DESCRIPTORS- *DISADVANTAGED YOUTH, *INDIVIDUAL
CHARACTERISTICS, *EDUCATIONAL NEEDS, *ATTITUDES, *RESEARCH
REVIEWS (PUBLICATIONS), SLUM SCHOOLS, PSYCHOLOGICAL
CHARACTERISTICS, ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES, ECONOMIC
DISADVANTAGEMENT, SLUM ENVIRONMENT, TEACHER ATTITUDES,
TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS, HOUSING, STUDENT BEHAVIOR, LIMITED
EXPERIENCE, FAMILY LIFE, ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, EDUCATIONAL
FACILITIES, SELF CONCEPT,

THIS DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARACTERISTICS AND EDUCATIONAL
NEEDS OF URBAN DISADVANTAGED PUPILS IS A SYNTHESIS OF 99
RESEARCH REPORTS. THE RESEARCH SUGGESTS THAT SUCH CHILDREN
LIVE IN A WORLD OF ISOLATION, LIMITED EXPERIENCE, AND
REJECTION. HOUSING CONDITIONS, A DEMORALIZING NEIGHBORHOOD,
AND A DISORGANIZED FAMILY LIFE ALL CONTRIBUTE TO THE
DISADVANTAGED CHILD'S GENERAL IMPOVERISHMENT. THE ENVIRONMENT
AFFECTS THE CHILD'S HEALTH, ATTITUDES, AND VALUES, AND HE
DEVELOPS FEELINGS OF INADEQUACY AND ANTAGONISM. THESE
ATTITUDES, AS WELL AS THE DISADVANTAGED PUPIL'S UNCERTAINTY
ABOUT THE VALUE OF AN EDUCATION, ARE CARRIED INTO THE
CLASSROOM AND AFFECT HIS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE. WHILE NEGRO
GIRLS GENERALLY ACHIEVE BETTER THAN NEGRO BOYS, THE READING
ACHIEVEMENT AND I.Q. SCORES OF ALL DISADVANTAGED PUPILS
REFLECT SERIOUS CUMULATIVE RETARDATION. THESE SCORES ARE A
REFLECTION OF THE CHILD'S EARLY EXPERIENCES RATHER THAN A
MEASURE OF HIS POTENTIAL. MOREOVER, DISADVANTAGED PUPILS ARE
NEGATIVELY INFLUENCED BY INADEQUATE EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES
AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS. SLUM SCHOOLS ARE UNDERSTAFFED
AND HAVE A HIGH RATE OF TEACHER TURNOVER, AND TEACHERS ARE
OFTEN INEXPERIENCED AND UNPREPARED FOR WORK WITH THE
DISADVANTAGED. FINALLY, RECENT STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT
TEACHERS' EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS OF PUPILS DIFFER FOR
WHITE AND NEGRO CHILDREN, AND FOR CHILDREN OF DIFFERENT
SOCIAL CLASSES. PERCEIVED BY THE TEACHERS AS INTELLECTUALLY
LIMITED AND MISBEHAVING, THE LOWER-CLASS CHILD WILL
SUBSEQUENTLY ACHIEVE LESS AND BEHAVE LESS SATISFACTORILY.
(LB)

Urban Disadvantaged Pupils

Characteristics
Environments
Potentials

A Synthesis of
99 Research Reports

By Elinor F. McCloskey

Northwest Regional
Educational Laboratory

Urban Disadvantaged Pupils

Capabilities	Handicaps
Attitudes	Hostilities
Aspirations	Aversions
Hopes	Fears
Interests	Families
Motives	Housing
Self-images	Neighborhoods
Achievements	Peer groups

A Synthesis of 99 Research Reports

By Elinor F. McCloskey

Northwest Regional
Educational Laboratory

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FOREWORD

This publication is a result of an extensive review of
research on the characteristics and educational needs of
the urban disadvantaged pupil. Originally, the work was
undertaken to aid the planning of specific activities for
our Laboratory program for the improvement of education
for culturally different children. Our decision to publish
is made with the conviction that the information in this
report will be of assistance to teachers, administrators
and others interested in understanding the needs of these
students.

Lawrence D. Fish
Executive Director

Portland, 1967

CONTENTS

URBAN DISADVANTAGED PUPILS

Characteristics, Environments and Potentials

Let history, facts and moral principles serve as guides.

Civilizations are influenced largely by perceptions of goals and by new feasibilities. For 2,000 years, with good reason and effect, moral and political leaders have proclaimed the dignity and rights of all men. Those principles have been proven both humane and feasible. Clearly, during recent centuries substantial enlargements of life in societies governed by consent of the governed have demonstrated that those moral concepts are both right and practical. Millions of serfs have become free men. Given opportunity, they have demonstrated immense capacity to perceive progressively better ways of living.

Today the technological and intellectual fruits of free men's historic achievements provide unparalleled resources and urgent need to extend and accelerate the full development of human capabilities. Now cybernetics and automation free ever larger portions of people and economic resources for further development of human potentials. The interdependence of people in this atomic-space age requires a swift and massive pursuit of that feasibility.

Numerous local, state and national groups are analyzing the educational, organizational and administrative problems emerging from the rapid growth of cities and metropolitan areas. Fortunately, psychologists, sociologists,

economists and educators are enlarging similar efforts to identify and attack the human problems that are accentuated by urbanization.

During the past century the growth of urban cultures has brought a wealth of new opportunities and benefits to large percentages of citizens. Increasingly, however, crowded slums, declines in availability of unskilled work and changing family relationships confront millions of urban citizens with new needs and new problems. The harsh facts are that at present millions of adults and children are obviously unable to make satisfactory adjustments. They are impoverished, demoralized, and alienated. Quite understandably, many protest their lot.

Conant (12) is among the many who have analyzed the extremely complex educational organization and administration problems aggravated by metropolitan growth, inner city deterioration, defacto segregation and conflicting public opinion. Hundreds of local, state and national groups are actively searching for fair and rational bases for policy and administration. Their prolonged and frustrating work is fundamental because it determines the circumstances within which teachers work. Realists are aware that, even with heroic effort, satisfactory solutions will require decades. In the meantime the lives of millions of children will be shaped by whatever instruction they receive. Careful consideration of information about the ways present circumstances and change affect pupils' outlooks and motives will help teachers to better nurture their capacities.

In the United States enlightened citizens are aware that approximately one-fourth of our children and adults remain inadequately prepared to participate

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in either the responsibilities or benefits of a technological society. Teachers are familiar with such terms as "underprivileged," "deprived" and "disadvantaged." Educators, statesmen and industrial leaders have avowed, in view of the nation's novel and growing affluence, this state of affairs is unjust, needless and, as recent events demonstrate, hazardous. A tardy but massive national effort to correct inadequacies and inequities is in progress.

Both teachers and school administrators can help pursue that purpose most effectively if they give thought to what is known about the characteristics and needs of the human beings they seek to assist. To facilitate both planning and practice, this document summarizes facts and concepts evolved from reliable research.

Avoid the confusion that results from semantic haggling about definitions of "deprivation," "retardation," "aptitudes" and "intelligence." Much more precise definitions of these concepts are urgent because precision will enlarge our capability to educate. Regardless of terminology, research at hand provides useful guides for substantial improvement of present curricula and instruction. There is an obligation to ponder and utilize that wealth of useful information. Some major facts are clear.

