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ABSTRACT

This report evaluated the Harlem Tutoring Program which was designed to give individual home tutoring in reading and mathematics to elementary school students in New York City. The students were at least two years below grade level in reading and/or mathematics. Forty-three students between the ages of six and thirteen participated in the program. The tutors were mostly college students who met with the students two days per week, for two hours each session. The program attempted to increase the student's reading, mathematics, and self-esteem. In addition, parents of students were assisted with family, housing, employment, and health problems through referrals to agencies. The major emphasis of the program was improvement of basic reading skills, including comprehension and vocabulary. Audio visual aids were used to provide remedial instruction. Pre and post achievement tests, observations, interviews, and conferences were used to evaluate the program. The findings of the report indicated the range of reading grade scores for the total sample was 2.76 to 6.92 months. Accordingly, the range in mathematics grade scores was -.09 to 1.89. (JP)

EVALUATION REPORT

Function No. 20-63402

HARLEM EDUCATION TUTORING PROGRAM

COMMUNITY DISTRICT UMBRELLA PROGRAMS 1975-1976

Prepared by:

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An Evaluation of Selected New York City Umbrella Programs funded under a Special Grant of the New York State Legislature performed for the Board of Education of the City of New York for the 1975-1976 school year.

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CHAPTER I: THE PROGRAM

The Harlem Education Tutoring Program was designed to give individual tutoring in reading and mathematics to 43 pupils between the ages of 6-13 years in their own homes after school. Most pupils are at least two years below grade level in reading and/or mathematics. The pupils live in the Central Harlem area in District 5. The tutor meets with each pupil in the pupil's home two days a week, for two hours each session. The tutors try to increase the individual child's reading and math levels while making them feel they can achieve in school by increasing their sense of competence and self-esteem. The program also assists the parents of the tutorial students, or acts as a source of referral, for problems related to housing, welfare, employment, health, child care, job training, etc. The program is located in a storefront, and although most tutoring takes place in the home of the child, some small group and individualized instruction takes place at the storefront also. The selection of children is based on referrals made to the program by guidance counselors, teachers, parents, principals, assistant principals, social workers, and the court. The pupils were attending seven schools in District 5.

The staff consisted of one program coordinator, one parent program assistant, two educational assistants, one clerk, one regular licensed teacher, and thirteen tutors. The educational assistants and the tutors were under the direct supervision of the regular teacher. The tutors, who were mostly college-students, had to go through a lengthy processing when they were hired that caused delays of two to three weeks. The parent program assistant suggested that tutors could be interviewed to determine their

eligibility for the program in August so that the full staff would be ready to start work in September.

Each pupil was tested in reading and mathematics when he entered the program with the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT) Form F, and at the end of the program with the MAT Form G. An evaluation of pupil weaknesses and strengths was made on the basis of MAT and other test results, consultation with the child's teacher at school, conversations with the child and his parent, and staff meetings. The major emphasis of the program appeared to be the improvement of basic reading skills, including comprehension and vocabulary. Audio visual aids were utilized to provide initial motivation and orientation to specific points, and to reinforce materials studied. The audio visual aids included audio-film strips with teacher's manuals, recording disks, write-on film strips, audio-repeat cassette recorders, headphones, etc. A wide variety of curriculum materials were available and each tutor, in consultation with his supervisors, developed an individualized program for each child. The program coordinator, parent program assistant, and the regular teacher conducted routine monitoring, observations, and conferences with the tutors and the educational assistants. The teacher assisted and evaluated each tutor and his work with his tutee. On Friday, for four hours, the teacher met with the tutors for in-service training programs, individual counseling sessions, lesson plan preparation, and conferences with the tutee and his parents. The supervising teacher also visited each tutor for about one-half hour when he was working with the tutee in the home of the tutee.

As a result of being in the program the pupils were expected to achieve statistically significant growth in their reading and mathematics scores as measured by scores on the MAT administered in October, 1975 and June, 1976.

The program was operational for the entire school year 1975-1976.

CHAPTER II: EVALUATION PROCEDURES

The evaluation objectives were:

1. To determine whether as a result of attending 75% or more of the Harlem Education Tutoring Program sessions, the reading grades of the participating students would show a statistically significant difference between the real post-test scores and the anticipated post-test scores.
2. To determine whether as a result of attending 75% or more of the Harlem Education Tutoring Program sessions, the mathematics grades of the participating students would show a statistically significant difference between the real post-test scores and the anticipated post-test scores.
3. It was anticipated that parents associated with the tutorial program would become more involved in school-community activities such that they would increase their attendance at PTA meetings by 50%, as measured by a pre-post analysis of PTA meeting rosters at the beginning and toward the end of the school year.
4. To determine the extent to which the program, as actually implemented would coincide with the program as described in the project proposal.

