Pay or Play? Why Youth Work in the United States

By Yasemin Besen

At the understaffed coffee shop, teenagers have been working required overtime for a while now. They carry loads of garbage out in the biting cold, unload large boxes of supplies, and serve endless lines of demanding and occasionally rude customers during busy hours. Because of the staffing problem, they are forced to work odd shifts, usually late nights and weekends, standing for hours on end. This is just what they do during their free time from their packed schedules at school. However, they seldom complain: overtime is an opportunity to spend more time with friends and meet new people[1].

By all appearances, the coffee shop where I conducted my fieldwork should be what Chris Tilly refers to as "half a job"-- highly mechanized, with minimal skill requirements, low hourly pay and long shifts.[2] But despite the poor working conditions, the students who work there all agree that: "It's not like that."[3] Their experience deviates considerably from traditional notions of work, as an activity for economic production, monetary gratification or skill acquisition, but work itself is consumed during their leisure time, remaining from schoolwork, as a commodity.

Not only does the work experience of these teenagers differ considerably from our existing preconceptions of work as a form of production, but most of these teenagers, with their bleached blond spiky hair styles, designer clothes, fashionable accessories and high technology cell phones deviate considerably from the traditional notions of youth workers. More often, descriptions of teenagers who work in the United States elicit images of impoverished inner-city kids, working to support their families and put themselves through school. That is why extensive research on youth employment, such as Katherine Newman's book *No Shame in My Game,* focuses on inner-city youth[4]. However, contrary to popular belief, youth from less affluent socio-economic backgrounds do not constitute the majority of the current youth labor force, but rather the current youth labor force consists predominantly of white, middle-class youth.[5] Therefore, teenagers with their fashionable clothes, cars and cell-phones are likely to be typical examples of young workers. Often, the ubiquity of affluent youth workers obscures their social visibility:

> "The large teenage, part-time labor force that staffs the counters of fast-food establishments, waits on customers in retail stores, assembles parts in industrial settings, and cleans motel rooms and office buildings has become such a familiar part of our social landscape that we may fail to note its unique character or to ponder its social significance."[6]

This article incorporates this dominant yet neglected portion of the youth labor force and explores the factors that influence their labor market entry decisions. In particular, this analysis examines the reasons why youth– particularly more affluent– youth give up their free time and work in demanding jobs for very low pay. Are they working for the money – like their economically disadvantaged counterparts – or does work fulfill a social function for these youth?

Donna Gaines in *Teenage Wasteland*[7] describes the daily life of a typical white, affluent, suburban teenager as a social "wasteland." Even though the focus of her analysis is working class youth, she identifies these white, suburban, affluent teenagers as economically privileged and saturated with goods such as cars and fashionable clothes. However, she argues that these teenagers lack space where they can socialize and meet new people. She

argues that these teenagers, often viewed as privileged because of their consumption patterns and economic affluence are socially deprived. They lack social space in which to interact with their friends and meet new people. Often, these teenagers experience difficulty meeting new people in large, impersonal high schools and lack alternative ways of meeting friends and the space in which they can interact with their friends. The centerless suburbs fail to offer central meeting places for local teenagers and create space for social activity. To cope with the lack of means of social interaction, Gaines argues, teenagers find alternatives in subcultural and gang activity. While her observations about the suburbs are about all teenagers, her analysis focuses exclusively on working class youth, therefore, such activities often are not applicable to most of the teenagers in the United States. Still, *Teenage Wasteland* offers a valuable contribution to the study of youth in the United States. This work directs attention to a vital characteristic of average, suburban American youth: their economic affluence coupled with the relative social deprivation of a centerless suburb, and identifies a few ways in which youth seek alternatives. I would argue that it is possible to view young workers as searching for alternative ways in which they can acquire space for socializing and meeting new people.

Methods

For the purposes of this analysis, young workers are defined as those between 16 and 19 years of age who are engaged in wage labor. This is in line with the Department of Labor's definition of an "employed person" as a civilian, 16 years or older, who does a minimum of one hour of work for pay of profit, or 15 hours or more without pay in a family enterprise. This age group not only fits the legal definition of labor, but also consists exclusively of teenagers. A large portion of the youth labor literature typically includes 16-19 year-olds, whether they are in high-school or college, because they show similar work patters. Work, for the purposes of this article, includes all work done for pay outside the home.