Disadvantaged pupils have immense potentials. Let that fact stand tall and bold as a guide. For, except in that basic context, other facts about pupils' limitations and difficulties can too easily be interpreted as reasons for doing less than is possible. Both history and the modern science of aptitude measurement indicate that the relatively limited capabilities and achievements

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of disadvantaged pupils are due mainly to restrictions of external environment, not to their internal potentials. Regardless of how "intelligence," "aptitude" and "achievement" are defined, research provides ample evidence that, at present, inadequate and inappropriate schooling is largely responsible for stultification of many capacities. With better schooling, capabilities can be enlarged. Dozens of enriched instructional and counseling programs demonstrate that most disadvantaged children <u>can</u> achieve on a level with their middle-class counterparts. Their abilities for continued learning <u>can</u> be widened and their aspirations <u>can</u> be heightened.

<u>Poverty is an overriding condition of disadvantaged children.</u>
Inadequate family incomes constrict children's experience and outlooks. Poverty imposes deadening burdens of abstinence, negation and humiliation. Definitions of inadequate income vary, but there is general agreement that about one-fourth of United States families have earnings falling in that category. About half reside in cities, about half in rural areas.

Abnormally large percentages of disadvantaged pupils live in disorgan- ized families. Among these families, unemployment, divorce and desertion rates are high. Abnormally high percentages of fathers are unemployed. Consequently, large percentages of mothers work out-of-home; not from choice, but from stark need to provide necessities. Sociologists note that the Negro family is essentially matriarchial and the male-models with which many children live are not appropriate for emulation.

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In cities, disadvantaged children tend to reside in overcrowded slum neighborhoods. Their associations and experiences are confined largely to those impoverished environments. Thus deprivated neighborhoods reinforce limited concepts and outlooks originating in inadequate homes.

Disadvantaged children have relatively impoverished self-concepts. From quite realistic appraisals of their experiences, these children have acquired the attitude that they cannot achieve as much as their middle- or upper-class counterparts. Consequently, their expectations and aspirations are correspondingly low. Many have learned to "not hope for too much." As a result, they are less motivated by goals that fuel the efforts of pupils who have acquired larger aspirations from richer experiences.

Disadvantaged children actually believe that they are inadequate. They feel incapable of achieving as much as their more widely advantaged classmates. That feeling grows from years of quite accurate observation that, in fact, their achievements are relatively slow and low. The content and processes of conventional school programs provide disadvantaged children with relatively slight motivation to learn. Most instruction implies goals these children perceive to be unobtainable. Years of low achievement or failure verify those perceptions. Consequently, these students tend to reject teaching. Many acquire negative attitudes.

Generally, disadvantaged pupils do learn less and their learning skills are poorly developed. From the beginning of their school years, and throughout, they achieve less than others. Their innate capacities for self-direction are less

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developed. These students are less self-sufficient in school situations. They seek and require more teacher guidance. Such deficits of development and learning are cumulative. They progressively reduce the emotional and cognitive bases essential for normal rates of acquiring more complex concepts and capabilities. Consequently, as years pass, disadvantaged children tend to become progressively more retarded.

Disadvantaged children have not developed sufficient cognitive and reasoning skills essential for typical rates and dimensions of school progress. These deficiencies accumulate partly from prolonged restriction to the limited experiences of culturally and intellectually impoverished homes and neighborhoods. They are supplemented by instructional processes inadequate t correct deficiencies.

Disadvantaged children's communication capabilities are elementary. Analytical conversations with adults at home are limited. There, children learn think and speak largely about concrete matters of immediate import. Generalities and long-range goals are seldom discussed or recognized.

Prescriptions for schooling essential to enlarge the motivation and achievements of disadvantaged children are legion. That is desirable because their problems and needs are complex. However, most analyses indicate three general and major needs.

A development of reading, writing and speaking capabilities requisite for thought, association and work in the modern world.

A substantially broadened sequence of cultural, social and civic experiences.

General and specialized training essential for earning incomes in modern occupation.

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A summary of research indicating the characteristics and special needs of disadvantaged children follows. It enlarges on Terman and Lima's observations that children's interests are influenced by experience and environment, (95) as well as human relationships, perceptions, aspirations and apprehensions.

It is necessary to avoid the error of stereotyping the characteristics of individuals as identical to the averages, or extremes of groups or subgroups. Research shows clearly that no "average" individual, nor any "average" urban disadvantaged child, exists. However, facts demonstrate that recognizable economic, sociological and psychological factors do generally affect the lives of most impoverished children.

To work effectively, all teachers need working concepts of disadvantaged pupils and of the factors that impede development of their potentials. The research reviewed illustrates the limiting influences of deprivated families, homes, neighborhood environments, attitudes, values and interests.

CONCEPTS OF DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

Many researchers conceive the "disadvantaged" as a single group regardless of race, religion, sex or age. That is a useful concept for some purposes. It is important to note, however, that in most American cities, Negroes constitute a distinct subgroup. Thompson points out, "No matter how social class may be defined--whether in terms of wealth, education, style of life, occupation, or aspiration--approximately 70 to 80 percent of the Negro population in large northern cities are lower class." (96)

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While income is not a complete index of class, it is a key character-
istic of people who live in disadvantaged situations. (94) Family incomes of
less than $3,000 or $4,000 a year are warning signals. They are inadequate to
finance necessities, let alone the books, travel and contact with cultural en-
richments from which wider perceptions can grow.

National income statistics show the comparatively low living levels
of non-white urban families. The median non-white family income is only about
53 percent that of white families. (13)

SERIOUS POVERTY

The Institute of Urban Studies conceives any family with an annual
income of less that $3,000 to be seriously impoverished. (94) Keyserling notes
that even larger incomes are inadequate for significant living. (54) Newton has
assembled evidence showing that low incomes tend to be "inherited" over two or
three generations. (69) Thus, the limited views and aspirations of impoverished
parents are transmitted to children.

The use of any arbitrary income level to distinguish between the ad-
vantaged and disadvantaged can be misleading if one assumes that all incomes
of a given size provide equal buying power or are utilized to meet the needs of
equal numbers of people. Such is not the case. For example, due to the larger-
than-average size of Negro families, their incomes must meet the needs of more
individuals than those of their white counterparts. Of equal importance, most
low income urban families are caught in what Grier and Grier call the "captive
market." (40) In neighborhood stores they pay higher-than-average prices for

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inferior commodities and services. As Batchelder observes, $3,000 or $4,000 seldom buys as much for poor families as for those with better earnings. (6) Hughes has aptly concluded, "...it costs more to be poor." (51) Hauser found, "In Negro families with children under 18 years of age, 62 percent...are being reared in poverty." Nine out of ten Negro families with five or more children eat meals that average less than 26 cents per person. (49)

DEPRIVATION

The Conference on Economic Progress provided evidence indicating that while many families residing in urban disadvantaged areas have annual incomes exceeding $3,000, they live in circumstances conceived as "deprivation." (13) That term has been defined as a level of living slightly above the poverty line but below minimum requirements for health and reasonable comfort. Deprivation generally connotes marginal living. Annual family incomes range between $4,000 and $6,000. Income based definitions of poverty are imprecise. Such measures of deprivation do not accurately indicate the extent which these families live below acceptable levels of health and decency. Ferman, Kornbluh, and Haber observe, "Regardless of where the 'poverty line' is set, it is considerably below what is needed to lead a full and fruitful life in American society." (28)

RELATED SYNDROME

Low income is a basic characteristic of the urban disadvantaged, and related characteristics have obvious humane and educational implications. Hunter observes, "...deprivation may be of money, opportunity, of social status, of free choice, of civil rights, or skills, or hope of the future." (52)

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Both Haubrich (46) and Edwards (24) have noted that in many cities large percentages of the poor are relative newcomers who have migrated to urban areas in the past two decades. Regardless of race, few are integrated into local civic or social organizations. In most communities more permanent residents make only limited efforts to welcome low-income newcomers. Both the suburban movement of the past four decades and the recent reaction to "open housing" proposals demonstrate that their arrival is resented by many central city residents. Open conflicts often develop. Political precinct committeemen testify few members of mobile families register to vote.

