

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

A STUDY IN ENVIRONMENTALLY DEPRIVED AREAS
OF WINNIPEG OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
THE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE OF SELECTED
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN AND THE
EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF THEIR PARENTS

BEING A REPORT OF A STUDY SUBMITTED IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

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Donald W. Amell

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ABSTRACT

This study was of a descriptive nature, designed to determine if there is a relationship between the school performance of children in environmentally deprived areas and the educational experience of their parents.

The study was conducted from September 1965 to April 1966, and was based on data obtained in face-to-face interviews with a population consisting of the parents of forty-seven school children in grades one through three residing in environmentally deprived areas in the City of Winnipeg and on data obtained through the Winnipeg School Division No.1 related to level of school performance of the forty-seven children. The focus of the research activities was to discover the grade level, the aspiration level for self, and the attitudes toward own education of parents, and if variations in these factors were related to the child's school performance.

Findings revealed that a higher proportion of the parents of children performing satisfactorily in school than the parents of children performing unsatisfactorily in school had a high education level, a high educational aspiration level, and a positive attitude toward their education. Further findings indicated that there was a higher incidence of mobility, broken homes and low incomes amongst families with a child performing unsatisfactorily in school than amongst families with children performing satisfactorily in school. Suggestions for intervention in education in environmentally deprived areas came out of the study findings.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	vi
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. BACKGROUND AND RELATED STUDIES.....	11
III. METHOD.....	26
IV. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS.....	35
V. CONCLUSIONS.....	47
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	55
APPENDIX A.....	57
APPENDIX B.....	60

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Distribution of Parents of Children Performing Satisfactorily in School According to the Level of Educational Achievement.....	37
1A. Distribution of Parents of Children Performing Unsatisfactorily in School According to the Level of Educational Achievement.....	37
2. Distribution of Parents of Children Performing Satisfactorily in School According to Educational Aspiration Level.....	40
2A. Distribution of Parents of Children Performing Unsatisfactorily in School According to Educational Aspiration Level.....	40
3. Distribution of Parents of Children Performing Satisfactorily in School According to Predominant Attitude Toward Their Own Educational Experience.....	43
3A. Distribution of Parents of Children Performing Unsatisfactorily in School According to Predominant Attitude Toward Their Own Educational Experience.....	43
I. Distribution of Families According to Marital Status of Parents (Appendix B).....	60
II. Distribution of Families According to Number of Residences in Past Five Years (Appendix B).....	60
III. Distribution of Families According to Annual Income Level (Appendix B).....	60

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

If we are learning anything from our experience, we are learning that it is time for us to go to work, and the first work of these times and the first work of our society is education.¹

- Lyndon B. Johnson, July 28th, 1964.

One of the most dramatic features of this century in the field of the humanities has been the declaration of a "War on Poverty" by the Government of the United States of America. A main plank in policy aimed at the eradication of poverty was the passage of the Elementary and Secondary School Act of 1965 in the Congress of the United States of America in which one of the explicit goals was: "To strengthen elementary and secondary school programs for educationally deprived children in low income areas."²

There has been a growing awareness that one of the main avenues of upward mobility in this era is education. Those who do not possess adequate education to compete on the open labour market are penalized heavily both socially and economically, thus, limiting seriously their off-springs' access to a full participation in the rapidly escalating affluence in western society. The problem of providing education for children in low income and disadvantaged areas is a major concern of professionals and lay people in the educational field. The basis for

¹American Education, United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Volume I, Number IV (April 1965).

²Ibid., p. 14.

any form of interventive activity is knowledge, and it is hoped that this study will provide a better understanding of the differences amongst families in disadvantaged areas and how these differences may affect school performance, and in this way provide a knowledge base for activity in this area of concern.

This study is set in Winnipeg, a western Canadian city of approximately 500,000 population which is the capital city of the province of Manitoba.

The study was conducted by a group of fifteen students enrolled in the Master of Social Work program at the School of Social Work, University of Manitoba*. It is one part of a total study involving four student groups and four related areas of concern. The study was initiated in September 1965 to extend to April 1966.

The original area of concern for the total study was dictated by the Research Committee of the School of Social Work - education in deprived areas and variations in educational motivation and cultural stimulation amongst satisfactory and unsatisfactory students. This concern was suggested by perusal of literature pertinent to education in depressed areas, awareness of differences among people in these areas, and the reality that some children perform satisfactorily in the school setting in depressed areas while others perform unsatisfactorily.

The Research Committee of the School of Social Work approached the Senior Planner, Planning Division, Metropolitan Corporation of Greater

*hereafter referred to as simply the School of Social Work.

Winnipeg who identified three areas in Winnipeg which are designated "environmentally deprived"¹.

Subsequently, the cooperation of the Research Director of the Winnipeg School Division was elicited, and through this contact four schools within the "environmentally deprived" areas previously circumscribed were designated as appropriate for research and representative of the areas in which they were physically located. The Research Director of the Winnipeg School Division approached the principals of these four schools, and a sample of seventy-four children in grades one, two and three was provided. Children in these early school grades had been requested since the child's earliest contact in the school is often most indicative of maladjustments attributable to conflicting values or value orientations between home and school.

Of the seventy-four children provided as a sample, thirty-five were assessed as satisfactory performers and thirty-nine as unsatisfactory performers by the classroom teacher of the individual child.

The study was introduced to the participating researchers in September 1965 by the Project Director of the School of Social Work. The study area and preparations previously made with the Metropolitan Planning Corporation of Greater Winnipeg and the Winnipeg School Division were outlined, and four research groups were designated.

Two of the groups were to explore the motivation aspect of both satisfactory and unsatisfactory performers in the school. One of these

¹ areas included in census tracts 11, 12, 19, 22, 23 - 1961 census of the Dominion of Canada.

two groups studied the child's educational experience as a variable in considering school performance; the other, of which this document is the record, studied the parents' educational experience as a variable in considering the child's school performance.

The remaining two research groups focussed on cultural stimulation as related to school performance. One of these groups studied culturally stimulating elements within the home as a variable; the final group studied the use made of culturally stimulating opportunities in the community as a variable in considering school performance.

The study exposed in this paper deals with the parents' educational experience as related to satisfactory or unsatisfactory school performance by the child. From a review of the literature¹ and consideration of current human behavior theory, it was reasoned that parental values and attitudes are transmitted to the child by the parents acting as role models in the socializing process. Thus, variations in parental attitudes should reflect in children's behavior.

This led to the formulation of the major hypothesis of this study: in the families of selected elementary school children living in environmentally deprived areas of Winnipeg, there are variations in educational experience between parents of children whose school performance is satisfactory and parents of children whose school performance is unsatisfactory.

In this study "elementary school children" are those enrolled in

¹see Chapter II.

grades one through three, who have been identified by school personnel as possessing sufficient intellectual capacity to achieve the acceptable school standard.

Further, "environmentally deprived areas" are geographic regions of Winnipeg identified by the Planning Division of the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg as regions in transition which fall below accepted socio-economic standards.

"Satisfactory performance" is above-average achievement in school functioning as identified by the class teacher at October 1965.

"Unsatisfactory performance" is below-average achievement in school functioning as identified by the class teacher at October 1965. The sample in this study, thus, is composed of children whose performance is notably deviant from the general body of school children or those considered average.

For the purpose of this study "educational experience" is defined as educational achievement, educational aspiration and attitude toward one's own school experience.

In deriving sub-hypotheses to be tested, specific factors which would affect the values and attitudes incorporated by the child from parents were sought.

As the parent provides an educational role model, it was reasoned the parent's actual level of grade attainment would affect the child's motivation for education and be reflected in his or her school performance. Thus, the parent's possession of a high level of education suggests that his child may be performing satisfactorily in school in response to this

positive example. It is suggested that the children who are performing unsatisfactorily may lack such a positive educational model to motivate them.

Thus, a first sub-hypothesis was derived: a greater proportion of parents of children whose performance is satisfactory than parents of children whose school performance is unsatisfactory have a high educational level.