The data for this article come from the *World Values Study*[8], which provides comparable and reliable survey data on economic and social work related factors on the population of interest – youth between the ages of 16 and 19 – for 45 societies. This study was carried out among 1,839 Americans and 89,908 respondents throughout the world, in two waves. Our data come from the second, the most recent wave of the study (2000), carried out by the Gallup organization in the United States. This dataset has been used widely especially among economists, political scientists and sociologists for examining differential beliefs about social institutions, government, values such as post-materialism, individualism and the role of women. It provides the ideal dataset for measuring the relative impacts of economic and social factors in decision to enter the labor market because it offers a wide array of work related variables including reasons for working, including both economic and social factor on a very large, nationally representative sample.

Typical datasets employed in labor market studies include extensive questions about economic factors, but often ignore social and value related concerns. Surveys that feature extensive questions about values typically exclude in-depth economic factors. The *World Values Study* includes an extensive battery of both economic and social questions and provides the unique opportunity to compare the relative impact of two sets of explanations.

The *World Values Study* also defines work in much the same way this paper does: paid labor done outside the home, not considering unpaid work, domestic labor or agricultural labor as "work." Most importantly, the dataset was constructed based on ethnographic, in-depth, face-to-face interviews with the respondents conducted by social scientists based with the questions devised by survey methodologists based on the results of several waves of pilot studies.

The U.S. teenage sample was subdivided into student and non-student subsamples. Even though the focus of this study is on the student population, the non-students in the same age cohort were included for comparative purposes. Interestingly, the biggest bifurcation in our sample is based on student status. Whether a respondent is identified as a student or not (high-school or college) is a very important predictor in understanding why youth work. As well documented in the literature, youth in the age group of interest do not show considerable

differentiation in their labor force entry decisions, with the composition of the workforce remaining constant between educational levels. To account for any potential confound, however, the model described below was run separately for college and high-school students, and the resulting coefficients were then compared with F-tests against the null hypothesis that the coefficients are equivalent (and, thus, that the effects of the reasons for working do not vary across the groups). The analyses failed to reject the null hypothesis of no difference for all coefficients.

Even though we fail to reject the null hypothesis of no difference in the factors leading to the workplace entry decisions of high-school and college, students and non-students in the same age bracket behave quite differently in terms of their labor market entry decisions. Within that age bracket, being a student or not is highly correlated with socio-economic status. Almost all sixteen to nineteen year-old non-students are economically deprived, although not all economically deprived youth leave school early. This creates a confound in analyses of labor market entry decisions, such that student status and socio-economic status are often highly correlated, muting the independent effects of one, or both, of the factors. Unfortunately, the measurement of variables like socio-economic status is not precise enough typically in surveys to capture the degree of relative deprivation. Although such measurements are useful in accounting for more pronounced effects, they fail to capture more nuanced ones. However, adopting the student/non-student indicator provides a more nuanced measure of economic deprivation and low socio-economic status. Although there are many economically deprived teenagers, from lower-socio-economic backgrounds, only the ones that are extremely deprived do not go to school. Therefore, to better capture the differential reasons for working, the sample was bifurcated into student and non-student sub-samples for comparison. Within these groups, we can control for the effect of socio-economic status, allowing us to examine how socio-economic status impacts students and non-students differentially.

The aim of this article is twofold. First, it compares economic and social factors in explaining the labor market entry decisions of youth. Second, it examines the differential impact of these factors in explaining the work decisions of youth who are students and non-students. In the study, youth – and all other respondents – were asked: "Did you work for money or benefits at least for one hour last week?" The answer is dichotomous; coded as yes (1) if the respondent worked for money or benefits for at least an hour in the reference week or no (0) otherwise. This measure corresponds to the definition of work in this dissertation and to the definition adopted by the United Stated Department of Labor.

There are several reasons for the choice of a dichotomous dependent variable, rather than modeling the number of hours worked. Prior research has shown that the number of hours worked does not have significant effects on many aspects of employment. This makes sense: it us unlikely that the factors that lead a teenager to take a job for ten hours a week differ considerably from those that would lead a teenager to work twenty hours a week. Also, the number of hours worked in a week by teenagers is often highly variable, varying by as many as ten hours from week to week. This not only renders measures of central tendency ineffective, but also raises questions as to the use of threshold effects. If we believe that taking a twenty hour per week job is different than taking a fifteen hour per week job, what to do with a student who works more than twenty hours one week, and less the next? Furthermore, the only findings that seem to show a difference based on the number of hours worked appear to show a threshold effect such that academic performance is hurt only after individuals work more than thirty hours per week.[9]

Another option would be to use a categorical dependent variable, in which youth work part-time or full-time. However, among students in the United States, the number reporting full-time work is negligible as a proportion of the total sample, giving us limited sample variance. Also, as noted previously, the definitions of full- and part-time labor can be very fluid among teenagers. For verification purposes, the analyses reported below were replicated for a nested logistic regression model including part-time and full-time work status without substantial changes in the findings.