The poor and deprived are irregularly employed. A report of the Conference on Economic Progress indicates in some groups as many as one-fourth of the family wage earners are unemployed. (13)

Harrington has noted unemployment for Negro men more than doubles that of whites. (44) Further analysis shows the Negro unemployment rate higher than white for every major occupation group. (90) An abnormally high incidence of chronic physical and mental health problems are inevitable results.

Because Negro adults average only an eighth grade education, (13) most are employed in poorly paid manual, service and operative occupations. (33) These "...menial and unrewarding jobs yield marginal subsistence for most ghetto families." (10) Inadequate incomes are accompanied by correspondingly low levels of morale and self-respect.

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The experiences and perceptions of most impoverished children are

constricted and distorted. Although the Negro disadvantaged child is less aware

of, or disturbed by, scarcity than his middle-class counterpart, it bears heavily

on his family relationships, his attitudes, habits and aspirations. (19)

In his February 1963 Civil Rights Message to Congress, President John

F. Kennedy summarized dismal facts assembled by Harris Wofford of the Civil

Rights Commission: "The Negro baby born in America today, regardless of the

section of the nation in which he is born, has about half as much chance of com-

pleting high school as a white baby born in the same place on the same day, one-

third as much chance of completing college, one-third as much chance of becoming

a professional man, twice as much chance of becoming unemployed, about one-

seventh as much chance of earning $10,000 a year, a life expectancy which is

seven years shorter, and the prospects of earning only half as much."

Newton, enumerating some common characteristics of a child living

in disadvantaged circumstances, observes that he:

> ...is a member of a submerged but visible cultural minority.
> His limited horizons in his limited life function as a depres-
> sant to his motivation, aspirations and (thus to his achievement).
>
> He frequently has contradictory attitudes toward self and
> others with low self-concept and the resultant exaggerated
> positive and negative attitudes toward others.
>
> The socio-cultural standards of his family (and neighborhood)
> are noncomplementary to social stability and academic achieve-
> ment--hypermobility, family instability, distorted model rela-
> tionships, housing inadequacy, economic insufficiency, as well
> as hyper and hypo stimulation.

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He is usually a member of a family in which there are less than two full generations of literacy.

He frequently performs several years below grade expectancy on verbal tests, but often demonstrates normal learning potential on non-verbal tests.

His styles and modes of perceptual habituation do not complement the emphases which are important to traditional academic success.

He has marked weakness in utilizing abstract cognitive processes (due to vocabulary difficulties) and favors concrete, stimulus-bound learning situations. (69)

FAMILY, HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD

The typical disadvantaged Negro child grows up in an environment characterized by isolation, constriction and rejection. (78) He lives in an "encapsulated" community which shelters and, at the same time, separates him from the wider society. He is confronted with tensions and opposing forces that bear on him from within and without his community. (30)

In 1965, the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Policy Planning and Research reported a sympathetic effort to ascertain facts about the extent of difficulties and disruptions confronting children and adults of the nation's Negro families. That document reveals:

One-third of the nation's non-white children live in broken homes.

In 17.3 percent of Negro families, the husband does not reside at home as compared with 3.4 percent for whites.

More than one-fourth of non-white men are unemployed at some time during each year.

Almost 25 percent of non-white families are headed by a woman, compared with 7 percent of white families.

In 1965 almost 14 percent of Negro children received federal
aid to dependent children as compared with 2 percent of white
children. That is a 7 to 1 ratio. At some time during their
lives 56 percent of the nation's Negro children receive such
aid as compared with 8 percent of white children.

The Negro illegitimacy ratio is eight times that of the white
population. (67)

The "extended family" is characteristic of non-white disadvantaged

households. The residence quite generally houses aunts, uncles, grandparents

and lodgers. (79) In many cases the confusion and frustrations born of such

conditions are complicated by disruption of normal family functions and relation-

ships. Clark, (10) Edwards, (24) and Hauser (48) report how the organization

of many Negro families differ from that of typical middle-class whites. More

fathers, when present, are irregularly employed. Many are demoralized and

unable to fulfill traditional male roles of father and household head. More

mothers, usually employed in poorly paid occupations requiring work at irregular

hours, are absent from home. Consequently, larger portions of child care re-

sponsibilities are haphazardly performed by relatives. (33) Silberman highlights

the import of those facts by noting, "...in a world in which having a father is

equated with being born with a silver spoon in your mouth, help is needed." (90)

The high percentage of broken Negro homes (19) adds to children's

dependence on relatives and friends for moral support. Only three-quarters of

Negro families in the United States are intact as compared with nine-tenths of

white families. (24) Comparing Negro children's home life with that of white

middle-class children, Glaser and Moynihan observe, "...more Negro children

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live apart from parents and relatives...more live in crowded homes, more have

lodgers and other related and unrelated persons living with them." (33)

Bloom, Davis and Hess note, "A large proportion of these [deprivated]

youth come from homes in which the adults have minimal levels of education.

Many of them come from broken homes, where poverty, large family size, broken

home discrimination, and slum conditions further complicate the picture." (36)

Glazer and Moynihan add, "...the incidence of these problems among Negroes

is enormous, and even those who escape them feel them as a close threat." (9)

Deutsch has pointed out that relationships between adults and children

are of larger psychological importance than the number of people living together

as a family. (19) Yet, when excessively large families and relatives with inade-

quate incomes are crowded into small quarters, struggles for space, attention and

privacy drastically impair satisfactory relationships. (6)

Of particular psychological importance is the fact that the mother in

Negro families is more likely to hold a steady job than the father. Wider job

opportunities for Negro women (33) have created Negro family employment pat-

terns which reverse the usual white male breadwinner role. That reversal imposes

an abnormally high economic risk on Negro families. Ornati provides facts

about income and employment stability demonstrating, "...the risk of poverty

for a family headed by females is high and growing." (72)

This reversal of male-female economic roles is traditional in the Negro

family. (24) Since the days of slavery, the Negro family has been, for the most

part, matriarchial, even when an adult male is present. (19) This tradition has

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contributed to the relatively dominant position of women, (3) and the lesser

role of men. While neither matriarchial nor patriarchial families are inherently

superior, Erickson notes, "...an inbalanced male-female presence is never

good and becomes increasingly bad as the child grows older." (26)

The matriarchial family, combined with the large percentage of male

absences from the families, has influenced the masculine role expectation for

Negro boys. They have fewer masculine success models. More often than their

white counterparts, they perceive prospects of emulating only negative or de-

pressing models. Silberman observes, "To anyone walking through the Negro

neighborhoods of any large city--and to the children who grow up in them--few

sights are more familiar than the groups of idle Negro men congregating at street

corners." (90) On the basis of interviews designed to ascertain the effects of

unemployment on adult and youthful males, Berry made similar observations. (8)

Other economic issues bear upon the ability of the Negro family to

subsist. Negro incomes have not advanced as rapidly as incomes of whites.