A Historical Regression Analysis was used in order to determine if the reading and mathematics grades on the MAT test showed a statistically significant difference between the real (or obtained) post-test scores (June, 1976 testing) and the anticipated post-test scores (based on October, 1975 MAT pre-test scores). Pre-test and post-test MAT reading and mathematics scores were available for 42 pupils in grades two through eight, but only 11 pupils had attended the program for 75% or more. Because only 11 pupils met the criteria of 75% attendance, several additional comparisons were made, including the use of all pupils with above and below 75% attendance.

CHAPTER III: FINDINGS

A Historical Regression Analysis was used to determine whether as a result of attending 75% or more of the Harlem Education Tutoring Program sessions, the reading and mathematics grades of the participating pupils would show a statistically significant difference between the real post-test scores and the anticipated post-test scores when a correlated t test was applied. Grades were combined because of low sample size in each grade. There was one pupil in grade two, ten pupils in grade three, six pupils in grade four, four pupils in grade five, six pupils in grade six, eight students in grade seven, and seven students in grade eight. The correlated t test results for reading achievement, comparing the mean predicted post-test grades with the mean actual post-test grades, are shown in Table 1 on page 9 in the Appendix. The improvement in reading skills above and beyond the expected improvement if the pupils had not been in the

program was significant for those pupils who attended 75% of the program sessions, except for the pupils in grades two, three, and four, and for the total sample. For pupils who had 75% attendance, the grade equivalent (GE) gain in months above the predicted gain ranged from 3.83 to 7.27 months. The range in GE gain in months for the total sample was 2.76 to 6.92.

The correlated t test results for mathematics achievement are presented in Table 2 on page 9 in the Appendix. In contrast to reading improvement, the gains in mathematics beyond those expected if the pupils had not been in the program, were not significant, except for the total sample in the second, third, and fourth grades. A significant loss in mathematics skills occured for the four pupils in grades two, three and four who had 75% attendance in the program. The unreliability of scores based on a sample of four pupils is very high and not much can be attributed to this atypical finding. The GE gain in months for those pupils with 75% attendance ranged from -2.35 to 2.05. The range in gain scores for the total sample was -.09 to 1.89. The lack of significant findings for mathematics could reflect the fact that the major orientation of the program was to improve reading achievement and much less emphasis was given to mathematics skills.

Parent attendance data at PTA meetings during October, 1975 through May, 1976 were available for only 11 parents. Attendance at PTA meetings data were available for 14 other parents, but they could not be used as their children had joined the program late in the year. For the 11 parents with complete attendance data, the results are shown in Table 3 on page 10 in the Appendix. The

PTA attendance during the first four months of the program (77% attendance) was somewhat poorer than the second four months of the program (84% attendance), but the improvement was far from the predicted 50% gain. The comparison of PTA attendance between the first two months of the program (95% attendance) and the last two months of the program (82% attendance) indicates a reduction in the number of meetings attended. The present evaluator, however, does not believe that the attendance results indicate a lack of parent involvement in school-community activities. The parent attendance at the PTA meetings was high for the entire year, which suggests strong parent involvement. Only if attendance at PTA meetings was low at the start of the school year could one compare end of school year attendance as an indicator of parent involvement as the parent becomes more concerned with the program.

The staff indicated that they had enough materials and supplies for the program. The center had a large variety of readers, workbooks, educational games, and audio visual equipment. The entire staff appeared to be especially well qualified and enthusiastic about their work. In general, the atmosphere in the homes was conducive to learning, and the parents cooperated in every way that they could. The physical facilities at the center and in the homes were adequate and enhanced individualized instruction.

There appears to be no doubt that the program serviced the needs of the target population, students who were retarded by two or more years below grade level in reading and/or mathematics. The program as implemented did coincide with the program as described in the proposal.

Recommendations From Last Prior Study

1. It was recommended that the tutorial program should be expanded. This recommendation was implemented with the hiring of 13 tutors this year in contrast to 11 tutors last year.
2. Evaluative survey forms should be developed for assessing the impact of the program on tutees and parents. This recommendation has not been implemented.
3. An on-site classroom facility with necessary equipement should be set up for an alternate tutoring site. This recommendation has been fully implemented.