In addition to questions about work status, respondents to the *World Values Study* were asked what they think is the most important reasons in choosing a job. All respondents were asked "Which one of these factors, in your opinion, are important in your decision to work?" They were then given 15 cards, each representing a factor that they were told some people believe to be important in a job, and asked to choose which of them they personally thought were important. Respondents could choose as many or as few of the cards as they felt were applicable. It is important to note that these questions were asked to all respondents, regardless of their work status, not only to those who were working during the reference week. Moreover, the question was asked in regards to respondents' beliefs about work in general and not in reference to any particular job. This is especially important because of the high turnover rates endemic to many youth oriented jobs. The aspects of a job listed on the cards were: Good Pay, Not Too Much Pressure, Good Job Security, Good Chances for Promotion, A Job Respected by People in General, Good Hours, An Opportunity to Use Initiative, A Useful Job for Society, Good Holidays, A Job in Which You Feel You Can Achieve Something, A Responsible Job, A Job that is Interesting, A Job That Meets One's Abilities, Meeting People, and Pleasant People to Work With. For the proposed research, each of the categories was treated as a separate variable, coded as 1 if the subject chose the reason, and 0 otherwise. The majority of the independent variables in the model were constructed, as discussed above, from the respondent's beliefs about the importance of different aspects of jobs, both social and economic. All of these variables were coded as 1 if the respondent chose the card corresponding to the reason, and 0 otherwise.

The aspects of a job respondents were able to choose from includes both economic (such as good pay, chances of promotion and job security) and social factors (such as meeting people and having pleasant people to work with). The inclusion of such factors allows us to compare the social and economic aspects of a job that respondents report as important in their decision to work.

In comparing the labor market entry decisions of student and non-student youth, in addition to the potential social and economic reasons for working, some control variables were included. First, a socio-economic status measure was included. *World Values Study* measures socio-economic status based on the type of occupation the parents. The question presented to the respondent (not asked by the interviewer, but to be filled out by the respondent) asked the respondents to classify their socio-economic background in one of four categories: upper/upper middle class, middle class/non-manual labor, manual skilled labor/non-manual skilled labor and unskilled manual labor. This coding was based on the definitions provided in the *World Values Study* and is in line with the common practice in academic studies on youth employment.

Another important distinction one needs to account for is whether youth live with their parents or not. The *World Values Study* provides a variable specifically to measure that. The respondents are asked: "Do you live with your parents?" The answers are coded 1 if the respondents report living with their parents, and 0 otherwise. Preliminary findings show no main effect of living with parents for the United States students and non-students, but significant effects for youth in other industrialized countries. Therefore, this variable was included for comparative purposes and will be discussed in detail in the next article.

Because of the dichotomous nature of our dependent variable – either an individual works or does not – I employ logistic regression techniques to predict the likelihood of a respondent working, given the above variables as predictive variables. The model will be run separately for student and non-student youth, to demonstrate the uniqueness of the student population within the United States.

Because the coefficients attached to logistic regression coefficients tells us very little about the effect of an independent variable other than its size and whether or not it is significant, it is necessary to use Monte Carlo simulation to fully analyze the results. To this end, Gary King's CLARIFY plug-in for STATA was used.[10]Monte Carlo simulations estimate unweighted, predicted probabilities at random 1000 draws. It offers expected values for each independent variable. To simulate the parameters, it uses the point estimates of variance/covariance matrices of the estimates. So that it can randomly draw a multivariate normal distribution which will enable us to obtain predicted probabilities. The numbers show the amount of change in the

dependent variable for every change in the dependent variable from the lowest category to the highest category. In other words, the Monte Carlo values for each independent variable shows, how much the likelihood of working increases or decreases moving from the lowest category of the independent variable to its highest value. Simply put, the Monte Carlo simulation allows us to present numerically precise estimates of the effects of parameters of interests in a way that requires minimal statistical knowledge on the part of the reader. Certainly the procedure outlines rather more complicated than simpler approaches such as odds ratios, but the interpretation and the visual representation of the results are much simpler with the aid of Monte Carlo simulations. As King et al. argue [11]with Monte Carlo simulations, the interpretation of the size and the magnitude of the effects are much simpler and easier to follow for the readers and they are comparable across different models. Also, with Monte Carlo simulations, it is easier to visually observe the size and the magnitude of the changes.