As automation outmodes manual tasks and makes new occupations more technical,

comparatively high percentages of Negroes are displaced and relatively low per-

centages possess the training required for employment in more complex jobs. Miller

has assembled evidence showing that disproportionate percentages of Negroes

subsist at whatever levels pension and public assistance make possible. (64)

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FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Working mothers have relatively little time for physical care of
children. In impoverished homes children commonly assume responsibility for
their own meals and for those of parents and others living in the household.
Consequently, strong sibling ties, evolved from mutual responsibilities, often
appear at an early age. (19)

The children of impoverished and disorganized families generally roam
the streets without supervision at comparatively early ages. There they acquire
independence and strong peer group relationships. (3) Bloom, Davis and Hess
highlighted the reasons for such developments by noting, "The child usually turns
to his peers for more satisfying relations than he has with adults. For this as well
as for other reasons, the peer group becomes central in the life of the lower-class
child far earlier than it does for middle-class children." (9)

Low-income Negro families are deficient in traditional white middle
class parent-child relationships. Intellectual stimulation between adult and child
is relatively slight. Adults seldom talk with children. (98) Parents who work at
physical tasks for long hours, often during evening hours, are too tired or inac-
cessible for conversation with children. (41) Consequently, schools must compen-
sate for the paucity of verbal stimulation in childhood years. (90)

Due to their limited educational background, parents have slight
knowledge of ways to help children succeed in intellectual tasks. (63) Bloom,
Davis and Hess observe: "Concern of parents for basic necessities of life, low
level of educational development of the parents, frequent absence of male

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parents, lack of interaction between children and adults all conspire to reduce stimulation, language development and intellectual development of such children." (9)

Parent relationships with children are generally categorical. Parents give children arbitrary verbal directions with little explanation of reasons why. Authority tends to override the child's natural curiosity and to restrict opportunity to explore his environment. (50) For discipline, parents rely heavily on external physical controls and little on the affection essential for development of internal controls. Riese believes that the paucity of harmonious interplay among family members are "...results of unreflective living. The individual cannot find him-self. Since he does not integrate his experiences, he fails to mature and his resourcefulness is diminished." (78)

Yet, as Edwards observes, "...many parents, particularly mothers, are warm and concerned individuals who, despite their problems, persist in their desire and sacrificial efforts to have their children become respectable and pro-ductive citizens." (24) This pursuit of that vague goal is impaired by environment, the continual apprehensive struggle for necessities, and lack of knowledge.

HOUSING

Harrington cites poor housing as one of the most pervasive and demor-alizing aspects of poverty. (42) Abrahams notes "...above all the Negro is discriminated against in almost every aspect of housing and neighborhood life, and he feels it." (1)

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Numerous studies document the general inadequacy of housing con-

ditions in urban ghetto areas. Often entire family units are crowded into single-

occupancy rooms and pay exorbitant rents. (57) Buildings also tend to be old and

in need of repair. Almost one-fifth of the nation's Negro population live in dilap-

idated and deteriorating dwellings without piped water or family bathrooms. (27)

White slum dwellers occupy similar quarters.

One youth characterized the homes with which he is most familiar as

follows: "...in my block in apartments where some of them have to pay maybe

seventy dollars for a couple of crummy little rooms for ten or eleven people and

have to share a bathroom in the hall with the door falling off...I don't think the

people of Scarsdale could take it." (90) The boy's point is echoed by Edwards

who notes that poor and segregated housing symbolizes the isolation of the Negro

from greater society, while it perpetuates a typical institutional pattern of

dysfunctioning. (24)

Few homes in blighted urban areas are furnished with objects that

contribute to the development of esthetic or intellectual values. Furniture and

decor are generally shabby and makeshift, imposing an environment which con-

tinually asserts that crudity can, and must, be sufficient. Books and magazines

are scarce. The few available generally offer little except sensational and

escapist content. Pictures, sculpture, dinnerware and other objects of art are

scarce, crude and poorly cared for.

Deutsch (19) found that only 50 percent of the children he studied

could recall having seen a pencil or pen in their homes. However, about

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60 percent view televisions at home. Riese suggests this paucity of cultural objects limits opportunity for sensory stimulation and expression. (78)

Spiegler views the growing access to television as providing children with a window to the wider social-political world. (93) Regardless of the degree to which this is presently so, the potential is immense. While research on the use and results of televiewing among disadvantaged children and youth remains inadequate, existing facts indicate two negative results. Silberman notes the opprobrium Negro children experience as they watch television of the predominantly white world. (90) Clark concludes that the Negro viewer: "...lives in part in a world bombarded by the myths of the American middle class, confronted by harsh reality where the dreams do not come true or change into nightmares." (10)

Stability of residence is generally low in ghetto areas. Silberman notes many families move from one rooming house to another creating in turn a rapid shift in school enrollments. (90) Reasons for these shifts are clear. Many families are constantly impelled to search for less oppressive quarters. Many, unable or neglectful to pay rent, are evicted.

Even the values that might be derived from new housing are impaired by persistence of custom and by old and new fears. In a bitter essay, Baldwin has chronicled the ills of life in new housing complexes. (7) In a less emotional appraisal of circumstances of another housing project, Glazer and Moynihan conclude:

> The project is now beginning to rival the slum as the environment of the poor Negroes. The projects are of course integrated,

although there is a strong tendency for the white population
to decline in a few years...too few elements of a community
exist to bind the elements of the projects. Social isolation
of tenant from tenant is common.... Suspicion is common be-
cause there is fear of having transgressed one of the many
rules of the authority...many take the view the less the
neighbors know the better. (33)

Appraising the plight of those evicted when slum dwellings are razed,

Lynd notes it "...almost invariably involves higher rents...the journey to

work may require extra fare; complex informal arrangements for child care may

no longer be available and make a cash substitute obligatory." (60)

HOUSING AND HEALTH

Studies by Keyserling, (54) Drake, (22) and Pettigrew (76) all indicate

the high relationship between poverty, poor housing and ill health. Crowded

living and sleeping quarters, inadequate sanitation, poor food storage facilities,

insects and vermin tend to produce high rates of illness and mortality. (38) Drake

cites data showing increases in Negro longevity lag 20 years behind those

for whites. (22) The Negro death rate from childhood diseases is six times that

for white children. (75) The incidence of respiratory and infectious childhood

diseases among all slum dwelling children, such as measles, meningitis, diphtheria,

and scarlet fever is high. (10) It is little wonder if the poor commonly: "...think

of the body as having a limited span of utility; to be enjoyed in youth and then

with age to be suffered and endured stoically." (81) It may also be that a

damaged self-image makes a damaged physical condition more acceptable.

