The present study was limited to early morning seminary students and had a full range of grades, nine through twelve. It found only 10 percent "disinterest" compared to Janson's 23 percent, but also found a high 65 percent total inactivity in the LDS Church. There

were 11 percent having significant problems with transportation compared to Janson's 20 percent and McClung's questionable 26 percent. There was much less overall interest in seminary, and no significant negative reaction to previous classes. The LDS Church is not as populous and well established in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area as it is in Utah and southern Alberta where these studies were done.

The previous early morning attendance study done by Arnold in Montana found about 25 percent of the students losing interest in seminary, 7 percent with a negative reaction to the teacher, and 25 percent too tired to get up, with lots of other miscellaneous items.

The present study confirms Arnold in every point. It found about 31 percent of the dropouts losing interest in seminary compared to his 25 percent, 5 percent with a negative reaction to the seminary teacher compared to his 7 percent, and 31 percent too tired to get up compared to his 25 percent. It also found several miscellaneous items.

Only one unique attendance finding stands out in the present study. About 42 percent of the dropouts checked a transportation problem in the present check list compared to 28 percent in Arnold's secondary check list, but only between 9 and 19 percent of the present transportation problems were unique as major reasons for low attendance compared to none of Arnold's. He concluded that transportation was available for all who wanted to attend seminary in Montana. Again, the LDS Church is a little more populous in Montana than Minnesota.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Experimentation with breakfast and transportation schedules could probably result in later seminary starting times, and students not having to go home between seminary and school. The beginnings of such innovations might include the relief society, or students, or families rotating a breakfast schedule at church or in homes, before or after seminary; and more car pooling from seminary directly to school. Each ward should "brainstorm" some solutions for their situation.
2. Further study is recommended on other facets of parent support besides "encouragement," such as assisting with transportation, and setting up home schedules supportive of seminary attendance.
3. Seminary opening and closing times should be held sacred by the teachers.
4. Dependable rides should be arranged for every student who wants to attend early morning seminary. This is probably the responsibility of ward priesthood leaders.
5. More parents might enjoy being involved in transportation if there were a study group or institute class organized for them during seminary.
6. Perhaps some kind of physical exercises could be developed for periodic movement of students during class to help them stay

awake. These could be something like the rest exercises found in the elementary Indian seminary curriculum.

7. Teachers could show more interest in students outside class by remembering their birthdays, calling them if they miss class, giving special assignments and projects, greeting them at church, attending sports events at their schools, keeping up with school activities through the school papers, and finding out some of the students' hobbies.

8. The seminary area director should visit classes periodically and be sure bishops and parents are kept informed of the progress and attendance of the students.

9. Some kind of correlation between seminary and the Bishop's Youth Council is recommended. Agenda items might include recruiting of students, arranging transportation, fellowshipping, and student feedback to bishops and seminary personnel.

10. Further study is recommended of the effectiveness of peer group recruiting versus adult recruiting of seminary students.

11. The effort should be continued to select only the best seminary teachers, following the advice of the highest LDS Church leaders:

Since early-morning seminary classes are held five times each week, the seminary teacher usually has more teaching contact and therefore potentially greater influence with the young people who attend early morning seminary than other teachers in the ward. For this reason persons with the strongest testimony of the gospel and the greatest teaching ability should be chosen as early-morning seminary teachers. The selection of early-morning seminary teachers is the responsibility of the seminary area director, with the prior approval of the bishop and stake president. Bishops are



encouraged to make the right persons available for seminary teaching, even if this involves reducing the church-service load of such individuals in order for them to have adequate time available for seminary responsibilities.<sup>1</sup>

12. A goal of 65 percent enrollment for the potential seminary students in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area is recommended. This would be slightly higher than in years past and would include those non-enrollees who indicated they wanted to come but had trouble finding a dependable ride.

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<sup>1</sup>The Priesthood Bulletin, VII (August, 1971), 4.

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Appendix A

Letters of Transmittal

14 June 1974

Dear Students and Parents,

Enclosed are two different questionnaires, one for each student in grades 9-12 last year and one for either parent.

This is a chance to tell how you felt about seminary last year. Each questionnaire can be completed in about four minutes. They will help me evaluate seminary and make some recommendations in my Master's thesis.

I need to know why some students enroll in seminary and some do not. I need to know why some students who enroll do not attend regularly, or stop altogether.

I am confident that you know some of the reasons and have some ideas and suggestions you would share.

It is important to answer each question completely and frankly. No attempt will be made to identify you.

One pre-addressed and stamped envelope is provided to return all the questionnaires but it is not particularly intended that anyone see the answers of anyone else.

Thanks much!

Wayne P. Smith 537-4284

17 June 1974

Dear Bishops,

With President Wilson's permission I am surveying, through the mail, nearly all the students in the stake in grades 9-12 last year, their parents, and their seminary teachers.

This is in connection with my Master's thesis in which I am trying to pin down the reasons why about half of the students do not enroll and why about half of those who did enroll last year did not complete the year.