Findings

As Table 1 shows, employment at young ages tends to be more common in the U.S.: 55% of students and 72% of non-student Americans work, while only 18% of students in other industrialized countries work. The descriptive characteristics of the American labor force are presented below.

Based on the logistic regression estimates predicting the likelihood of working, we see a unique case for American students. As might be expected, the socio-economic status of the students has a significant effect on their labor market entry decisions. However, for the students in the United States, likelihood of labor market entry increases with the increase in the socio-economic status. Mirroring the findings of the Department of Labor[12], students from higher socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to work.

As Figure 1 and Figure 2 illustrate, youth from higher socio-economic groups are more likely to work. Figure 1 divides the socio-economic background into four groups: upper, middle, skilled and unskilled workers. Among the highest ses group, we see the highest labor force participation rate. 71.6% of the upper class youth work while only 40% of the unskilled working class youth do. Figure 2 illustrates that only 23.9% of the current youth labor force come from unskilled working class backgrounds. The largest group within the current youth labor force consists of the upper class youth (44%).

For students in the US, the decision to enter the labor market is not explained by economic variables such as good pay, job security, and chance for promotion, good hours or an opportunity to use initiative. Furthermore, whether or not an American student lives at home has no significant effect on labor entry decisions.

In contrast, the social factors show significant effects on youth's labor market entry decisions in the United States. The variable denoting whether or not the respondent felt that Meeting People was an important aspect of a job has a strong and significant effect on a student's labor market entry decisions.

Another important factor is their confidence in the education system. The lower the confidence American students in the education system, the more likely they are to work. The effects of confidence in the education system on the decision to enter the labor market will be discussed in detail in upcoming articles.

While logistic regression estimation identifies the significant predictors of entering the labor market, logistic regression coefficients are not interpretable. While we can identify the significant effects and the direction of the relation, we are unable to measure the magnitude of the effects. For this purpose, Monte Carlo simulations were employed. Monte Carlo simulations for a coefficient measures the magnitude and the direction of the effect that variable has on likelihood of working controlling for all other variables in the model.

Table 3 shows the Monte Carlo simulations. Each number shows how much the likelihood of working increases or decreases depending on the sign of the coefficient, moving from the minimum value of the independent variable to the maximum value. The overall likelihood of working for students in the United States is 56 percent, controlling for all the factors in the dataset. Moving from the lowest socio-economic status group of

students to the highest increases the overall likelihood of working by thirty percent. While students from the lowest socio-economic status have around a forty percent chance of working, students from the highest socio-economic status can be expected to work nearly seventy percent of the time.

An American student who values meeting people on the job, holding all other variables at their means, has a 63.4 percent chance of working; an increase of 22 percent over a US student who did not value meeting people (of whom, 41.5 percent are expected to work). In addition to the significant effect of meeting people, the other social predictor of youth's labor market entry decisions is having confidence in the education system. Not having confidence in the education system makes a student in the United States 37 percent more likely to work, raising the predicted probability of working from 41.5 percent to 78.8 percent.

Therefore, for these students in the United States, we can argue that labor market entry decisions are dominated not by economic, but by social considerations. Moreover, the youth sample's labor market entry decisions seem to have little to do with economics. The only significant economic variable in predicting the work decision is socio-economic status, which has an effect opposite that which would be predicted by traditional economic models.

In order to put these findings in context, we can examine how the same variables predict the labor market entry decisions of non-students in the same age bracket in the United States. They display a fundamentally different pattern. Almost 80 percent of all youth who do not go to school work. Not only are they more likely to work than their student counterparts, but also their labor market entry decisions follow a different pattern. Similar to the students, socio-economic status is a significant predictor of labor market entry decisions. Not only does socio-economic background has a significant effect, but its effect is in the same direction. The non-students from higher socio-economic groups are more likely to work. Moving from the lowest socio-economic status group to the highest, the overall likelihood of working for American non-students increases from 60.5 percent to the near-certainty of 95.1 percent.

However, except for the similar effect of socio-economic status, the predictors of labor market entry decisions show a different pattern. None of the social factors measured significantly predict the labor market entry decisions of non-students in the United States. However, the decision to work is significantly predicted by usefulness of the job, respectfulness of the job and possibility of promotions. Non-students in the United States valuing the respectability of the job are substantially less likely to work, and those that value the possibility of promotions, as well as those that value the usefulness of the job to society are more likely. Both of these variables have z-values slightly outside of conventional levels of statistical acceptability ($p = .06$ and .053, respectively), but given the relatively small sample size for logit estimation, the results are not wholly uninterpretable: both of these are relatively more work-related concerns than those voiced by US students.