Riese notes the psychological as well as physical harm consequent

of overcrowded living in deprived circumstances. She cites dearth of opportunity

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for private reflection and for development of imagination as causes for the restlessness and aimlessness of children who grow up in destitute environments. (78)

Mental, as well as physical health, is often impaired. Dreger and Miller found mental disturbances among the poor substantially higher than in other population groups. (23) Macdonald found 90 percent of the poor's treated illnesses are psychotic and are treated only when persons become completely unable to function. (61) Harrington observes "...not only the rate but also the intensity of mental illness is much greater for the poor." (44)

Shaw summarizes the impact of such circumstances on children, "These children have great difficulties in personal adjustments. Delinquency is more concentrated, and destructive aggression more widespread...psychoses and completely disabling breakdowns are disproportionately high. One reason is that they receive relatively little of the ego satisfaction, the rewards, and the feelings of belonging that society has to offer." (86)

In summary, it appears evident that inner city poverty and housing result in a high incidence of both physical and psychological disabilities. In many cities large numbers of disadvantaged children suffer serious health impairments, many of which are directly associated with poverty.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD

The ghetto child's neighborhood is as congested as his home and almost equally confining. Deutsch observes, "Visually the urban slum and its over-crowded apartments offer the child a minimum range of stimuli." (18) He found 65 percent of the children he studied had never traveled beyond a 25-block

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radius of their homes--additional evidence of the extent to which the disadvan-
taged are isolated from the larger society. (19) The few face-to-face contacts
these children do have with a white society and the persons they are often asked
to emulate are those in authoritarian roles. (41) Except for television, teachers,
policemen and social workers, the slum child has few links with life beyond his
neighborhood.

A Harlem boy clarifies the contrast: "The first things the kids learn
in Scarsdale is how to read and write;.... In my neighborhood the first things
the kids learn are how to fight and steal and not take any crap from anyone. We
grow up knowing about narcotics. I mean we don't even remember when we didn't
know about them." (90)

Padilla characterizes the slum child's neighborhood as full of garbage,
noise, tenements, dope peddlers and addicts, and social workers. (73) Recreational,
hospital and social facilities are generally shabby and demoralizing. (1)

Because dwellings are crowded and unpleasant, most slum children
find out-of-home associations at a relatively young age. Early in their lives peer
group relationships exert influences greater than those affecting middle-class
children. As a result these children develop relatively high levels of precocious
independence at a comparatively early age. (3) Since they associate almost
exclusively with neighborhood children, the limited perceptions, fears and
hostilities of the neighborhood are accentuated and reinforced.

In summary, the disadvantaged child's world is less quiet, healthy,
safe or comforting than that nurturing his middle-class counterpart. Yet it

provides a security of close relationships with siblings and peers, if not with adults. While deprivation may not make the child excessively anxious, it affects almost every aspect of his self-image and his relations with others. It also has overriding influence on his perceptions of need and opportunities. This, in turn, affects his motives and his interest in learning.

Teachers can note that all of the facts reviewed above indicate this constricted environment has an adverse influence on reading interest. Low income families and neighborhoods provide little access to reading materials. The limited reading habits of adults expose children to negative reading habit models. Crowded quarters restrict space and conditions suitable for reading. Impaired mental and physical health tends to reduce interest in leisure time reading. Obviously these facts bear on the roles which teachers can reasonably expect home life to play in schooling; and on the types of special instruction these children need.

ATTITUDES, VALUES AND INTERESTS

As has been noted, disadvantaged children, especially Negroes, live in an exceptionally confined world. Their geographical mobility and their contacts with adults are restricted. Their opportunities for early perceptual development are limited. Consequently these children acquire relatively parochial concepts of their capabilities, of alternatives open to them, and of ways they can best approach objects and situations. Naturally those limited outlooks influence attitudes, values and interests.

ATTITUDES

Allport defines an attitude as a "...mental and neural state of readi-
ness, organized through experience exerting a directive or dynamic influence
upon the individual's response to all objects and situations to which it is related."(2)

Deutsch has analyzed the numerous ways segregated environments dis-
tort concepts of fruitful human relations and limit children's acquaintance with
"...the tools to handle daily relationships or strategies for handling problems
they must overcome to achieve individual success." (17)

Bloom, Davis and Hess have assembled evidence indicating that depri-
vation impels a child to adopt fatalistic attitudes about the probability that he
can meet even his most basic physical needs, let alone his emotional and social
needs. "Such passivity and defeatism stemming from need deprivation is learned
by the child from both the realities of living and from parents." (9)

Schorr perceptively notes: "Actually the attitudes associated with the
culture of poverty--passivity, cynicism, orientation to the present--are a realistic
response to the facts of poverty. They help to husband energy and are important
to psychic survival." (82)

Berelson and Steiner have summarized a massive body of research
indicating differences in attitudes of the disadvantaged and the privileged, and
of factors affecting attitude change. (7) The educational implications are vast
and complex. By various processes, attitudes developed from deprivation can be
changed to more nearly correspond with those of more privileged groups. This
may be a desirable, even essential, educational goal. However, the process is

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difficult and emotionally hazardous. Attitudes evolve as selective responses to perceived realities. They may serve the disadvantaged child as protective mechanisms which he needs to achieve and maintain mental health amidst the tensions, stress, noise and confusion of the environment from which he has no immediate escape.

SELF-IMAGES

Negro children, like others, interpret their environment largely in terms of their perceived relationships to it. Quite realistically they appraise possible opportunities for rewards and success. They develop behavior mechanisms necessary to avoid confrontation of insuperable difficulties or failure. Those pervasive efforts to do what appears necessary, possible and satisfactory under perceived circumstances affect their concepts of themselves.

Studies indicate that an effacive self-image emerges early in the lives of most Negro children. (68) With poetic insight, Goodman reports facts indicating that by the age of four, "...color casts a shadow faint or strong over the lives of these children." They learn to see "group-wise" and hence "value-wise." (35) They learn early "...that the world is white and they are black, ...that beauty, success, and status all wear a white skin." (90) They acquire an awareness of stigma, "...a handicap which disqualified them from full social acceptance." (75) "Negro children clearly are more uneasy [than white children] about the topic of race.... They are compulsively interested in the topic and extremely uncomfortable with it. They are personally involved, evasive of realities, wishful about unrealities." (35) They are forced into greater

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involvement with their own restricted group and simultaneously threatened by

awareness of belonging to the "wrong" groups. By resisting identification with

their own racial group and with parents, even young Negro children experience

ego-deflation and loss of self-esteem. (3) Shepard concludes that having

identified with their parents, many "...culturally disadvantaged children have

severely crippled self-images, low levels of expectancy and little orientation

toward school or the society it represents." (88) Research provides few facts

about problems encountered by a Negro child who attempts to identify with

both worlds, possible because so few do.

Deutsch, asking intermediate-age Negro children what they saw when

they looked into a mirror, obtained evidence indicating cumulative development

of inferior self-images. He concludes that a negative self-image is one of the

two most important syndromes associated with being Negro. The other was the

absence of a father. (19)

One may generalize that, regardless of race, negative self-concepts

develop in part from the child's sensing that the larger society views him as

inferior and expects inferior performance from him.

Contemplating that probability, Goldberg concludes: "The Negro child

is heir not only to the characteristics of lower-class status, but as a member of a

minority group which has historically been considered inferior, he carries the scars

of every kind of discrimination, forced segregations, and limited channels of mo-

bility." (34) Krugman notes such characteristically low self-concepts adversely

influence the achievement rates and levels of children of all races. (56)

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Together with low self-fulfillment expectations, many Negroes are aware of personal and group powerlessness. This sense of impotence is reflected in many aspects of children's development. Few are trained for leadership. (86)

Gordon has developed two stratification scales for measuring power. One is based on socioeconomic and political power; the other, on racial, nationality and neighborhood influence. The urban Negro child usually rates at the lower end of both. (37)

The Negro boy's subdominant position as a male within his family and culture constitutes still another force contributing to his inferior self-image. He cannot escape observation that more Negro males than females are unemployed. As might be expected, Glazier and Moynihan found more Negro boys than girls have impaired self-images. (33) As previously noted, the Negro boy growing up in a matriarchial society, sees and has direct personal contact with few males he can regard as models of behavior or success. Deutsch speculates that even sports figures and other successful personalities viewed on television seldom become models because they appear too distant. (19) There is also evidence that the positions of people such as Ralph Bunche or Willie Mays appear unlimitable and, therefore, pose threats rather than models for Negro boys. If so, they may add to the sense of frustration or failure. (44) While such reactions appear incongruous at first, the possibility that they may be real is a matter for careful consideration by teachers.