"High level of education" is considered as complete grade nine or above. This is suggested by the fact that most technical courses require a grade nine standing as a requisite for entrance.

In further consideration relative to the parents' functioning as educational role models, it was reasoned that the parent's aspiration for self while he was attending school might be a variable which would prove significantly different amongst parents of the children performing satisfactorily and those performing unsatisfactorily. The rationale for such a suggestion was that those parents who had a high expectation for self, regardless of achievement, would transfer these expectations to the child and serve to positively motivate him. Further, it was suggested that high educational aspirations for self reflected value placed on education and this would be transmitted to the child to create positive valuation of education. It was felt that aspirations currently held would be influenced by events and changes, either societal or personal, during the years between the completion of school and the current project, thus, being not a true reflection of educational experience; this reasoning led to a focus upon the educational aspirations the parents had during

their own school attendance or at its completion.

A second sub-hypothesis was formulated: a greater proportion of parents of children whose school performance is satisfactory than parents of children whose school performance is unsatisfactory had a high educational aspiration level.

"High educational aspiration level" is defined as a desire to attain an educational level of grade nine or above; again, relating to the requisite for entrance to technical training¹.

Additional variations amongst parents were considered important. The parent's attitude toward the educational system derived from his own experience within the school as a student was considered to effect the attitude toward school which he would convey to his child. Thus, it was reasoned that a parent possessing a positive attitude toward his own educational experience as a student would be more inclined to support a positive image of education for his child than would a parent whose own experience in school had left him embittered and possessing a negative attitude toward his educational experience.

From this line of reason a final sub-hypothesis was derived: a greater proportion of parents of children whose school performance is satisfactory than parents of children whose school performance is unsatisfactory have a positive attitude toward their educational experience.

Several assumptions were necessary in this study. The group of children selected by the school personnel, while performing either

¹as in "high educational level".

satisfactorily or unsatisfactorily, all have the capacity to fulfill the requirements of the school program. Thus, as the group studied have been identified by the school personnel as having sufficient intellectual capacity to achieve the accepted school standard, it is assumed that variations in school performance will not be significantly affected by differences in intelligence amongst the sample group.

It is also necessary to assume that educational opportunities (teaching standards, teaching materials) in the different schools, as well as within classes, are constant and thus variations in school performance are not attributable to these factors.

Since the sample was derived without participation of the researchers, it is assumed that the teachers' assessment of students as performing satisfactorily or unsatisfactorily will be made objectively, and will be a true indication of the student's performance at the time of the study.

An assumption about the areas of the city in which the study took place was necessary, and thus, it is assumed that the four school areas (three geographic areas) in which the study is set are environmentally deprived to a similar extent, so that differences in degree of deprivation will not affect the validity of the study.

Finally, it is assumed that the schedule employed in the study is administered and answered in an honest and objective manner.

A personally administered schedule was employed in the collection of data; it was felt that personal contact would increase the likelihood of response, as well as allowing a certain degree of flexibility

in rewording questions if the individual interviewed is unable to understand the question. At the same time, as a part of a four phase study, it was necessary that this portion of the study acknowledge the needs of other portions in which personal observations were required. The schedule derived for this portion of the study was combined with those of the other participating research groups and was subject to a pretest on a small sample.

Identical schedules were provided for each parent and it was hoped that the respondents would be interviewed separately, i.e. husband and wife, to eliminate the effect of one person's response on the other's response.

Data derived will be contrasted and compared with reference to the two groupings studied i.e. parents of the satisfactory performers and parents of the unsatisfactory performers.

With reference to interpretation of data, as well as being aware of the assumptions of the study, certain limitations exist derived from the scope of the study and the methods employed.

Both the size of the sample and the manner in which it was derived impose limitations on the degree to which generalizations can be made from the results obtained.

It is further acknowledged that since the scope of the study is grades one through three in a metropolitan area that results must be considered as applicable for generalization only under similar circumstances.

The time span of the study and the assessment of the children in the sample, at one particular point in time, must be considered when

interpreting data. As well, there was no mechanism employed to check reliability of responses or interviewers.

It is the sincere hope of the group involved in researching this study that the results derived hereof will contribute to a furthering of knowledge for use in dealing with the problem of education of children in deprived areas.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND AND OTHER STUDIES

1. BACKGROUND

The sixties have opened a new horizon in the educational field. Whereas, education has in past been viewed as a luxury to be engaged in by those of wealth and prestige, it is today a basic necessity to which individuals have a moral and legal right. Yet, it is not so much a new philosophy which has evolved of itself, but an outcropping of an economic and industrial revolution. The current scientific advances on the international scene, the expanding economy and demand for educated and skilled labour, together with the emphasis in the United States and Canada on individual "success" has placed new demands on the educational systems in both nations.

Alfred Kahn quotes the Rockefeller Brothers' Fund publication The Pursuit of Excellence: Education and the Future of America to describe the dual impact of education, i.e. societal and individual; "A free society nurtures the individual not alone for the contribution he may make to the social effort, but also and primarily for the sake of the contribution he may make to his own realization and development."¹

The current awakening of interest in the educationally disadvantaged child can be seen in the light of both criteria; as a "waste of

¹Alfred J. Kahn, Planning Community Services for Children in Trouble (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), p. 146.

talent"¹ available to the society, and as the individual child fails to achieve the fullest expression of his capabilities.

In a wider sense, the whole problem of the impoverished in America has been recently exposed to public view. As the gross national product of both the United States and Canada² has risen rapidly, an economic optimism evolved in the middle and late fifties which conceived of poverty as disappearing as a result of the natural working of the economy.

S. M. Miller refers to the "income revolution" whereby not only poverty would be eliminated, but income distribution would become equalitarian. He describes this as a "panglossian picture" which "has been battered by a number of recent books which have underlined the extent of poverty in the United States."³

Michael Harrington is one of the writers who attempted to bring the problem of poverty and the poverty-stricken to public notice. He challenges the optimism of the economists with a vivid and gripping description of what it means to be poor in America. To this depth of perception, he adds a dimension of width as he suggests that over twenty percent of the population of the United States is living below the

¹ Robert J. Havighurst, "Urban Development and the Educational System," Education in Depressed Areas, ed. A. Harry Passow (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College Columbia University, 1963).

² Canada gross national product currently estimated at 50 billion dollars compared to 20 billion dollars in 1951 (in terms of market prices).

³ S. M. Miller, "Poverty and Inequality in America: Implications for the Social Services," Mental Health of the Poor, ed. Frank Riessman, Jerome Cohen, Arthur Pearl (New York: The Free Press, 1964), p. 11.

poverty level.¹

The meaning of poverty is described thus: "In short, being poor is not one aspect of a person's life in this country, it is his life. Taken as a whole, poverty is a culture."²

Leonard Schneiderman explores "the culture of poverty", and he adds a more positive dimension to consideration of the values of the poor.³ He suggests that prolonged poverty results in a life-style which is transmitted from generation to generation, and thus, the existence of a culture of poverty. Too often this poverty life-style is viewed as dysfunctional and alluded to as a purveyor of deviance, whereas Schneiderman indicates that it is, in fact, functional for survival in the environment and life-space of the impoverished. However, "it is non-functional and severely deficient for successful survival by standards held in middle-class urban America."⁴

The life-style and value orientation attributed to the impoverished is useful to them as it allows for an adequacy of functioning within the limits of their impoverished environment, and thus, it may be termed both appropriate to and consistent with the expectations of the life-space. However, as the impoverished or "lower class" individual

¹Michael Harrington, The Other America (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963).

²Ibid., p. 158.

³Leonard Schneiderman, The Culture of Poverty - A Study of the Value Orientation Preferences of the Chronically Impoverished (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms, Inc.).

⁴Ibid., p. 2.

or family participates in an ever widening range of activities, there is a discontinuity evident as the life-style and incorporated values which are functional in his impoverished environment are totally inappropriate to the expectations of the wider society in which participation is required.