The negative coefficient on the respect value could be explained by the presence or absence of "respectable" jobs available for non-students between ages sixteen and nineteen. For non-student youth with limited skills and education valuing respectable jobs makes an individual less likely to work. Overall, social factors do not help predict labor market entry decisions among non-students. For non-students, the significant predictors are all economic, or, at least work-related in nature. Unlike students, whose labor market entry decisions are largely explained by social factors, the non-students market entry decisions are predicted by factors at least relating to the job.

The student labor force in the United States constitutes a unique case: their labor market entry decisions are explained predominantly by social factors. They are fundamentally different from their non-student counterparts. But, while our analysis shows that students in the United States differ substantially from non-students in the U. S., we cannot yet claim that the difference is due to the uniqueness of the American student population. It could be the case that our effects simply mirror a universal difference between students and non-students. We therefore tested for universality through an analysis of the labor force entry decisions of students

and non-students outside the United States. The international comparisons will be discussed in detail in a forthcoming article.

Discussion

This unique set of factors can be explained through the lack of social space and alienation of students in the United States. Many scholars have noted the alienation of young people especially in the suburbs. However, Donna Gaines' analysis identifies subcultures, music, deviance and suicide as alternative ways to deal with alienation for economically deprived youth in this country. This analysis suggests that students turn to work in order to fulfill unmet social needs. In the past, these needs would have been met by schools or other social organizations. Work, therefore, replaces such organizations and fulfills primarily social factors. Among a similar population, research has shown that work places function as gathering places for youth, message centers and generally, arenas in which youth can meet new friends and socialize with their peers.

We can argue that for students in the United States, work is a medium through which new acquaintances are made. United States students are the only group where meeting people significantly increases the likelihood of working. Working, therefore, not only provides the opportunity to meet peers, but also offers the space in which they can socialize. While they could potentially fulfill this need at school, they may be prevented from doing so by their lack of confidence in the education system.

Due to the perceived inability of schools to create social cohesion, educational institutions may have lost their role in creating an environment that allows students to meet peers. When students lose confidence in the educational institutions' ability to foster social connections and meet new people, their likelihood of working increases. Work, therefore, provides an alternative to school in creating the social environment in which to meet peers.

In addition, there has been a decline in the perceived ability of schools to provide a common meaning and narrative in youth's lives, which is followed by the decision to work. Work, as an alternative to school, is perceived to provide both economically viable skills and create the opportunity to meet peers as well as offer a common culture and social cohesion. Work not only provides the opportunity and the space to meet new people, but also provides a common narrative and a common language for that interaction. This phenomenon will be discussed in further detail in the next articles.

In short, we see that the students are working to fulfill unmet social needs. It is important to note, however, the student labor force consists predominantly of higher socio-economic status students. Of course, for some youth, especially those in inner-cities and impoverished rural areas, the work decision might be entirely economic. However, the focus on these youth is to miss the overall trends in youth employment for the students in the United States. The marginal effect of these youth can be seen in the relationship of socio-economic status and likelihood of working in the United States. Overall, in the United States, youth from higher socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to work. Recent findings show that disadvantaged youth have difficulty finding work even when they want it, as the jobs are primarily filled by higher socio-economic status youth (Newman, 1999). This serves to reinforce the notion that work is primarily a social decision for students. It is as if youth employment is a commodity that only the affluent can afford.

Conclusion

With most of their economic needs met, middle-class students in the United States lack the social interaction that youth in earlier times would have experienced in school or in other social institutions. This paper demonstrates that this is a characteristic neither of all students nor of American youth in general, but specifically of American students. Contrary to traditional labor market analyses, the decision to work for a large proportion of such students in the United States is a largely social rather than strictly economic calculation.

Youth in other industrialized countries, however, tend to act quite differently. For both students and non-students elsewhere, work is primarily an economic activity and not a social one.[13] Of course, American youth are not a homogenous category. While many middle-class and more affluent students work for social reasons, the non-students behave mostly like youth in other industrialized countries: working out of economic need.

While this paper illuminates, the motivations of a portion of youth in the United States, how these values and motivations are translated into decisions of work remains outside the scope of this paper. For that, a detailed ethnographic understanding of the workplace and experience is needed. The next step would be to identify the mechanisms and unravel the everyday experience of youth labor.