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The Negro boy also must rationalize the relative success of girls in
school, and his own lesser achievements. His difficulties in school are often
masked by hostility and resentment. These camouflage and compensate for his
shabby self-image. Rosenblatt uses the term "anomie" to conceptualize responses
to combinations of such threats. (81)

ANTAGONISM

Antagonism and suspicion are frequent outgrowths of the Negro child's
wounded self-image. Goodman discovered Negro children to be more antago-
nistic toward their own group than toward whites. (35) Haggstrom notes feelings
of envy and hostility displayed toward peers who succeed. (42) Clark also
speculates that unrealities, uncertainties and distortions make it difficult for
Negro youth to know whom to trust and whom to suspect within and without their
groups. (10) Similar reactions can be noted among insecure children of all races.

Malone suggests that in threatening environments, antagonism is
learned as early as three to five years of age. Children develop a danger
orientation and precocious coping patterns which enable them to survive but
produce a false independence as they grow older. (62)

Such patterns of awareness and response are similar to Miller's con-
cepts of proclaimed independence and false disclaimer. Characteristically,
insecure children seek out a highly restrictive environment. There, they learn
to rely on authoritative external controls for a sense of direction. The resultant
rigidities retard development of their capacities to cope with larger or changing
environments. (65)

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VALUES

Values are here conceived as rather permanent "...beliefs about what is...desirable...and what is...undesirable.... Values reflect the culture of a society and are widely shared by members of the culture." (55)

INFLUENCES OF ENVIRONMENT UPON VALUES

Values are influenced by physical environment, interpersonal relation-ships, aspirations and perceptions of what is feasible. Shaw notes deprived youth basically "...have the same drives for achievement, recognition, and acceptance as their peers." (86) Many sociologists have observed urban Negroes tend to share middle-class aspirations, such as financial success and education for their children. They are, however, thwarted by limited opportunity, as well as limited knowledge, about how to achieve such goals. Appraising the barriers between aspiration and attainment Clark observes:

> Large numbers of ghetto youth caught in the paradox of the ghetto, are unable to resolve their personal conflicts within positive and socially acceptable forms of adjustment or in direct and assertive antisocial behavior. They are aware of the values and standards of the larger society, but they know that they are not equipped to meet its demands. (10)

To varying degrees all of the above influences have similar impact on the personal development of all disadvantaged children regardless of race. Rodman conceives a "stretched value system" as a behavioral mechanism for response to such conflicts. He suggests that the poor "...share the general values of the society...but...they have stretched these values, or developed alternative values which help them to adjust to their deprived circumstances.... The

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resultant is a stretched value system with a low degree of commitment to all the values within the ranges." (80)

EXTERNAL CAUSALITY

While the urban poor share many values and interests with the larger society, substantial differences exist. They are more prone to accept limiting circumstances and events as causal factors that determine the direction of their lives. The poor tend to conceive environmental limitations as fate, luck or chance. (42) They reflect belief, by words and actions, that destiny sets forces in motion over which they have almost no control. While such response is akin to superstition, it is more inclusive and exercises a more general influence on behavior. (65)

IMMEDIATE SATISFACTIONS

Because the poor seldom have assurance of security or comfort beyond essentials for existence, they understandably place large value on the immediate and the concrete. They value commodities and direct personal relationships that provide tangible satisfactions. (9) They have relatively little emotional margin for consideration of long-range goals or indirect relationships with unknown persons. Reasons for this are suggested by the Ausabels. They note that learned fear of deprivation drives individuals "...to get all they can of physical gratification, while the getting is good." (3) It is a psychological commonplace that high anxiety narrows perceptions forcing individuals to be concerned mainly about immediate needs. As Haggstrom notes, the time perspective of people living on thresholds of poverty is foreshortened by a feeling that thought or plans

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for the future are futile. (42) Neither the past nor the future offer the poor any

reason to hope for dependable long-range satisfaction.   The unsatisfactory past

tends to be rejected because it offers slight guide to any perceivably better

future. (77) Experience seems to have demonstrated that short-range plans and

transient gratifications prove to be most rewardful and feasible. (42) Clark offers

an insightful explanation of such preoccupation with the immediate by noting:

"...the ghetto fails to prepare one for voluntary sacrifices precisely because it

demands so many involuntary ones." (10)

Isolation and limits of experience also contribute to heavy dependence

on immediate satisfactions. Familiar rewards are credible and perceived to be

achievable. One cannot perceive the larger satisfactions inherent in circum-

stances or relationships with which he is unfamiliar. For these reasons disadvantaged

children and adults tend to place "...particular stress on the intimate, the sensory,

the detailed, the personal. Not struggling to escape their circumstance [they]

often regard their ordinary lives as being of much intrinsic interest. This is

related to their primary concern with the problem of survival." (42)

Obviously, necessary concern for meeting immediate needs reduces

the amount of time and energy available for either contemplation or pursuit of

more distant benefits. This probably is a reason why both children and parents

value the utilitarian elements of education more highly than intellectual or

cultural aspects.

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CONCERN FOR TROUBLE

Relatively high crime and delinquency rates in the inner city attest
that the poor also experience abnormal shares of "trouble." "Getting into
trouble, and staying out of it, are major concerns of adults and children." (42)
The psychological response to expectation of troubles is indicated by the comments
of a girl who sketched a human figure accentuating legs and feet, but slighting
hands, "...le.,s mean more than hands, so I give them more attention.... If
you can run you're OK, but if you take something you're in trouble." Negro
slum parents express anxiety about their loss of control over young children and
a conscious desire to understand why children "get in trouble." (90)

FEAR OF FAILURE

Riessman notes disadvantaged children experience more than ordinary
fear of failure, especially in school. (79) Riese speculates that when these
children meet people whose standards appear unachievably higher than their
own, a sense of "paralyzed inadequacy" impairs effort and frustrates hope of
matching such ideal figures. (78) Deutsch found Negro children tend to be
more fearful and dysphoric in general than white children. (19) If, as many
suggest, a child begins life with a negative self-image, fear and unease are
predictable results. This may account, in part, for evidence that disadvantaged
children value success more than happiness. (92) It may also explain why, to
an abnormal degree, they feel more secure in familiar circumstances. Many
find new experiences threatening rather than stimulating.

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MASCULINITY

Riessman notes the large value disadvantaged boys ascribed to tough-
ness and masculinity. (79) More specifically, Miller (65) found low income
groups tend to value strength and endurance, athletic skill, fearlessness and
success in physical combat. Davis found slum children are taught to have courage
to fight; that physical aggression is laudable and essential. In such a milieu they
learn to admire and acquire traits perceived to be useful for acceptance and
survival. They deny regard for sentiment, or for "art," or "literature." (15)

"SMARTNESS"

Miller obtained evidence that "smartness" is valued highly, especially
when one is in the company of others. This is conceived as a capacity to outwit
another, especially to protect one's own advantage. It implies a "...capacity
to achieve a valued objective with a maximum use of mental agility and minimum
use of physical effort." (65) Analyzing acts and responses involved in group
relationships, both Riessman (79) and Miller (65) note the high premium placed
on horseplay, kidding, inventiveness and hair-trigger responses.