The area in which this value conflict becomes most apparent is the school system. The school is middle-class oriented. Schneiderman suggests that success in the student role is based on the performance in accord with particular values:

A logical analysis of the requirements for success in the student role suggests the essential importance for adequate student performance of a future time orientation, capacity for a future which one anticipates as bigger and better and which justifies present effort for future gain. It suggests also the importance of a sense of value in activity geared to self-development and attainment as opposed to the spontaneous expression in activity of impulses and desires.¹

This is the expectation of the school, and reward and/or censure is expressed in reference to these expected values. Schneiderman's study clearly indicates that there is an incongruency between these school values and those dominant among the chronically impoverished.

A most explicit statement by Martin Deutsch indicates the result of this conflict in values: "Among children who come from lower-class socially impoverished circumstances, there is a high proportion of school failure, school drop-outs, reading and learning disabilities, as well as life adjustment problems."²

¹Ibid., p. 159.

²Martin P. Deutsch, "The Disadvantaged Child and the Learning Process," Mental Health of the Poor, ed. Frank Riessman, Jerome Cohen, Arthur Pearl (New York: The Free Press, 1964), p. 172.

The question emerges, "why has this problem only recently become of prime concern to our society?" If we accept Wilensky and Lebeaux's¹ contention that the economy is the system in society which currently influences most profoundly all other systems, we could suggest that changes in the economy have contributed to the importance of this problem in the educational system.

As industry and the functions of the economy have reached a high degree of specialization and technical complexity, the criteria and requirements for personnel have been continually upgraded. Current trends would indicate a continuation of this upward gradation of employment requisites. Whereas, only two decades ago there was ample employment opportunity for the school drop-out, the poorly educated or the unskilled labourer, today industry, with the emergence of automation, has little need for the unskilled. This obviously places the lower-class at a disadvantage as the skills they do possess become non-marketable. David and Pearl Ausubel allude to this effect of automation relative to the problem faced by the racial minorities in the United States.²

Miller describes the economy's increasing educational demands and the effect on the importance of education to the individual:

Skill and education requirements of industries are increasing-whether industry really needs the level of skills it demands is not the issue;

¹Harole L. Wilensky and Charles N. Lebeaux, Industrial Society and Social Welfare

²David P. Ausubel and Pearl Ausubel, "Ego Development Among Segregated Negro Children," Education in Depressed Areas, ed. A. Harry Passow (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College Columbia University, 1963).

the important fact is that industry thinks it does or believes that it can get such labor. The effect is to make obsolete old skills, unemploying many workers as the demand for industrial labor declines. New labor is employed only if it is highly skilled or educated; consequently, the low educated, especially the young, are more disadvantaged in relation to the economic system today than similarly low educated were a generation or two ago. The Second Industrial Revolution as presently conducted is destroying the economic potential of vast segments of the American population. Increasingly, formal schooling - not necessarily the ability to perform certain tasks - is the credential required for entry into the main economic system."¹

Thus, the possession of a high level of formal education has become less of a luxury and more of an outright minimum necessity in order for an individual to function effectively in a modern industrial society. Blanche Coll² suggests that education is not only a requisite to economic success, but social and cultural success as well; education has meaning for the total being in all his social roles.

Upon the school system rests the burden of attempting to provide an educational experience for the lower class which will provide them the much needed formal education, and hereby an avenue into full participation in the economy and the total society. Miller highlights the importance of education in this context when he refers to it as "the escape route from poverty."³

Various writers have attempted to account for the problem experienced by the lower-class child in the formal education system. A number of writers stress the discontinuity of values between the school and

¹ S. M. Miller, op. cit., p. 13.

² Blanche Coll, "Deprivation in Childhood: Its Relation to the Cycle of Poverty," Welfare in Review, Vol. III, No. 3 (March 1965).

³ S. M. Miller, op. cit., p. 15.

the lower-class child.¹ Many concrete suggestions for program and policy changes within the school system have been presented which could hopefully bridge the gap between the middle-class school and the lower-class child.²

Frank E. Jones has attempted to view social class factors as a framework within which to study family, peer group and school influences on educational behavior. He states:

Apart from the evidence of higher aspirations among lower class boys and girls, there is evidence that they are capable of scholastic success. While it is evident that the higher social classes achieve greater school success than the lower classes, it is also evident that many capable lower class boys and girls, for one reason or another, do not achieve scholastically commensurate to their abilities. For fuller exploitation of human resources, understanding of how aspects of the social environment, other than social class may influence educational behavior is necessary.³

What Jones is suggesting is that not all lower-class children under-achieve in school, drop-out, or fail; and thus, we must not use "social class" as a total explanation of the failure of lower-class children. The idea of a culture of poverty is only the beginning of our

¹ Supra p. 3, see also Frank Riessman, *The Culturally Deprived Child* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962); and Richard A. Cloward and James A. Jones, "Social Class: Educational Attitudes and Participation," *Education in Depressed Areas*, ed. A. Harry Passow (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College Columbia University, 1963). Havinghurst, op. cit., develops the idea of "the lower-class school" and its inability to prepare its pupils for societal participation.

² see A. Harry Passow (ed.) "Education in Depressed Areas," Education in Depressed Areas (New York: Bureau of Publication, Teachers College Columbia University, 1963); and Alfred Kahn, op. cit.; Frank Riessman, op. cit.

³ Frank E. Jones, The Social Bases of Education (Toronto: Canadian Conference on Children, 1965), p. 35.

consideration of the problem of the educationally disadvantaged and provides a flexible framework within which to explore familial and other influences in the child's environment.

Although common factors in cultural conditioning obviously make for many uniformities in personality development, genetically determined differences in temperamental and cognitive traits, as well as differential experience in the home and wider culture, account for much idiosyncratic variation.¹

What is the "lower-class" view of education? Goldberg² suggests that it is not deemed to be vital for employment amongst lower-class people who value physical strength and manual ability as marketable skills. Cloward and Jones³ suggest that there is a class difference in emphasis upon education, but that this does not provide an answer for the problem of underachievement in low-income groups.

Frank Riessman describes the consensus of current thought;

It is popularly held that the culturally deprived child is not interested in education; moreover, that he is essentially antagonistic toward it. This idea is rooted in two obvious facts: one is the observation that he is plainly discontented in the school; the other is the equally well-known fact that his parents have little education, frequently cannot read, and that there are typically few, if any, books in the home.⁴

¹David P. and Pearl Ausubel, op. cit., p. 128, see also Jerome Cohen, "Social Work and the Culture of Poverty," Mental Health of the Poor, ed. Frank Riessman, Jerome Cohen, Arthur Pearl (New York: The Free Press, 1964), who describes the fallacy of expecting to find a modal type of behavior upon encountering a member of the lower-class.

²S. Goldberg, "Factors Affecting Educational Attainment in Depressed Urban Areas," Education in Depressed Areas, ed. A. Harry Passow (New York: Bureau of Publication, Teachers College Columbia University, 1963).

³Richard A. Cloward and James A. Jones, op. cit.

⁴Frank Riessman, op. cit., p. 10.

In contradiction to this view, Riessman indicates that "the culturally deprived" value education, but not in the same manner as the school system expects. They have a utilitarian view of education, valuing it as an enabling agent in coping with demands of employment, interpersonal contacts and dealings with the wider society; the school, in contrast, stresses the value of education for its own sake.

How does the family influence education? Jones suggests that the value which parents place upon education and the educational expectations they have for their child will be expressed in the child's school behavior. Parents may emphasize education both as they express values consistent with those of the school system and as they acknowledge the worth and value of education. Jones stresses especially the importance of the parents as role models for the child as he develops, and thus, the meaning and value which they ascribe to education will be transmitted to the child.

Miller indicates that many low-income families have a very high regard for education and yet many children of these families leave school early. He feels that part of the problem is "parents' lack of ability to translate their general strong interest in education into effective support of the children in school".¹

In this same regard and in accord with Miller, Deutsch states:

No matter how the parents might aspire to a higher achievement level for their child, their lack of knowledge as to the operational implementation, combined with the child's early failure experiences

¹S. M. Miller, op. cit., p. 15.

in school, can so effectively attenuate confidence in his ability ever to handle competently challenge in the academic area, that the child loses all motivation.¹

To counter the idea that the lower-class parents convey a negative attitude toward the school which effects negatively their child's relationship with the school, Deutsch suggests that the lower-class child enters school with a neutral or nebulous attitude and that it is in the school itself that negative attitudes toward learning develop.