Table 1: Descriptive Characteristics of the Current Youth Labor Force in the United States

			US Students		US Non-Students		Intl Students		Intl Non-Students	
Variable	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev
Good Pay	0	1	0.83	0.38	0.83	0.38	0.73	0.44	0.74	0.44
Pleasant People	0	1	0.77	0.42	0.77	0.42	0.73	0.44	0.72	0.45
No Pressure	0	1	0.34	0.47	0.37	0.48	0.37	0.48	0.35	0.48
Job Security	0	1	0.71	0.46	0.71	0.46	0.58	0.49	0.63	0.48
Promotions	0	1	0.63	0.48	0.61	0.49	0.50	0.50	0.45	0.50
Respect	0	1	0.50	0.50	0.41	0.49	0.40	0.49	0.36	0.48
Good Hours	0	1	0.61	0.49	0.64	0.48	0.45	0.50	0.52	0.50
Initiative	0	1	0.51	0.50	0.40	0.49	0.54	0.50	0.44	0.50
Useful	0	1	0.48	0.50	0.32	0.47	0.47	0.50	0.36	0.48
Holidays	0	1	0.24	0.43	0.34	0.48	0.31	0.46	0.35	0.48
Meet People	0	1	0.63	0.48	0.60	0.49	0.50	0.50	0.48	0.50
Achieve	0	1	0.80	0.40	0.70	0.46	0.60	0.49	0.54	0.50
Responsible	0	1	0.68	0.47	0.57	0.50	0.45	0.50	0.41	0.49
Interesting	0	1	0.81	0.39	0.75	0.43	0.65	0.48	0.60	0.49
Meets Abilities	0	1	0.64	0.48	0.54	0.50	0.62	0.49	0.49	0.50
Confidence in Education	1	4	2.00	0.81	2.14	0.92	2.30	0.84	2.33	0.83
Live w/Parents	1	2	1.16	0.37	1.28	0.45	1.10	0.40	1.18	0.38
Socio-Economic Status	1	4	2.54	1.25	2.86	1.12	2.44	0.94	2.92	0.87
Work?	0	1	0.55	0.50	0.72	0.45	0.18	0.38	0.71	0.46

Table 2: Logistic Regression Coefficients for Youth Labor Market Entry Decisions on Selected Variables for Students in the United States

	Coefficients	
Good pay	.045	(0.451)
Pleasant People to Work with	-0.412	(0.433)
No Pressure	-0.550	(0.390)
Job Pressure	0.086	(0.403)
Promotion	0.021	(0.397)
Respectfulness	0.151	(0.367)
Good Hours	0.060	(0.387)
Initiative	-0.005	(0.419)
Useful	0.230	(0.378)
Holiday	-0.127	(0.409)
Meeting Other People	0.906*	(0.388)
Achievement	0.084	(0.447)
Responsibility	0.514	(0.407)
Interesting	0.345	(0.464)
Meets Ability	0.328	(0.399)
Confidence in Education System	-0.581*	(0.223)
Live with Parents	0.374	(0.457)
Socio-economic Status	0.480*	(0.141)
Intercept	-1.446	(0.988)
Log likelihood	-116.757	
N	199	
LR chi2(18)	40.54	
Prob > chi2	0.002	

**p < .05*

Standard Errors in parentheses

Table 3: Estimated Likelihood of Working, Overall and with Effects of Selected Significant Independent Variables, by Student Status and Residency

United States Students	
Overall Mean Likelihood of Working	0.555
Effect of Socio-Economic Status	0.337
Effect of Meeting People	0.219
Effect of Confidence in Education System	0.374
United States Non-Students	
Overall Mean Likelihood of Working	0.809
Effect of Socio-Economic Status	0.349
Effect of Promotions	0.160
Effect of Respect	0.208
Effect of Useful	0.164
Non-US Students	
Overall Mean Likelihood of Working	0.174
Effect of Socio-Economic Status	0.055
Effect of Pleasant People to work with	0.074
Effect of Living with Parents	0.511
Non-US Non-Students	
Overall Mean Likelihood of Working	0.715
Effect of Socio-Economic Status	0.153
Effect of Taking Initiative	0.063

Table 4: Logistic Regression Coefficients for Youth Labor Market Entry Decisions on Selected Variables for Non-Students in the United States