FORMAL APPLICATION OF STANDARDS

Semler and Iscoe point out the disadvantaged child receives little
stimulation in his impoverished environment to seek new experiences. (83) Much
more than middle-class children, he is bound by tradition and culture. He
approaches new ideas or new people with extraordinary suspicion and apprehension.
This perhaps can be viewed as a retardation of maturation and sophistication.

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For instance, Dolger and Ginandes report the disadvantaged children they
studied consistently demonstrated thought processes similar to those of younger
children. Their moral judgments tended to reflect the letter of the law rather
than the spirit. They believed misdeeds should be avenged, not forgotten. (21)

PRAGMATISM

Anthropologists have long documented the truism that cultural dif-
ferences evoke and reinforce disparate value systems; and divergent values tend
to create dissimilar perceptions. Riessman observes the disadvantaged child is
likely to be more pragmatic than his more affluent middle-class counterpart.
Vocational education interests him more than academic. (79) He places relatively
slight value on learning for its own sake. These children view education largely
as something that should help them to reach a tangible goal in the near future.
They have a relatively slight interest in learning only related to remote future
goals.

The occupational, cultural and social goals of most disadvantaged
youth are relatively low. (9) More important, even those limited aspirations
are only vaguely perceived and poorly supported by either the knowledge or
resolution essential for fulfillment. (91) Equally significant, most children who
aim at middle-class goals do so unrealistically. They have distorted concepts of
both their opportunities to achieve such goals and the types of study essential for
achievement.

Gordon's study of 700 disadvantaged elementary school pupils, how-
ever, provides data indicating that while occupational aspirations probably are

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unrealistic, they are characterized by a strong service ethic. Many want to be teachers or nurses, in order "to help people." While such evidence is tenuous, it suggests a motivation of immense educational potential. (36)

INTERESTS

Getzel defines interest as a characteristic disposition impelling an individual to seek out a particular object, activity or goal. (32) That concept can serve as a useful framework for consideration of the following facts.

Disadvantaged children tend to be interested in the exciting and the active. They prefer occupations that involve physical action. These children respond to new, colorful commodities and machines. Boys are intrigued by sports and other activities combining suspense, stress, and testing of strength and endurance. (79)

Impoverished homes contain few books or magazines; children's interest in reading is understandably slight. Silberman reports many disadvantaged youth never learn to read fluently. They never experience the motivation derived from discovery that they can do so successfully. (90) However, observation indicates if the material is interesting and suitable, deprived children will read. Silberman believes those few who do read, do so mainly for vicarious experiences that provide escape from slum boredom and confinement. (90) On the basis of his work with underprivileged teen-age youth, Spiegler suggests, to be interesting, a book must be: "...fast moving, simply written, action packed.... It must have lots of adventure, plenty of excitement and slews of interesting facts.... Good pictures, big print, and stories which come to the point are essential

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qualities. Animals, aviation, careers, hobbies, sports, sea and westerns are
subjects which appear to be enjoyed." (93)

ATTITUDES TOWARD EDUCATION

The performance of pupils is affected by attitudes toward schooling
as well as by ability. It is useful, therefore, to examine some facts about
relationships between attitudes and performance.

Evidence of the value placed upon education by the urban poor is
conflicting. Much of what is reported reflects a specific focus which may be
misleading if other foci are not also considered. The Ausabels found most parents
and associates of lower social class children place slight value on education. (3)
Harris notes that neighborhood influence also may be strongly anti-intellectual
and, in any case, it places little importance on educational accomplishment. (45)
Deutsch, however, points to the probability that few parents are actively hostile
to schooling. Instead, they are simply not informed about the benefits to be
derived from education. Keller found parents of poor urban families stongly
desire their children to continue schooling. She also discovered: "...white
families were satisfied with their children's school performance, while Negro
parents were very much concerned about their children's work." (53) Glazer and
Moynihan substantiate Keller's findings. They observe many slum families,
particularly Negro families, "...continually emphasize to children the theme
of the importance of education as a means of getting ahead." (33)

If, however, one notes that education does not "pay off" in earning
power as well for Negroes as for other citizens, he must ponder just what value

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a Negro child realistically can place on schooling. Teachers need awareness

that experience and circumstances provide reason for both disadvantaged children

and their parents to be uncertain about the purposes and values of education.

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Evidence indicating some attitudes, self-concepts, values and inter-

ests affecting a disadvantaged child's educational outlooks has been reviewed

above. Other studies provide additional data about personal characteristics

influencing his performance in school.

Bloom, Davis and Hess have assembled data showing few of these

children are prepared for either the reduced amounts of physical activity or the

sustained periods of attention demanded by most instructional procedures. (9)

The HARYOU study indicates Negro children tend to be withdrawn

and hostile toward authority figures. They develop consonance of school conduct

more slowly than whites. (43) Deutsch believes their achievement is retarded by

a general lack of persistence when a task is difficult and inadequate systems of

internal rewards. (19) Unfamiliarity with either the language patterns or the

instructional materials used in schools handicaps slum children. (97) Fusco notes

the substantial degree to which poor comprehension of middle-class language im-

pairs performance. (31) While richly verbal in their own fashion, disadvantaged

children have difficulty responding to the "advanced linguistic forms" of the

middle class. (18)

Riessman has assembled evidence indicating the culturally disad-

vantaged child appears to have a physical and visual "style" of learning. He is

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inclined to work at a leisurely pace. He acquires generalizations slowly. In
general, he appears to be less persevering in difficult tasks than more privileged
children. A disadvantaged child is more prone to tenaciously pursue a familiar
interest or a habitual approach to a problem. (79) While recognizing the use-
fulness of such evidence, Shepard cautions: "It would be a serious mistake to
conclude from these facts that the 'style of learning' of culturally disadvantaged
children is basically different from those of other groups." (88) Certainly their
present differences are results of experience and not measures of their potentials.
No differences in basic intelligence have been identified.

Groff found more white than Negro students have feelings of inade-
quacy in school. (41) This evidence supports Riessman's findings that they
fear failure and Wylie's data indicating their achievement expectations are
lower than those of whites. (79)

Negro students coming from intellectually impoverished homes tend
to be deficient in perceptual skills. Seeking escape from noisy and discordant
living conditions, they have learned not to listen. Consequently, educationally
useful auditory skills are poorly developed. Memorization skills and vocabularies
are limited. Many students have acquired only slight capacity to follow directions.
(9) While the school gives high prestige value to books, the content of the books
it provides seldom deals with matters corresponding with the disadvantaged child's
image of life. Deutsch also notes little curriculum content has a meaningful re-
lationship to the child's experience or goals. The child is uncertain about what
to expect from school and has difficulty reconciling what he encounters there

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with what he perceives to be the realities of his existence. (18) Perhaps most important of all, relatively few of these children have been conditioned to either seek or value the rewards the school is prepared to bestow.