The enclosed questionnaire is part of the survey and is designed, I hope, so that you could complete it in less than ten minutes. It is intended to be done in one sitting without getting up or referring to any record books, etc.

Thanks,

Wayne P. Smith

17 June 1974

Dear Teachers,

With President Wilson's permission I have sent you a short seminary questionnaire that can be done in about ten minutes.

It is correlated with a questionnaire recently sent to most all of the students in grades 9-12 in the stake, and their parents. The Bishops are also receiving a short questionnaire.

This survey will help me evaluate our seminary program and make some recommendations in my Master's thesis.

Pres. Wilson suggested I might ask you to help me get all the questionnaires back. Perhaps you could hint around that if they don't send it back it will blow up . . .

- Thanks,

Wayne P. Smith

Appendix B

Questionnaires

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Why do you think each of the following students completed the year with credit?
2. Why do you think each of the following students attended poorly or discontinued?
3. What ideas or suggestions would you give that would improve seminary:

## BISHOPS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Please indicate with numbers the approximate attendance (before March boundary changes wherever significant) of each of the following groups of students (not individuals): (cross out any unfamiliar names)

- A. Students not enrolled:
1. Sunday Mtgs:  Reg  Some  Never
    - A.  Attend about same as parents
    - B.  Attend more than parents
    - C.  Attend less than parents
  2. MIA:  Regular  Some  Never
  3. Why do you think these students did not enroll? \_\_\_\_\_
- 

- B. Students who attended poorly or discontinued:
1. Sunday Mtgs:  Reg  Some  Never
    - A.  Attend about same as parents
    - B.  Attend more than parents
    - C.  Attend less than parents
  2. MIA:  Regular  Some  Never
  3. Why do you think these students attended poorly or discontinued? \_\_\_\_\_
- 

- C. Students who attended regularly:
1. Sunday Mtgs:  Reg  Some  Never
    - A.  Attended about same as parents
    - B.  Attended more than parents
    - C.  Attended less than parents
  2. MIA:  Regular  Some  Never
  3. Why do you think these students did so well? \_\_\_\_\_
- 

2. What ideas or suggestions would you give to improve seminary:



Sex \_\_\_\_\_ School starting time last fall \_\_\_\_\_ Grade last fall \_\_\_\_\_

### S T U D E N T   Q U E S T I O N N A I R E

1. Please check your transportation to school or seminary most of the time last year:
  - A. To seminary:  Didn't go  Walk  Car alone  Car w/parent  Car pool
  - B. Between seminary & school:  Doesn't apply  Home first  right to school
  - C. To school:  Walk  Car  Bus (What time did it pick you up: \_\_\_\_\_)
  
2. Please check best description of your work situation during the last school year:
  - A.  Didn't work  Before school  After school  Weekends only
  - B.  Fall  Winter  Spring  All year
  - C.  Once a week  2-3 times weekly  4 or more times wkly
  
3. Please check best description of your extracurricular school activities last year:
  - A.  None  Athletics  Music  Student govt  Club \_\_\_\_\_
  - B.  Before school  During school  After school
  - C.  Fall  Winter  Spring  All year
  - D.  Once a week  2-3 times weekly  4 or more times weekly
  
4. Please check the best description of your attendance over the last year:
  - A. Sunday Meetings:  Regularly  Occasionally  Never
  - B. MIA:  Regularly  Occasionally  Never
  - C. Family Home Eve:  Regularly  Occasionally  Never
  
5. Please indicate your seminary experience PRIOR to last year:  Not old enough  
 Completed 1 or more yrs  Attended  Available but didn't go  unavailable
  
6. Please check EVERYONE who invited or encouraged you to go to seminary last year:
  Parents  Priesthood leader  Seminary teacher  Friends  Home teacher
  
7. Please check the best description of your seminary activity last year:
  None  Attended 4-5 times wkly  Attended 1-3 times wkly  Discontinued
  
8. What was the biggest reason for what you did about seminary last year?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
  
9. Also, please check AS MANY of the following as may have applied to you:
  - A. School problem:  Studies  Activities  Starting time
  - B. Transportation problem:  Too far  Gas price  Undependable ride
  - C. Subject Problem:  Scripture chase  Text  Filmstrips  Worksheets
  - D. Health problem:  Long illness  Short illnesses  Tired a lot
  - E. Encouragement from:  Parents  Friends  Teacher  Priesthood leader
  - F. Pressure from:  Parents  Friends  Teacher  Priesthood leader
  - G. Great subject:  Scripture chase  Text  Filmstrips  Discussions
  - H. Teacher problem:  Personality  discipline  Methods
  - I. Great teacher:  Personality  Preparation  Interest outside class
  - J. Spiritual Boost:  Testimony  Mission goal  Temple marriage goal
  
10. Do you plan to enroll in a seminary or institute of religion (college) class for next fall if it is available?  Yes  No
  