	Coefficients	
Good pay	-0.215	(0.649)
Pleasant People to Work with	0.522	(0.594)
No Pressure	-0.219	(0.547)
Job Pressure	-0.627	(0.586)
Promotion	1.000**	(0.547)
Respectfulness	-1.279*	(0.661)
Good Hours	-0.289	(0.647)
Initiative	0.449	(0.665)
Useful	1.276**	(0.723)
Holiday	-0.794	(0.577)
Meeting Other People	0.482	(0.572)
Achievement	0.576	(0.595)
Responsibility	-0.091	(0.583)
Interesting	0.353	(0.613)
Meets Ability	-0.537	(0.649)
Confidence in Education System	0.095	(0.258)
Live with Parents	0.465	(0.526)
Socio-economic Status	.889*	(0.287)
Intercept	4.263*	1.505
Log likelihood	-64.552	
N	145	
LR chi2(18)	41.71	
Prob > chi2	0.001	

**p<0.05, **p<0.01*

Note: Standard Errors in parentheses

Figure 1: Percentage of Youth Working by Socio-Economic Status

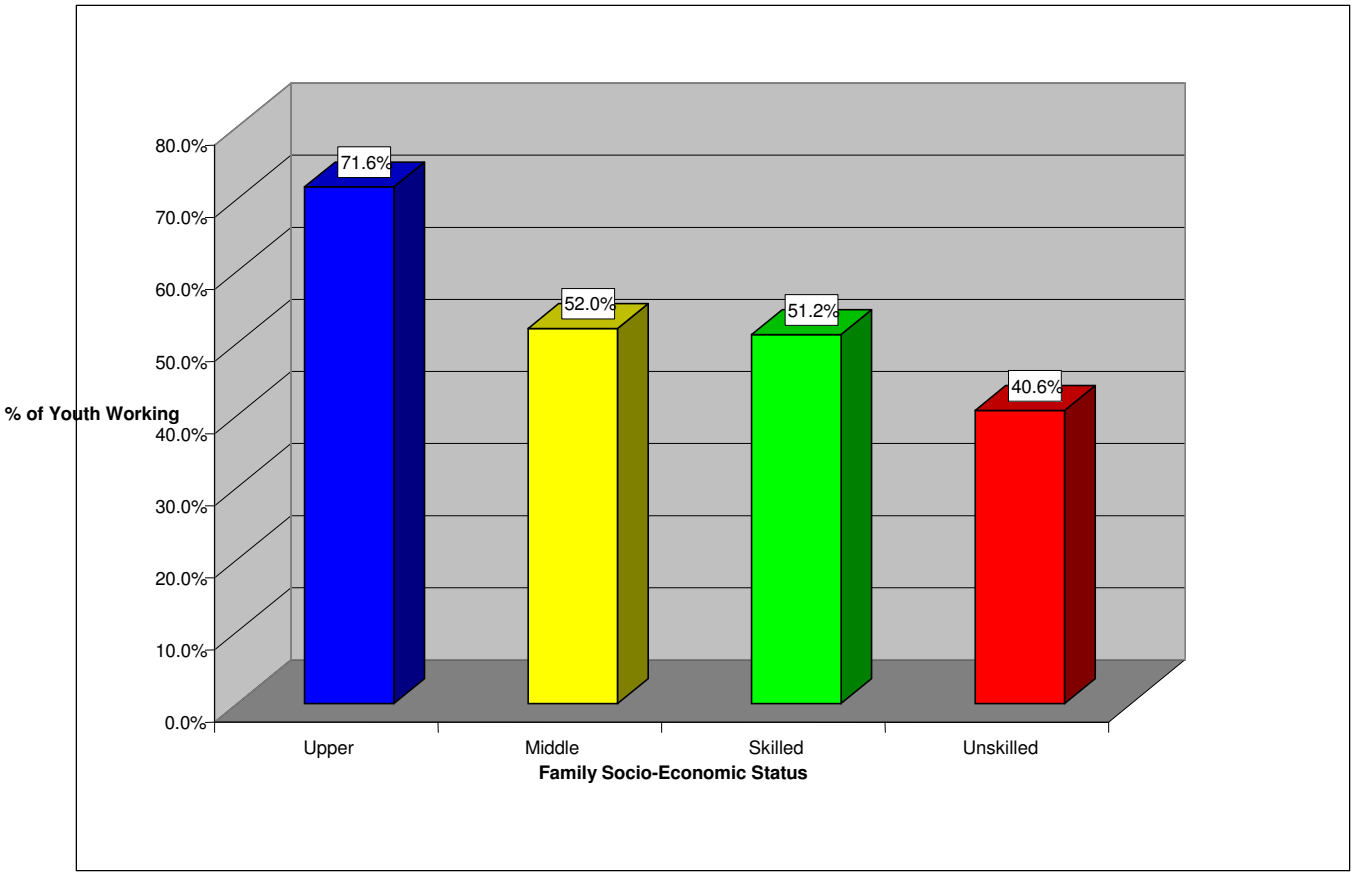
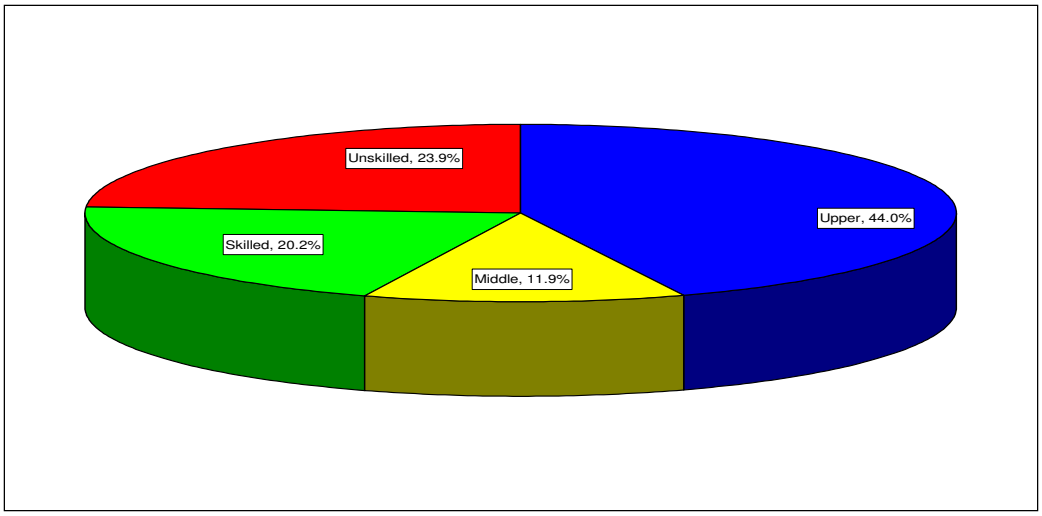