A much more confining assessment of the lower-class family is set forth by Goldberg who suggests that even with high aspirations for their offspring, the parents "cannot provide the model of attitudes and behaviors which underlie a perception of the world as open, and schooling as a means of moving out and up into the open world."²

Thus, the consensus is that the lower-class parents do value education, however, they are unable to transmit this into appropriate expression and are unable to convey to the child a positive attitude toward education. To move a step further, it is implied that the parents' inability to function as adequate educational role models stems from a negative or unrewarding school experience, or a limited exposure to education in their own childhood.

Alfred Kahn states that part of the school's role in education is to compensate for this lack of adequate educational role models in the home; "the school is in a position to do much to ensure the emotional

¹ Martin Deutsch, op. cit., p. 185.

² S. Goldberg, op. cit., p. 81.

satisfaction of achievement, to arouse desirable goals and values, to offer adult models after which a child might pattern himself."¹

The consensus of most writers in the current exposure of lower-class education suggests a changing role for the school, a new flexibility which will allow it to meet the needs of the educationally disadvantaged child and provide him a most necessary requisite for entering modern society - an education to the fullest extent of his capabilities.

Writing with direction and relevance to this topic, Cloward and Jones express a trifocal philosophy of equality in education:

First, equality means that equivalent educational facilities shall be available whatever the socio-economic position of the child. Second, equality means that individual differences in learning patterns shall be taken into account. Finally, equality means that the educational system shall not be organized in such a way as to favor children who are socialized in one rather than another part of the social structure.²

A. Harry Passow describes a difference in emphasis as he alludes to a remedial intervention and a newer, preventative approach to program formation. While he suggests programs of pre-school preparation, curriculum modification and neighbourhood enrichment, he also suggests that programs be included which involve the families of school children in depressed areas. Thus, while educators are grappling with the adjustments within the school system itself, it is paramount that interventive efforts at many levels by many professions occur simultaneously in the family, neighbourhood, community and society.

¹Alfred Kahn, op. cit., p. 151.

²Richard Cloward and James A. Jones, op. cit., p. 193.

2. OTHER STUDIES

While there has been much significant research in the field of education, there is little which is directly relevant to our study and focus on the educational experience of parents.

John Porter using information from the Canadian census of 1951 indicates a significant class difference in school population.¹ Using an occupational scale derived from B. R. Blishen's occupational status listing he shows that a higher percentage of children between the ages of fourteen and twenty-four whose fathers' occupations rank in the first or second highest occupation classes are attending school, than are those children whose fathers' occupations fall in the two lowest occupational classes.

Another Canadian study of significance in attempting to understand class differences in education is that of John Robbins in Ottawa.² Robbin's results indicated that amongst a selected group of Ottawa public school students that a positive relationship exists between social class and intelligence, i.e. higher social class corresponds to higher Intelligence Quotient.

Two studies which attempt to describe the class difference in value placed on education are: Herbert H. Hyman's derivation from statistics and data collected by the National Opinion Research Center in

¹John Porter, "Social Class and Education," Social Purpose for Canada, ed. M. Oliver (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961).

²John E. Robbins, "The Home and Family Background of Ottawa Public School Children in Relation to their Intelligence Quotients," Canadian Society, ed. B. R. Blishen, et al, (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1961).

a nationwide survey of the United States in 1947¹, and, Cloward and Jones study in the Lower East Side of Manhattan.² Both studies indicate that the lower class does not view education as important as do the middle and upper classes. However, Cloward and Jones go further than does Hyman in suggesting that this statistically significant difference may be attributed to his observation that low income people fail to perceive education as a channel of mobility, but rather that their own occupational aspirations which are often stymied by reality social and economic barriers influence this low evaluation of education.

Several studies have attempted to correlate selected family factors and educational aspiration of children,³ however, few, if any, have attempted to relate these family factors to the child's actual performance in school.

In a study conducted in Wisconsin,⁴ it was noted that fifty-one percent of students in high-school whose parents ranked high in educational achievement had college plans, whereas, twenty-two percent of

¹Herbert H. Hyman, "The Value Systems of Different Classes: A Social Psychological Contribution to the Analysis of Stratification," Social Perspectives on Behavior, ed. Herman D. Stein and Richard A. Cloward (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1958).

²Richard A. Cloward and James A. Jones, op. cit.

³See particularly Leonard B. Siemens, "The Influence of Selected Family Factors on the Educational and Occupational Aspiration Level of High School-aged Youth," (M.A. thesis, Department of Sociology, College of Arts and Science, University of Manitoba).

⁴W. E. Sewell, A. O. Haller, and M. A. Strauss, "Social Status and Educational and Occupational Aspirations," American Sociological Review, Vol. XXII, (1957).

children whose parents ranked low in educational achievement had college plans.

Siemens refers to a study conducted in Ontario which suggested a positive correlation between a child's educational achievement and such family factors as socio-economic status and educational level of parents.¹

In the area of parental aspirations relative to school behavior, Jones indicates that there are several studies which support the hypothesis that scholastic activity is associated with the degree that the parents and child share similar beliefs and values.²

The literature reviewed herein would substantiate a class differentiation in valuation of education, and further, indicate that a correlation could be anticipated between parental academic achievement and current school performance of children. We might derive as well an understanding of the impact of parental-child agreement in values as it

¹Leonard B. Siemens, op. cit., p. 27, citing Robert Kaill, "An Enquiry into the Relationship Between the Occupational Level of Parents. Their Attitude Toward Education and the Educational Achievement of the Child," (Guelph, Ontario: Master of Science in Agriculture Thesis, 1963).

²see particularly Joseph A. Kahl, "Educational and Occupational Aspirations of 'Common Man' Boys," Harvard Educational Review, Vol. XXIII, No. III, cited in Frank E. Jones, op. cit., p. 39, wherein it was discovered that parents of working class boys who emphasized education had more likelihood of their sons planning a college education. Also, William R. Morrow and Robert C. Wilson, "Family Relations of Bright High-Achieving and Under-Achieving High School Boys," Child Development, Vol. XXXII (1961), cited by Frank E. Jones, op. cit., p. 40; this study indicates that a comparison of high scholastic achievers and under-achievers showed that parents of high-achievers were more likely to encourage scholastic achievement than parents of under-achievers, and there was a greater acceptance of parental standards by high-achievers than by under-achievers.

relates to a high degree of achievement in school.

The most striking impact of attempting to review the literature related to our study, is the discovery of a lack of over-all integration in the field of educational research and vast gaps in knowledge particularly in the area of Canadian education. The latter may be attributable to the fact that there is not a federal department in Education, and hence, there does not exist a body with substantial financial resources to support efforts in the field of educational research in Canada. In the same sense without a central planning body to integrate the efforts of researchers, we can expect a continuation of the diverse and unrelated research which has left vast gaps in current knowledge.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

As was stated in Chapter I, this was a study of variations in educational experience between parents of children whose school performance is satisfactory and parents of children whose school performance is unsatisfactory. The study was set in an environmentally deprived area of the City of Winnipeg, and involved parents whose children were enrolled in grades one through three.

As noted in Chapter I, the basis for considering the areas in which a study took place as "environmentally deprived" was their designation by the planning Division of the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg as regions in transition which fall below accepted socio-economic standards.

The three major areas to be tested were: parental educational level, parental educational aspiration level, and parental attitudes toward their own educational experience. The general method was to delineate the two groupings, i.e. parents of satisfactory school performers and parents of unsatisfactory school performers, and to compare and contrast these two groupings relative to the three major areas of concern noted above.