11. What ideas or suggestions would you give to improve seminary:

## P A R E N T   Q U E S T I O N N A I R E

1. Please indicate your family's seminary experience PRIOR to last fall:
 

A. Graduated:	___ Father	___ Mother	___ Children grade 9 or up
B. Attended:	___ Father	___ Mother	___ Children grade 9 or up
C. Available but didn't attend:	___ Father	___ Mother	___ Children grade 9 or up
D. Not available	___ Father	___ Mother	___ Children grade 9 or up
  
2. Please check the best description of your feelings about seminary last year:
 

\_\_\_ Extremely valuable    \_\_\_ Probably good    \_\_\_ School more important    \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Please check how gasoline price affected your family's driving last year:
 

\_\_\_ No effect    \_\_\_ Slightly less driving    \_\_\_ Much less driving    \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Please circle the approximate number of miles ONE WAY to seminary last year:
 

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 20 25 30    \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Please check best description of seminary activity of your student(s) last year:
 

#1:	___ None	___ Attended 4-5 times wkly	___ Attended 1-3 times wkly	___ Discontinued
#2:	___ None	___ Attended 4-5 times wkly	___ Attended 1-3 times wkly	___ Discontinued
#3:	___ None	___ Attended 4-5 times wkly	___ Attended 1-3 times wkly	___ Discontinued
  
6. What do you think is the biggest reason why each student did as he did?
 

#1: \_\_\_\_\_

#2: \_\_\_\_\_

#3: \_\_\_\_\_
  
7. Also, please indicate AS MANY of the following as you think may have applied to one or more of your student's situations:
 

A. School problem:	___ Studies	___ Activities	___ Starting time	
B. Transportation problem:	___ Too far	___ Gas price	___ Undependable ride	
C. Subject problem:	___ Scripture chase	___ Text	___ Filmstrips	___ Worksheets
D. Health problem:	___ Long illness	___ Short illnesses	___ Tired a lot	
E. Encouragement from:	___ Parents	___ Friends	___ Teacher	___ Priesthood leader
F. Pressure from:	___ Parents	___ Friends	___ Teacher	___ Priesthood leader
G. Great subject:	___ Scripture chase	___ Text	___ Filmstrips	___ Discussions
H. Teacher problem:	___ Personality	___ Discipline	___ Methods	
I. Great teacher:	___ Personality	___ Preparation	___ Interest outside class	
J. Spiritual boost:	___ Testimony	___ Mission goal	___ Temple marriage goal	
  
8. I think ( \_\_\_ none \_\_\_ 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 ) of my students would enroll in a seminary or institute of religion (college) class for next fall if it were available.
  
9. What ideas or suggestions would you give to improve seminary:

Appendix C

Summary of Suggestions for Improving Seminary

Suggestion	NE		D		A		T	B
	S	P	S	P	S	P		
Blank	93%	78%	35%	47%	43%	26%	15%	12%
Later time	7%	11%	20%	10%	10%	6%	8%	
Better transportation		6%	1%		1%	2%		25%
Home study seminary		6%	4%	8%	4%			
Better lessons			7%	2%		2%		
Cancel it			5%		1%			
Three or four times wkly			4%	2%	1%	6%		12%
Released time seminary			4%	10%	3%	8%		25%
Better discipline			4%			2%		
Start and end on time			4%	2%	3%			
Closer class			2%	4%		2%		
Thursdays (after MIA) off			2%					
Outside speakers			2%					
More advertising			2%					
More time to talk to friends			2%					
Start earlier			2%					
Better teacher			2%	12%	16%	30%	8%	
Better communication in bad weather				2%		2%		
More activities					10%	2%	8%	
Require more work					3%			
Go slower					1%			
70 percent attendance					1%			
More reports to parents						4%	15%	12%
More parents transporting						2%	8%	
Attendance incentive						2%		
Better correlation with MIA						2%	15%	
Sunday night 2 hours						2%		
Hard chairs if at home						2%		
More parent involvement							8%	
No classes smaller than 10 students							15%	
Pay the instructor (7 students)								12%
Have parents visit class								12%
More reports to bishops								12%
More regular and systematic teacher supervision								12%

Number of Responses                      40    18    55    49    68    53    13    8

REASONS FOR NON-ENROLLMENT AND LOW ATTENDANCE  
IN LDS EARLY MORNING SEMINARY AT  
MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL

Wayne Platt Smith

Department of Church History and Doctrine

M. R. E. Degree, April 1975

ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine why only about one half of the potential Latter-day Saint students in grades nine through twelve in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area enroll in early morning seminary each year, why so many students attended poorly or discontinued part way through 1973-74, and what effect the increase in the price of gasoline had on attendance. About 40 percent of the potential students and their parents, all eight of their bishops, and all thirteen seminary teachers responded to a mailed questionnaire.

The main reasons for non-enrollment were inactivity in the LDS Church, disinterest in seminary, and difficulty finding dependable rides because of distance. The main reasons for low attendance were losing interest in seminary, partly due to lack of teacher interest out of class; being too tired, partly because of the early seminary hour; and transportation problems, due to distance and lack of parental support.

COMMITTEE APPROVAL:

  
James R. Harris, Committee Chairman

  
Richard O. Cowan, Committee Member

  
LaMar C. Berrett, Department Chairman