Figure 2: Composition of Youth Workforce by Socio-Economic Status



APPENDIX

The variable names were abbreviated for the presentation of the model. Their definitions are as follows:

Y= the dependent variable: decision to work measures as whether the respondent said yes or no the question of whether he/she works or not.

Good pay: measures importance of good pay for both working and non-working respondents in the decision to work in general.

No Pressure: measures importance of having a no pressure job for both working and non-working respondents in the decision to work in general.

Security: measures importance of job security for both working and non-working respondents in the decision to work in general.

Promotions: measures importance of possibility of promotions for both working and non-working respondents in the decision to work in general.

Respected: measures importance of having a respected job for both working and non-working respondents in the decision to work in general.

Good Hours: measures importance of good hours for the respondent for both working and non-working respondents in the decision to work in general.

Initiative: measures the importance of having the opportunity to use initiative in the job for both working and non-working respondents in the decision to work in general.

Useful: measures importance of usefulness of the job for both working and non-working respondents in the decision to work in general.

Good Holidays: measures importance of good holidays for both working and non-working respondents in the decision to work in general.

Achievement: measures importance of possibility of achievement for both working and non-working respondents in the decision to work in general.

Responsibility: measures importance of having responsibilities at work for both working and non-working respondents in the decision to work in general.

Interesting: measures importance of having an interesting job for both working and non-working respondents in the decision to work in general.

Meets Abilities: measures the importance of having a job that meets the respondents' abilities for both working and non-working respondents in the decision to work in general.

Pleasant People: measures importance of having pleasant people to work with for both working and non-working respondents in the decision to work in general

Live with Parents: is a dummy variable that identifies respondents living with their parents, such that respondents living with their parents are coded as 1, and 0 otherwise.

Confidence in Education: respondents were asked to indicate their confidence in the educational system of their nation, with four possible responses ranging from a low of "none whatsoever" to a high of "complete confidence."

NOTES

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[11] King, Gary, Michael Tomz and Jason Wittenberg. "Making the Most of Statistical Analyses: Improving Interpretation and Presentation" *American Journal of Political Science.* (2000) vol. 44, no. 2.
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[13] For further information on other industrialized countries, see Besen, Yasemin. "How Unique is American Youth?" Unpublished Manuscript. 2005.

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REGIONAL LABOR REVIEW, vol. 9, no. 1 (Fall 2006): 30–39.