Data for the delineation of the two groupings came from the Winnipeg School Division through the Research Director, Mr. Duncan. In

providing a sample of children whose parents were to be tested, the Winnipeg School Division also provided an assessment by the classroom teacher of the child's school performance, i.e. either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Further data, upon which the two groupings of parents were compared and contrasted, was obtained from a schedule prepared by the researchers which was administered on a face-to-face basis to the parents of the school children in the sample.

The sample, which totalled seventy-four children in grades one through three who were attending schools located in the environmentally deprived area in which the study took place, was provided by Mr. Duncan, Research Director of the Winnipeg School Division.

A sample of approximately eighty children, divided equally between children performing satisfactorily and children performing unsatisfactorily was requested by the Research Committee of the School of Social Work. This was considered adequate both in providing a sufficient sample size for study, as well as providing an adequate number of interviewees to afford all students engaged in work at the Masters degree level at the School of Social Work an opportunity to engage in research interviewing.

Mr. Duncan enlisted the cooperation of four schools¹ in the "environmentally deprived" area in providing the sample. The principals of the four schools were instrumental in having classroom teachers in the grades being studied designate a number of students who were performing

¹ Hereafter designated Schools A, B, C, and D.

satisfactorily and a number who were performing unsatisfactorily; the satisfactory performers were performing above average, while the unsatisfactory performers were performing below average in the classroom.

The four schools each provided approximately one-quarter of the total sample; School A provided the names and addresses of seven children performing satisfactorily and eight children performing unsatisfactorily; School B provided the names and addresses of ten children performing satisfactorily and eleven children performing unsatisfactorily; School C provided the names and addresses of six children performing satisfactorily and ten children performing unsatisfactorily; School D provided the names and addresses of twelve children performing satisfactorily and ten children performing unsatisfactorily. The total sample, comprised of the fifteen children from School A, the twenty-one children from School B, the sixteen children from School C, and the twenty-two children from School D, was seventy-four children in grades one through three of which thirty-five were performing satisfactorily and thirty-nine unsatisfactorily.

Of the original sample of seventy-four children, the parents of forty-seven were interviewed and included in the study. The parent or parents of each child in the sample were approached once or twice to introduce the study, and appointments were arranged to administer the schedule. A letter of appreciation from the Research Director of the School of Social Work was sent to participating parents. Twenty families, upon contact, were not interested in participating in the study, three families could not be located, and four families were eliminated

from the sample. Of the latter four families, in three instances the child was not living with his or her own parents, and in the fourth instance the child was enrolled in kindergarten according to the parents. The final sample studied consisted of the parents of twenty children who were performing satisfactorily and the parents of twenty-seven children who were performing unsatisfactorily.

The schedule was pre-tested by administering it to fourteen families whose children were enrolled in grades four through six in Schools B and C. From the pre-test one change was made in the sequence of questions in the schedule. This change having been completed, the schedule was considered operative. A copy of the revised schedule may be found in the Appendix.

A face sheet upon which data relevant to the interpretation of the findings of the study could be placed was compiled by the Project Director of the School of Social Work from suggestions submitted by the four groups conducting the total research study of which this study is one part. A copy of the face sheet is included in the Appendix.

The schedule was constructed to provide the necessary information for the study of the three sub-hypotheses. The parents, i.e. fathers and mothers, of the children were both interviewed where possible and an identical schedule used for each. This was done since the researchers were unable to find an adequate means of combining the two parental responses to derive a unified measurable quantity and/or quality of response.

Question 1 on the schedule was intended to provide a grade level,

and was asked as "What was the last grade you passed in school?" so that the response would be a grade level of achievement rather than the number of years spent in school by the respondent.

In order to place responses to question 1 on a consistent scale, it was necessary to ask the respondent where he or she had passed the last grade in their schooling. Responses which were not within the Province of Manitoba had to be equated with or translated into grade levels consistent with those in vogue in the province. Questions 6 and 7 were intended to establish the educational aspiration level of the respondent. The respondents were offered two possible answers in question 6,- either they reached the grade they wanted, or they had wanted to go further. In this manner it was reasoned that all possible responses could be accounted for by both categories. Respondents who had "wanted to go further" were asked to specify a grade level for their aspirations, and while it was acknowledged that some people would have difficulty in being this specific, it was deemed necessary to obtain a measurable quantity.

Question 11 was intended to establish a predominant attitude toward school on the part of the respondent. A five point rating scale was presented by the interviewer upon which the respondent could place his or her "feeling" toward school. The researchers acknowledged the difficulty inherent in attempting to research attitudes, and arrived at the rating scale as a means of eliminating the necessity of the research interviewer making a judgement upon material the interviewee might present attitudinally.

While the basic data required to test the three sub-hypotheses was obtained primarily in questions 1, 6 and 7, and 11, the researchers felt it necessary to ask further questions in order to establish the reliability of responses and to gain information necessary for interpretation of the basic data. All questions seemed to relate to this duality of purpose.

The schedule in this study (in Appendix) was combined with those of the other three groups engaged in the total study in the areas of educational motivation and cultural stimulation. The four schedules, thus combined, together with the face sheet, were administered to the parents of the forty-seven children who comprised the final sample.

In a series of group meetings the schedule was presented question by question to the interviewers who comprise the class in the Master of Social Work programme at the School of Social Work, University of Manitoba. In this way as much standardization as is possible with such a large number of interviewers (cf. 47) was derived. The number of interviewers engaged in administering the schedule posed a limitation related to the reliability of the data derived as respondents may have been affected by personal qualities of the interviewers or personal interpretation given particular questions by the interviewers.

Each research interviewer was provided a letter from the Chairman of the Research Committee of the School of Social Work to facilitate introduction of the study and the interviewer to the parents of the children in the sample. It was made explicit to the interviewers, at the request of the Winnipeg School Division, that the parents were not to be

informed of the schools' participation in the project; hence, a general question was posed when approaching parents, e.g. "Do you have any school children in grades one, two, or three?". If the answer was "Yes.", (which was already known), the parents were asked if they would be willing to participate in the study. In this manner the confidential nature of the Winnipeg School Division's participation was maintained.

The interviewers were not informed whether the parents they were to interview had a child performing satisfactorily or unsatisfactorily; hence, an attempt was made to eliminate biases toward one or the other grouping on the part of the research interviewer.

The data obtained was considered as it related to the primary goal of comparing and contrasting the educational experience of the parents of children performing satisfactorily in school and the educational experience of the parents of children performing unsatisfactorily in school.

The information whether the child of the parents interviewed was performing satisfactorily or unsatisfactorily was placed on the face sheet upon return of the completed schedules and face sheets. These were thence divided into two categories: parents of satisfactory performers, and parents of unsatisfactory performers. In each derivation of data, responses of mothers and those of fathers were kept separately in each grouping, i.e. fathers of satisfactory performers and mothers of satisfactory performers, fathers of unsatisfactory performers and mothers of unsatisfactory performers.

The two groupings were tested for the quality of a high level of education. Parents who had responded that the last grade they had passed was grade nine or a higher grade (in terms of the Manitoba educational system) were considered to have a high educational level. The proportion of parents of children whose school performance is satisfactory having a high educational level was thence compared with the proportion of parents of children whose school performance is unsatisfactory having a high educational level. (Sub-hypothesis I)

The same two groupings were tested for the quality of a high level of educational aspiration. Parents who had responded that they had reached the grade they had wanted to reach (Question 6) were considered to have fulfilled their aspirations and hence were rated on the level of education achieved. Those who wanted to go further (Question 6) were rated on the grade level they stated they "wanted to get to" (Question 7). Those whose rating was grade nine or above (in terms of the Manitoba educational system) were considered to have a high level of educational aspiration. The proportion of parents of children whose school performance is satisfactory having a high educational aspiration level was compared with the proportion of parents of children whose school performance is unsatisfactory having a high educational aspiration level. (Sub-hypothesis II)

The two groupings, i.e. parents of satisfactory performers and parents of unsatisfactory performers, were tested for possession of a positive attitude toward their educational experience. Parents responding to Question 11 in the "liked very much" or "liked" categories were

considered to possess a positive attitude toward their educational experience. The proportion of parents of children whose school performance is satisfactory having a positive attitude toward their educational experience was compared with the proportion of parents of children whose school performance is unsatisfactory having a positive attitude toward their educational experience. (Sub-hypothesis III)

Data is presented in Chapter IV in tabular form. Relevant data from the face sheet and data considered an aid to interpreting findings are also found in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

As noted in Chapter III, the final sample interviewed consisted of the parents of forty-seven children,- twenty of which children were performing satisfactorily and twenty-seven of which were performing unsatisfactorily in school.

