

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN A DEPRIVED AREA IN THE
CITY OF WINNIPEG AND THEIR ATTENDANCE AT
CULTURALLY STIMULATING ACTIVITIES

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by

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ABSTRACT

This is a descriptive study of a selected sample of forty-seven elementary school children, twenty of whom were successful and twenty-seven of whom were unsuccessful school performers. All the children concerned within this study lived in an environmentally deprived area of the City of Winnipeg. The study was undertaken in order to consider the relationship between attendance at culturally stimulating activities, outside the home and school performance.

Information was obtained through face-to-face interviews with parents of the children in the sample group. The interviews were based on a schedule of questions prepared by the research group and designed to query attendance in four specific areas of culturally stimulating activities: religious activities, use of library facilities, and secular activities inside and outside of the immediate community.

The findings revealed that successful school performance was positively related to the child's use of library facilities and to attendance at secular activities located outside the immediate community. Successful performance was found to be negatively related to religious activities, and attendance at secular activities within the immediate community.

Overall, the findings of the study were inconclusive as two of the areas selected as culturally stimulating were found to be negatively

related to satisfactory school performance and two were found to be positively related.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Unsuccessful school performance is a daily problem which must be dealt with in the education system. It is usually the effects of unsuccessful school performance which involve social workers because of breakdown in social functioning. The reasons for unsuccessful school performance are many and often it is a combination of reasons which explain a child's performance in school. School curricula and the teaching methods have been questioned and revised in order to provide what the schools consider the best they have to offer. Often the reasons for poor school performance may be found in the child himself, in his home, in his environment or a combination of all these factors. Detailed reasons will be dealt with in the review of literature.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether there is a connection between the school performance of environmentally deprived children and their culturally stimulating activities. This study was conducted by a group of twelve social work students in their Masters year, 1965-66 at the University of Manitoba. It was only one part of the total study carried out by three other groups. The other groups dealt with the following aspects of the life style of families in environmentally deprived areas; parental experience with education, cultural experiences within the home and the child's experience with education.

With today's stress on education, the unsuccessful school performance of any child becomes a concern because of the detrimental long-range effects it can have. Today in Canada, one out of every twelve Canadians over fifteen are illiterate according to the 1961 census.¹

The child who is unsuccessful in school at an early age may become discouraged and disgusted and may eventually become a school drop-out. Society is becoming increasingly specialized and advance education and training are necessary in order to have a job which will provide a living. Lack of education is one of the reasons that men have difficulty finding jobs. The 1961 census also says that about one-half of the unemployed have not finished primary school and less than ten per cent have completed high school.²

The unsuccessful school child may be the potential delinquent, finding that he cannot attain the things he wants by having a job and earning money, he may steal. Another long-range effect of poor school performance may be the potential alcoholic who turns to liquor to mask the problems that he cannot face. In any case, the child who is unsuccessful in school at an early age and continues to be so may end up being a burden to society. A burden which could have possibly been prevented in those early days of elementary school.

In the past, education was not as important as it is today. Workers previously received on-the-job training. They were apprenticed to a trade and they held the same job throughout their lives. This

¹ "1 Out of 12 Canadians Illiterate", Winnipeg Free Press, Dec. 8, 1965, p. 1.

² "Poor Get Poorer," Winnipeg Free Press, Dec. 8, 1965, p. 11.

existed before industrialization and no longer exists today. Few industries today give on-the-job training, and if they do, it is for the lesser jobs and once the individual loses his job, he can only do that one job and doesn't have the qualifications for another.

The specific focus of this study was the culturally stimulating activities outside the home in which environmentally deprived children can participate.

Differences in the child rearing practices between the lower class family and the middle class family may account for what the children do in their leisure time.

Theoretically, every man has a right to education and it is through education that poverty can be lessened. Education is seen as the gateway to success.

Recognizing the problems of the environmentally deprived child in school, one of the junior high schools which is part of the physical area of this study has begun a Higher Horizons Program to help these children with their school work by providing extra remedial classes and a place to do their homework amongst other things.

The physical area with which this study was concerned was and still is considered to be a blighted area by the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg.³ Much of it is marked for rebuilding or spot clearance accompanied by rehabilitation. A high proportion of the housing consists of multi-family dwellings or small houses which are close together. Most of this housing is penetrated by industry which

³ Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg Planning Division, 1962. Census tracts #19, #22, #12, #23.

creates heavy truck traffic which children must contend with in order to get to the nearest school. This area lacks adequate playground and park facilities.