Deutsch speculates such characteristics probably evoke much of the behavior that impels teachers to use large amounts of time for discipline instead of instruction. He estimates disciplinary effort in slum schools engages as much as 80 percent of some teachers' time; this percentage is seldom less than fifty. (18)

Much evidence shows that children of the inner city perform "...far below norms for the city and the country as a whole." (94) Sexton's study delineates wide discrepancies in the educational achievement of pupils from families of different income levels. (85)

Bloom, Davis and Hess have assembled evidence showing sixth grade pupils have a cumulative deficit of achievement in reading and arithmetic. (9) A comparative I.Q. study by Deutsch and Brown produced data indicating the serious extent to which cumulative deficits impair performance in later school years. (20) HARYOU obtained evidence indicating the longer disadvantaged pupils remain in school, the larger the proportion becomes whose performance falls below grade level. (43)

Such evidence provides a framework for interpretation of facts indicating comparative levels of achievement in specific educational areas.

READING ACHIEVEMENT

In 1960, New York City schools issued a statement recognizing the unsatisfactory and spotty results of recent efforts to enlarge the reading skills of

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underprivileged pupils. The report noted reading retardation continues to in-

crease steadily as pupils proceed through the grades. (71) While available facts

are inadequate, they indicate, regardless of race, most children living in im-

poverished environments are substantially retarded. Using data on file in city

school offices, HARYOU found 1962 third grade pupils in Central Harlem were

fully one year behind the mean achievement levels of New York City pupils;

by sixth grade they were nearly two years behind. (43) An analysis of sixth

grade reading test scores, obtained from the Board of Education reports, showed

a mean of 5.0 for Negro pupils, 4.4 for Puerto Ricans, and 7.0 for all others. (94)

The HARYOU figures indicate general retardation in all component skills measured

to obtain composite scores. There is little reason to believe the facts would be

substantially different in the slum areas of other cities.

I.Q. SCORES

I.Q. scores cast additional light on the cumulative retardation of

disadvantaged children. Many current interpretations of I.Q. data assume the

validity of observations that scores, to a considerable degree, reflect environment

and experience as well as innate intelligence. As early as 1951 Eells cautioned:

"...interpretation of I.Q. differences between pupils of different cultural back-

ground should be made with extreme cautions...that their scores true signifi-

cance cannot be stated with any degree of certainty on the basis of current research

knowledge." (25)

Recently Fischer has reviewed additional evidence indicating culturally

deprived environments may affect a child's measured I.Q. by an average of

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twenty points. (29) Such variation cannot be accounted for by application of

general statements concerning the standard deviation of scores of current I.Q.

tests.

Assuming the validity of the above interpretations, it is relevant to

note, as a group, Negro pupils' I.Q. scores are generally lower than whites'

and Negro scores decline as pupils proceed through school.

Perhaps of greater educational significance, "Psychologists' studies

of entire first grades in Harlem, using individual psychological examinations,

generally yield normal distributions. Median scores in group verbal tests admin-

istered some years later are invariably lower." (71) The HARYOU study shows

sixth grade pupils in Central Harlem score lower than those in third grade. (43)

Without casting aspersions on dedicated teachers and administrators, candor

requires confrontation of the fact that pupil experiences in those schools result

in a cumulative retardation of development.

SEX AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

An abundance of evidence indicates girls generally earn better grades

than boys. Normal maturation patterns give girls a head start in language based

subjects. Those differences, however, tend to even out in the middle grades.

Relating performance to socioeconomic status, Sexton found boys of lower economic

class families are the least successful of all youth. (84) Deutsch's data indicates

by sixth grade, Negro girls generally exceed boys only in reading. (19) The

Ausables, however, found girls out performing boys in all areas. They explain

their evidence by noting: "...opportunity for acquiring primary status in the

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school is greater for girls than boys because of their superior verbal fluency and greater conformity to adult authority along with greater achievement needs." (3) A similar study conducted by New York City schools showed third grade girls' reading scores higher than those of boys with differences disappearing in the sixth grade. (70) In general, Negro boys achieve less than any other group of pupils.

FACILITIES AND EXPENDITURES

External factors also influence teacher capacities to either ascertain or foster individual needs and interest. Despite recent acceleration of school construction, many buildings housing disadvantaged pupils remain structurally demoralizing and distractive. Buildings serving minority neighborhoods are generally older, less adequate and not as well maintained as schools in predominantly white areas. They provide less floor and playground space, and fewer special rooms. Many already unsatisfactory buildings continue to deteriorate while enrollments increase. Likewise, teacher-pupil ratios are higher in those schools.

Generally, per pupil expenditures are relatively low. So are expenditures for books and other instructional materials. Library facilities have been poor or nonexistent until recent years. (59)

TEACHERS

Obviously, teachers have a major influence on the extent to which pupils' interests are recognized and enlarged. While much has been written regarding such influence, few hard data are available. However, the following

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facts indicate the limited capabilities of some entrusted with instruction of disadvantaged children.

Many teachers assigned to core city schools have had little or no preparation for working with impoverished children. Larner is outspoken in his belief that most teachers are too immersed in middle-class outlooks to teach disadvantaged children successfully. (58) HARYOU also notes the teachers' middle-class values and perceptions impede effective communication between teachers and pupils. (43) Haubrich has analyzed teachers' serious misconceptions of disadvantaged pupils' preschool experiences. As would be expected, he notes such teachers experience difficulties in understanding and working with them. (46) Those difficulties are accentuated when teachers with the least experience are assigned to slum schools and, more so, when supervision is inadequate. (43)

In Chicago, Sexton found integrated and Negro schools are manned by disproportionate numbers of uncertified teachers, many of whom are used as substitutes. (84) In many schools half of the teachers are substitutes. Some classes operate year-round without a regularly assigned teacher. Under such circumstances few teachers are familiar with pupils' backgrounds.

To make matters worse, teacher turnover in depressed area schools is exceptionally high. In some, it reaches 61 percent each year. Short tenure decreases teachers' opportunity to acquire an understanding of disadvantaged pupils. Adding to the disparities inherent in high turnover rates, some competent teachers refuse to work in "undesirable" neighborhoods. Others find work in such circumstances so wearing that they seek transfers to more pleasant assignments. (58)

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TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF PUPILS

Recent studies provide information indicating teachers respond differently to white and Negro children, as well as to children of different social classes. (9) Gottlieb compared Negro and white elementary school teachers' views of their students. He found Negro teachers manning schools in low income areas expressed more satisfaction with their work. They also tended to see Negro students as fun-loving, happy, cooperative, energetic and ambitious. White teachers perceived the same students as talkative, lazy, fun-loving, high strung and frivolous. (39)

A similar study by Davidson and Lang revealed teachers generally rated classroom behavior of lower-class children as undesirable even when their academic achievements were good. Children became aware of teachers' critical attitudes and acquired lower perceptions of themselves. (14) Exemplifying what Deutsch terms "poor self-fulfillment prophesy," those same children subsequently achieved less and behaved less satisfactorily. (19)

There is also a growing body of information which implies many teachers feel the lower-class child is intellectually limited. (43) Riessman notes a similar belief based on his conversations with teachers. (79) Silberman suggests: "The teacher who assumes that her children cannot learn very much will discover that she has a class of children who are indeed unable to learn." (90)

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EPILOGUE

Perhaps little of the foregoing evidence is as precise as might be desired. None is absolute. Indeed, attitudes, aspirations, hopes, fears and aversions are abstractions, difficult to quantify. Competent researchers and teachers recognize the need for more research with more exact measures.

The concepts and facts in hand, however, are useful. They indicate ways teachers and administrators can do more to meet the desperate needs of disadvantaged children and youth. Moral principle and professional conscience assert our obligation to proceed with improvements made possible by the knowledge we now possess.

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