Amongst parents of the children performing satisfactorily, two fathers had separated from the family and four fathers were not available to be interviewed. Of the remaining fourteen fathers for whom data was available, five schedules were completed by mothers on behalf of their spouse; a decision was made to include data from these five schedules pertaining to grade level achieved, but not to include data in the more subjective areas of aspirations and attitudes.

Amongst parents of the children performing unsatisfactorily, eleven fathers had separated from the family by divorce or separation and one father was hospitalized and unavailable to be interviewed. Of the total of fifteen fathers for whom data was available, four schedules were completed by mothers on behalf of their spouse; a similar rationale as that employed for inclusion or exclusion of data in such schedules in the grouping of fathers of satisfactory performers was employed.

Three fathers for whom data was fully or partially available were in reality common-law spouses of the child's mother, however, were deemed

to be currently performing the role of male parent.

One mother of a child performing unsatisfactorily was unavailable to be interviewed which reduced the total responses in that grouping of mothers from twenty-seven to twenty-six.

The researchers tabulated the educational levels of the two groupings of parents in order to compare and contrast the parents of satisfactory performers and the parents of unsatisfactory performers. It was necessary to equate several responses, i.e. grade levels, which were from outside Canada with the standards currently in vogue in the educational system in Manitoba. Responses noting grade levels of achievement in Italy, Hungary, France, Poland, Palestine, Roumania and Finland were included in the tabulation. In each instance community resources who had personal experience in the country in question were asked to evaluate responses and relate them to the Manitoba educational system. In no instance did the translated grade level vary enough to change its categorization, i.e. either high level of educational achievement (grade nine and above), or not high level of educational achievement (below grade nine).

In comparing the proportions of mothers and fathers of the two parental groupings relative to a high level of education, it was found that there was a higher proportion of parents of satisfactory performers than parents of unsatisfactory performers who achieved a high level of education. Comparative data is presented in Tables 1 and 1A.

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN PERFORMING SATISFACTORILY IN SCHOOL ACCORDING TO THE LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

	Fathers		Mothers		Total Parents	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	14 ^a	100	20	100	34	100
High (grade 9 and up)	9	64.3	9	45.0	18	52.9
Not High (below grade 9)	5	35.7	11	55.0	16	47.1

^a included 5 schedules responded to by wife.

TABLE 1A

DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN PERFORMING UNSATISFACTORILY IN SCHOOL ACCORDING TO THE LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

	Fathers		Mothers		Total Parents	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	15 ^a	100	26	100	41	100
High (grade 9 and up)	4	26.7	7	26.9	11	26.8
Not High (below grade 9)	11	73.3	19	73.1	30	73.2

^a included 4 schedules responded to by wife.

Familial Education Level (Questions 15 and 16)

Many respondents interviewed did not know the grade level attained by their parents. Five parents (17.3%) of satisfactory performers had at least one parent who had achieved a grade level of nine or higher. Thirteen parents (35.1%) of unsatisfactory performers had at least one parent who had achieved a grade level of nine or higher.

When indicating the highest grade level attained by a sibling, sixteen parents (55.2%) of children performing satisfactorily noted at least one sibling who had achieved a grade level of nine or higher. Amongst parents of children performing unsatisfactorily, twenty-three (62.2%) indicated that at least one sibling had achieved a grade level of nine or higher.

This comparison would indicate that the familial level of educational achievement was high in a greater proportion of parents of children performing unsatisfactorily than parents of satisfactory performers.

Failure Rate (Question 4 and 5)

Twenty-three (79.3%) of the parents of satisfactory performers had not failed a grade during their schooling; six (one father and five mothers) had failed a single grade.

Of the thirty-five parents of unsatisfactory performers able to respond, two mothers had not attended school, twenty-four (68.6%) had not failed a grade during their schooling; eleven parents (three fathers and eight mothers) had failed at least one grade, and three of the mothers in this grouping had failed more than once. Notable in the grouping of

parents of children performing unsatisfactorily was a couple where the father had failed once and the mother four times.

The grouping of parents with children performing satisfactorily in school had less incidence of school failure than the grouping of parents with children performing unsatisfactorily. This finding would support the earlier data presented, wherein the same grouping showed a greater proportion of high level achievers than the grouping of parents of unsatisfactory performers.

School Leaving (Question 3)

In examining the reasons for leaving school, it was found that many respondents encountered barriers to further education in the form of finances, war, or strained familial situations. Nineteen parents (65.5%) of satisfactory performers, as compared with eighteen parents (51.4%) of unsatisfactory performers left school because of barriers external to self.

The educational aspiration levels of both grouping of parents were tabulated. A majority of both the parents of the satisfactory performers and the parents of the unsatisfactory performers indicated aspirations for self at the grade nine or above level; however, the proportion of parents of satisfactory performers in this category was higher than the proportion of parents of unsatisfactory performers. Responses of the two groupings of fathers were particularly disproportionate in this direction. Tables 2 and 2A present the material for comparison and contrast.

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN PERFORMING SATISFACTORILY IN SCHOOL ACCORDING TO EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION LEVEL

	Fathers		Mothers		Total Parents	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	7 ^a	100	17 ^b	100	24	100
High (grade 9 and up)	6	85.7	14	82.4	20	83.3
Not High (below grade 9)	1	14.3	3	17.6	4	16.7

^a excluded 5 schedules responded to by wife and 2 respondents who did not answer question.

^b 3 respondents did not answer question.

TABLE 2A

DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN PERFORMING UNSATISFACTORILY IN SCHOOL ACCORDING TO EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION LEVEL

	Fathers		Mothers		Total Parents	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	11 ^a	100	25 ^b	100	36	100
High (grade 9 and up)	7	63.6	18	72.0	25	69.4
Not High (below grade 9)	4	36.4	7	28.0	11	30.6

^a excluded 4 schedules responded to by wife.

^b 1 respondent who had not attended school felt unable to answer questions.

Reasons for Wanting to go Further in School (Question 8)

Twenty-one of the sixty-four parents interviewed who had attended school "reached the grade they wanted to get to". Of those who aspired to go further in school, twenty-five respondents viewed further education as a means of occupational and/or financial gain, and nine showed a positive orientation toward further schooling for its own sake.

All of the fathers, in both groupings, viewed education as a means to an end. Two (13.3%) of the mothers of unsatisfactory performers, as compared with seven (50%) of the mothers of satisfactory performers who answered this question valued education as an end in itself. This alliance of half of the mothers of satisfactory performers with the value upon education espoused by the school system would seem significant.

Further Training (Questions 9 and 10)

Eight of twenty-nine parents (27.6%) of satisfactory performers took further training after completing their formal schooling. Three of the fathers (33.3%) and five of the mothers (25.0%) took such training as up-grading courses, mechanics, hairdressing and nurses aide training.

Of thirty-seven parents of unsatisfactory performers, nine (24.3%) had taken training after completion of formal schooling. Six of the fathers (54.5%) in this grouping and three of the mothers (11.5%) took such training as an automotive course, up-grading courses, commercial courses and a nursing assistant training course.

It is of interest to note the high percentage of fathers of unsatisfactory performers who pursued a form of training since they were

the lowest grouping in considering proportions aspiring to a high level of educational achievement.

Aspirations for Child (Question 18).

A greater proportion of parents of satisfactory performers (79.3%) were able to cite a specific goal for their child than were the parents of unsatisfactory performers (67.6%)

Ten parents (34.5%) of satisfactory performers had high school goals established for their child, while thirteen (44.8%) noted a university education as a goal. Six parents (20.7%) in this grouping were non-specific eg. "as far as he is able".