CHAPTER IV: SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The statistical analysis of the mean MAT predicted post-test versus the actual post-test scores indicated a significant improvement in reading ability for all grades, except the pupils in grades two, three, and four with 75% attendance. The GE gain in reading achievement for pupils in grades 5-8 with 75% attendance was 3.83 months, and the gain for pupils in grades 3-8 was 7.27 months. For the total sample, the GE range in gain scores was 2.76 months for pupils in grades 2-4, 4.13 months for pupils in grades 5-6, 6.92 months for students in grades 7-8, and 6.42 months for pupils in grades 5-8.

The only significant improvement in mathematics ability was for the total sample of pupils in grades 2-4, where the GE gain was 1.56 months. The pupils in grades 2-4 with 75% attendance had a significant loss in mathematics achievement with a GE

less of 2.35 months. There were no significant changes in mathematics ability for the remaining pupils in grades 5-8 and 3-8 with 75% attendance, and for the total sample in grades 5-6, 7-8, and 5-8.

Only a slight improvement was noted in parent attendance at PTA meetings during the second half of the program. Parent attendance at PTA meetings was high, however, during the entire school year.

The program was in full operation during the school year and was effectively coordinated by the program director and the parent program assistant. Physical facilities and materials used in the program were adequate and as described in the proposal.

Conclusions

The tutorial program in the home of the tutee can be considered clearly successful on the basis of impressive gains made in reading achievement. It is thus recommended that the program be continued.

Recommendations

1. Hire tutors in August so that tutorial work can start in September.
2. Give more systematic attention to math improvement. One highly organized and structured approach to remedial math instruction that is recommended is described in the final evaluation report written by the present evaluator entitled "Summer Mathematics Remediation For Incoming Pupils - 1975 High School Umbrella # 2," and had the B/E Function No. 09-61618(b). The key feature of the above program was the setting up

and execution of a systematic, individualized, simple and direct attack on the mathematics weaknesses of pupils as diagnosed from the MAT results. For each pupil, a record sheet was filled out indicating areas of weakness diagnosed from the MAT in addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, decimals, and percentages. Next to each area on the record sheet there was a reference to the Learning To Compute Workbook section and pages that had problems to help the pupil improve his skill for a given MAT weakness.

3. Evaluate parent involvement in program through objective questionnaires and parent participation in the program, and not through attendance at PTA meetings.

Table 1

Comparison of Predicted Post-test versus Actual Post-test Mean Grade Equivalency Reading Scores by Grade Level and Attendance in Program

			Pre-test		Actual Post-test		Anticipated GE Gain Post-test		in Months		
Group	Grade	N	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		t	p
75%	2-4	4	1.875	.435	2.600	.082	2.060	.508	5.40	2.262	n.s.
75%	5-8	7	3.459	.950	4.164	1.185	3.781	1.006	3.83	3.721	.05
75%	3-8	11	2.882	1.117	3.882	1.388	3.155	1.200	7.27	4.386	.01
Total	2-4	17	2.059	.457	2.424	.458	2.148	.474	2.76	3.337	.01
Total	5-6	10	4.220	1.012	4.915	.880	4.502	1.065	4.13	2.320	.05
Total	7-8	15	3.733	.790	4.633	1.081	3.941	.863	6.92	4.163	.01
Total	5-8	25	3.928	.898	4.700	.990	4.058	.984	6.42	4.177	.01

Table 2

Comparison of Predicted Post-test versus Actual Post-test Mean Grade Equivalency Mathematics Scores by Grade Level and Attendance in Program

			Pre-test		Actual Post-test		Anticipated GE Gain Post-test		in Months		
Group	Grade	N	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		t	p
75%	2-4	4	2.275	.591	2.275	.591	2.510	.668	-2.35	-5.890	.05
75%	5-8	7	4.500	.849	5.029	1.030	4.900	.906	1.29	0.416	n.s.
75%	3-8	11	3.691	1.340	4.236	1.408	4.031	1.442	2.05	0.944	n.s.
Total	2-4	17	2.060	.542	2.365	.545	2.207	.616	1.56	2.142	.05
Total	5-6	10	4.270	.909	4.680	1.060	4.502	.999	1.78	1.305	n.s.
Total	7-8	15	4.900	1.370	5.147	1.142	5.156	1.142	-0.09	-0.032	n.s.
Total	5-8	25	4.656	1.231	4.960	1.142	4.894	1.128	0.66	0.480	n.s.

Table 3

Comparison of PTA Attendance at Beginning and at End of Program

	Dates of Attendance	
	10/75 - 1/76	2/76 - 5/76
No. PTA Meetings Attended	34 (77%)	37 (84%)
No. PTA Meetings Missed	10 (33%)	7 (16%)

	10/75 - 11/75	4/76 - 5/76
No. PTA Meetings Attended	21 (95%)	18 (82%)
No. PTA Meetings Missed	1 (5%)	4 (20%)