Thirteen parents of unsatisfactory performers (35.2%) indicated a high school goal for their child, while twelve (32.4%) mentioned university as a goal. Twelve parents (32.4%) were non-specific.

In comparing and contrasting attitudes of parents toward their own education in the two groupings, it was found that a greater proportion of parents of satisfactory performers than parents of unsatisfactory performers had a positive attitude toward their own educational experience. Mothers of unsatisfactory performers were particularly non-positive in relation to other groupings. Data is presented in Tables 3 and 3A.

In attempting to validate and check on the reliability of the attitudinal responses in Tables 3 and 3A, predominant attitudes toward teachers, subjects and peers while in school were tested. A high percentage of positive responses in all three areas was elicited.

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN PERFORMING SATISFACTORILY IN SCHOOL ACCORDING TO PREDOMINANT ATTITUDE TOWARD THEIR OWN EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

	Fathers		Mothers		Total Parents	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	9 ^a	100	20	100	29	100
Positive Attitude	7	77.8	14	70.0	21	72.4
Not Positive (including neutral)	2	22.2	6	30.0	8	27.6

^a excludes 5 schedules responded to by wife.

TABLE 3A

DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN PERFORMING UNSATISFACTORILY IN SCHOOL ACCORDING TO PREDOMINANT ATTITUDE TOWARD THEIR OWN EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

	Fathers		Mothers		Total Parents	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	11 ^a	100	24 ^b	100	35	100
Positive Attitude	8	72.7	14	58.3	22	62.9
Not Positive (including neutral)	3	27.3	10	41.7	13	37.1

^a excluded schedules responded to by wife.

^b 2 mothers had no schooling upon which to base attitudes.

It was interesting to note that of these parents specifying a non-positive attitude (neutral or dislike) toward their own schooling, five specified all of the three areas tested as positive, thus, seemingly not accounting for their non-positive predominant attitude. Four who indicated a positive attitude toward their school experience, noted one or two areas of non-positive attitude in three areas tested.

Attitude Toward Teachers (Question 12)

Amongst parents of satisfactory performers 96.6% (28/29) "liked" their teachers; the one dissenter was a mother who "didn't know".

A greater range of feeling was noted amongst parents of unsatisfactory performers; 80% (28/35) of parents "liked" their teachers. One father and one mother "disliked" the teachers, and one father and four mothers "didn't know".

Attitude Toward Subjects Taught (Question 13)

Subject matter received a less positive response than did teachers from parents of satisfactory performers; 86.2% (25/29) of these parents "liked" the subjects they were taught. The dissenters were four mothers of which two "disliked" the subjects and two "didn't know".

The same percentage, 80%, of the parents of unsatisfactory performers as "liked" teachers, "liked" the subjects they were taught, however, these were not the same twenty-eight respondents in both instances as six parents rated the two areas differently. Non-positive responses were given by one father ("didn't know") and six mothers (1 "disliked",

5 "didn't know").

Attitudes Toward Peers (Question 14)

Amongst parents of satisfactory performers, 89.7% (26/29) "liked" their peers; two mothers disliked their peers while in school and one mother was uncertain, i.e. "didn't know".

Amongst parents of unsatisfactory performers, 82.9% (29/35) "liked" their peers; one mother disliked her peers, and one father and four mothers were uncertain.

Perception of Change in School (Question 17)

This question was asked in order to attempt to assess the parents' perception of school today and its relationship to school at the time of their attendance. Attitudinal responses were expected, however, the researchers, after attempting to categorize the plethora of responses elicited found that little clarity could be achieved. It was felt that the question was not specific enough for the purpose for which it was intended.

Face Sheet Data

Three significant areas emerged from a derivation of data from the face sheet: broken home incidence, mobility, and income level. The two groupings of parents were compared in each area and tabulated data is found in Appendix B.

- (1) Broken Homes: Families of children performing unsatisfactorily showed a higher incidence (48.2%) of broken homes (divorced,

separated or common-law union) than did families of children performing satisfactorily (15.0%).

- (2) Mobility: Families of children performing satisfactorily had a mean number of residences in past five years of 1.85 including current residence; results in this grouping ranged from eleven families who had lived in the same residence during the past five years to one family who had four residences in the same period.

Families of children performing unsatisfactorily had a 2.11 mean number of residence in the past five years; range was from ten families who lived in the same residence for the entire five years to a family who "could not remember how often they moved", but indicated it was well over four. In deriving a mean this latter family was given a rating of five residences.

- (3) Income Level: Income levels for the families with a satisfactory performer were appreciably higher. Most notable is the number and percentage of families in the grouping consisting of families of unsatisfactory performers who fall below a \$3,000 per annum income - fifteen families (55.6%); comparatively, only four families (20%) of families of the children performing satisfactorily fell below this level.

Conclusions resulting from this data both in terms of the hypotheses of this study and otherwise will follow in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

This study was of a descriptive nature, and the researchers' intent was to compare and contrast the educational experience of parents whose children are performing satisfactorily with the educational experience of parents whose children are performing unsatisfactorily. The context of the study was the problem of education in environmentally deprived areas, and thus, all parents and children included in the study resided in areas so designated.

The purpose of the study was to ascertain the possibility of there being a relationship between the educational experience of parents and the motivation demonstrated by their child through his or her school performance.

The hypothesis tested was: In the families of selected elementary school children living in environmentally deprived areas of Winnipeg, there are variations in educational experience between parents of children whose school performance is satisfactory and parents of children whose school performance is unsatisfactory.

The findings as a whole substantiate the major hypothesis since variations did appear between the two groupings of parents in the three major areas tested. The direction of this variation and the generalizations deriving from it will be dealt with after considering the findings

pertaining to the three sub-hypotheses.

The first sub-hypothesis stated: A greater proportion of parents of children whose school performance is satisfactory than parents of children whose school performance is unsatisfactory have a high educational level. The findings supported this sub-hypothesis in that a greater proportion of the parents of satisfactory performers than the parents of unsatisfactory performers had attained a grade level of nine or above. The variation seemed great enough (almost 2:1) to substantiate the sub-hypothesis and led to a consideration of the significance of the perceived difference between the two groupings of parents.

Relating the educational level of the parents to the child's demonstrated motivation, i.e. performance, it is possible to suggest that those parents possessing a high level of education provide a more positive educational role model than do those parents not having a high level of education. Thus, the higher proportion of such positive role models amongst parents of children performing satisfactorily would seem to suggest that the parent's possession of a high level of education may have motivational benefits for the child.

In reviewing the literature, it was also suggested that amongst lower-class people a lack of practical "know-how" about education often stands in the way of the parents giving adequate direction or assistance to their children in coping with the demands of the school system. In viewing the higher proportion of parents of satisfactory performers having a high educational level, it could be suggested that practical "know-how" may be directly related to education achievement, thus placing

the unsatisfactory performers at a disadvantage due to the lower proportion of their parents who possess such educational "know-how".

In either instance -"role model" or "know-how"-, the parents of satisfactory performers appear as more adequate than the parents of the unsatisfactory performers.

One of the most interesting findings was that related to familial education level, wherein a greater proportion of the parents of children performing unsatisfactorily than parents of children performing satisfactorily came from families where at least one parent and/or one sibling achieved a grade level of nine or above. This seemed to show a reversal in trend in view of the higher ratings by parents of satisfactory performers in most areas tested. From this, it might be suggested that the parents of the satisfactory performers represent an upward educational mobility, while the parents of the unsatisfactory performers demonstrate either a static or downward mobility in education which results in either high expectations for the child (parents of satisfactory performers) or low or uncertain expectations for the child (parents of unsatisfactory performers).

The second sub-hypothesis stated: A greater proportion of parents of children whose school performance is satisfactory than parents of children whose school performance is unsatisfactory had a high educational aspiration level. The findings supported this sub-hypothesis in that a greater proportion of the parents of satisfactory performers than parents of unsatisfactory performers had aspired to a grade level of nine or above.

While it was acknowledged by the researchers that circumstances and values of both a personal and societal nature have changed between the time the respondents left school and the time they were interviewed, it was felt that all parents interviewed were subject to such influences, thus not distorting the comparison of the two groupings regarding their aspirations at the time they left school. The difference between the two groupings was not as pronounced as in comparisons regarding educational levels, and both groupings of parents indicated a majority who aspired to grade nine or above.

The focus on parental aspirations for self is based on the idea that motivation is transitional, and hence, parents with high personal aspirations would transmit these to their children. The greater proportion of parents of satisfactory performers than parents of unsatisfactory performers having high aspirations for self would support the suggestion that the former grouping tends to develop greater motivation in its children.

Both groupings of parents demonstrated high expectations for their children which is a societally sanctioned valuation of education. However, half of the mothers of the satisfactory performers showed a valuation of education for its own sake which is consistent with a middle-class orientation and coincides with the values generally ascribed to the school system. The fact that a much lesser proportion than one half of the mothers of unsatisfactory performers held to such a "middle-class" orientation would seem to indicate that the type of value placed upon education may be a pivotal factor in considering motivation transmitted.

from parent to child.

The third sub-hypothesis stated: A greater proportion of parents of children whose school performance is satisfactory than parents of children whose school performance is unsatisfactory have a positive attitude toward their educational experience. The findings supported this sub-hypothesis, however, not to the extent that either the first or second sub-hypotheses were supported.

The parents of all children, both those performing satisfactorily and those performing unsatisfactorily, showed a high proportion of positive responses; the researchers felt that the fact that the study was introduced to the respondents as being conducted by the University of Manitoba and that the interviewers were university students may have predisposed the respondents to positive attitudinal responses in order to meet expectations implicit in the situation. Upon further study, however, the variability of many respondents in rating their attitudes on teachers, subject matter and peers would indicate a freedom on their part to express negative or neutral feelings toward school generally.

The slightly higher proportion of the parents of children performing satisfactorily than parents of children performing unsatisfactorily would suggest that the child's motivation in pursuing his school work may be affected by parental attitudes that are conveyed to the child in normal parent-child interactions.

In reference to the major hypothesis it is readily discernable from the conclusions related to the three sub-hypotheses tested that a greater proportion of the parents of children whose school performance

is satisfactory than the parents of children whose school performance is unsatisfactory possess education levels, convey aspirations and enunciate attitudes which would positively affect a child's motivation in school. The direction of the variations in educational experience herein noted would seem to lend support to a conjecture that the parents of the satisfactorily performing children present attributes and attitudes which would serve to motivate their children to perform well in school, while the parents of the unsatisfactorily performing children present these same positive attributes and attitudes to a lesser extent. Further research will be necessary to confirm or substantiate such a statement.

Some of the limitations as to reliability and validity of the findings in this study have already been suggested in earlier chapters - the size of the sample and the manner in which it was derived, the use of only students in grades one through three, the assessment of the children's performances at one fixed point in time, and the lack of adequate means of verifying responses of those interviewed.

While these factors must be considered in deriving conclusions from the findings, they do not obscure or detract from the general validity of the study as a descriptive instrument. While the limited number of responses in some categories and groupings in the analysis of data tended to distort percentages, this was borne in mind in attempting to stress the speculative nature of conclusions derived, and the emphasis upon the need for further research in this particular area to refine or revise the results of this study.

As well as providing data for a comparison of the two parental

groups studied, the study also lent itself to a better understanding of education in environmentally deprived areas. The high incidence of mobility, broken homes and low income amongst families of the children performing unsatisfactorily would seem an appropriate area for further research and intervention.

One must be impressed with the high aspirations many of the parents interviewed held for their children, as well as the relatively large number who themselves had aspired to education beyond that which they achieved. The fact that many of the parents interviewed encountered barriers to further education of a financial nature would seem to indicate the necessity of insuring financing - and adequate financing - to assist families in order to help maintain children in school as long as they show ability and motivation. Recent changes in Family Allowance legislation to allow payment to families with children aged sixteen to eighteen years who are still in school is only a beginning step in the right direction.

Basically, the parents of unsatisfactory performers showed characteristics generally attributed to people in deprived areas - view of education as means to employment, high aspirations and relatively positive attitudes toward school, but a limited educational level. The grouping of parents whose children were performing satisfactorily seemed to demonstrate some middle-class orientation - value of education for its own sake, higher income than their unsatisfactory counterparts and a relatively higher level of education than the parents of the unsatisfactory performers. The value base and attributes of the satisfactory

performers' parents would seem more attuned to the expectations of the school system.

Further research will be necessary to expand upon and refine the results of this study. It is hoped that this study will prove valuable as a contribution to the well of knowledge available to professionals and others in the field of education in depressed areas, and that it may be an impetus to further research and activity in this important area.

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APPENDIX A

Schedule No. _____

PART I

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
Research Project 1965-66

Interviewer _____

Performance S U

Family Name _____

School A B C D

Address _____

<u>Family Members</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Living In Home</u>	
			Yes _____	No _____
Father	_____	_____	_____	_____
Mother	_____	_____	_____	_____
Children	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____

Marital Status (if one parent family) Divorced _____ Separated _____ Widowed _____

Others in Household: Relationship _____

Ethnic Origin - - - Father _____ Mother _____
(Language spoken by male ancestor on arrival in Canada)

Length of Residence at present address _____

Length of Residence in Winnipeg _____

(If appropriate) Where else have you lived in Winnipeg during past 5 years?

Father's Occupation _____

Mother's Occupation _____

Gross Family Income _____

Instructions to Interviewers

1. Interview both parents, together if possible.
2. Complete appropriate section for each parent.
3. Complete one schedule for father and one for mother.

1) What was the last grade you passed in school? _____

2) Where? _____

3) Why did you leave school at the time you completed this grade?

4) Did you repeat any grades? Yes _____ No _____

5) How many grades did you repeat? _____

6) When you left school had you reached the grade you wanted to reach, or did you want to go further?

Reached the grade you wanted? _____

Wanted to go further? _____

7) If you wanted to go further what grade did you want to get to? _____

8) Why did you want to go further? _____

9) Have you taken any courses since leaving school?

Yes _____ No _____

10) If yes, what course(s)? _____

N.B. Interviewer: For questions 11 - 14 present all alternatives and check (v) appropriate response.

- 11) Which of the following best describes the way you feel about your school experience?
- Disliked very much _____ Disliked _____
- Neutral _____ Liked _____
- Liked very much _____
- 12) How did you feel about your teachers?
- Liked _____ Disliked _____
- Don't know _____
- 13) How did you feel about the subjects you were taught?
- Liked _____ Disliked _____
- Don't know _____
- 14) How did you feel about the other students?
- Liked _____ Disliked _____
- Don't know _____
- 15) What was the last grade completed by
- your mother? _____ your father? _____
- 16) What was the highest grade obtained among your brothers and sisters? _____
- 17) Do you think that school is different today from when you attended?
- Yes _____ No _____ Don't know _____
- If yes, in what way? _____
- 18) How far do you want your child to go in school? _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

APPENDIX B

TABLE I

DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILIES ACCORDING
TO MARITAL STATUS OF PARENTS

	Married	Divorced	Separated	Common Law Union	Total
Families of satis- factory performers	17	0	2	1	20
Families of unsatis- factory performers	14	2	9	2	27

TABLE II

DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILIES ACCORDING TO
NUMBER OF RESIDENCES IN PAST FIVE YEARS

	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Families of satis- factory performers	11	4	3	1	1	20
Families of unsatis- factory performers	10	9	5	1	2 ^a	27

^a includes 1 family who "moved more than four times".

TABLE III

DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILIES ACCORDING
TO ANNUAL INCOME LEVEL

	Under \$3,000	\$3,000- \$3,999	\$4,000- \$4,999	\$5,000- \$5,999	\$6,000 & over	Total
Families of satis- factory performers	4	5	4	6	1	20
Families of unsatis- factory performers	15	4	3	4	1	27