This study was concerned with elementary school children from environmentally deprived areas and their culturally stimulating activities outside their homes. The children, male and female, successful and unsuccessful who made up the sample group, came from four schools and were in grades I-III. They were chosen by the classroom teachers.

A major limitation in this study is that the sample was selected rather than being a random sample. The research group had nothing to do with the selection of the sample.

The fact that the health of the children in the selected sample was left out of this study limits its findings.

In some instances we were faced with interviewing only one parent from a two parent family and this limited the accuracy of responses and limited responses to the knowledge of the child's activities to the one parent present at the interview. In an interview with both parents there was a greater possibility of them accurately knowing what the child was doing in his leisure time.

The study did not directly take into account parental attitudes to participation in the activities identified in the schedule.

With our particular focus on culturally stimulating activities outside the home, as assigned to this research group by the Research Committee, the following major hypothesis was formulated: The successful or unsuccessful school performance of a selected group of elementary school children living in an environmentally deprived area

of Winnipeg is related to their attendance at culturally stimulating activities outside the home.

The following activities were selected for study: religious (religious instruction as well as religious services); use of library facilities (also includes use of reading material from other sources); secular activities inside of the immediate community (clubs, playgrounds, etc.); and secular activities outside of the immediate community (facilities available to the public from all areas of the City of Winnipeg).

These activities were chosen because the research group considered them to be culturally stimulating. They were chosen because attendance at them or use of them was considered to be measurable and they were experiences which took place outside of the home, some of which were not available in the immediate community.

The library and the church constitute major institutions in the community at which attendance is voluntary and the cost, if any, is minimal. Both types of institutions were available to these children.

The research group separated secular activities into two parts, inside and outside the immediate community because some of the secular activities considered culturally stimulating were not available in the immediate community. The research group felt that merely going out of the immediate community was more culturally stimulating than remaining in the immediate community. Even going down town could be considered culturally stimulating because the child is exposed to things which differ from what his own environment of home and street have to offer him.

Those activities outside the immediate community are middle class oriented as are the church and the library. They are usually established and operated by the middle class for the middle class.

The following are the sub-hypotheses formulated on the basis of the above considerations and in support of the main hypothesis:

1. A greater proportion of the successful children than the unsuccessful attend religious activities.
2. A greater proportion of the successful children than the unsuccessful use library facilities.
3. A greater proportion of the successful children than the unsuccessful attend secular activities inside of the immediate community.
4. A greater proportion of the successful children than the unsuccessful attend secular activities outside of the immediate community.

The following definitions of words will be used for the purposes of this study:

Not being able to list all the activities which could be considered culturally stimulating and the criteria for choosing them; the group has defined "culturally stimulating activities" as those activities which increase the child's interests and abilities in such areas as verbal and visual skills, abstract thinking, social inter-action and attention span. This definition is broad enough to cover the realm of experiences which individuals participate in or attend during their leisure time.

The research group saw the "immediate community" as that area

which encompasses all the homes of the sample group in which all daily living activities take place. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, the immediate community will be bounded by the following: Red River to Redwood Avenue; to Salter Street; to C.P.R. tracks; to McPhillips Street; to Notre Dame Avenue; to Balmoral Street; to Ellice Avenue; to Notre Dame Avenue; to Portage Avenue; to Main Street; to the C.P.R. tracks to the Red River. By extending the boundaries past the school district boundaries, a child who was just going across the street might be going out of the school district boundary and thus out of the immediate community in those terms, but still inside the immediate community according to the definitions.

"Religious activities" are those experiences which involve religious instruction and services, whether held within a religious institution or not. Some of the services and religious instruction in this area are conducted in other community buildings rather than in churches.

The group defined "library facilities" as being services that the public library provides. The library lends out films as well as books and magazines and also has a story hour for children. The library also provides for reading space and the assistance of the librarians.

"Secular activities" are those culturally stimulating experiences which are non-religious in nature. Some of these activities would include Neighbourhood Service Centre clubs, parks, vacation trips.

The "environmentally deprived area" is the area which was defined by the Planning Division of the Metropolitan Corporation of

Greater Winnipeg as being in transition and falling below socially accepted standards.

"Successful" school performance is that which was identified by the classroom teacher as being above average.

"Unsuccessful" school performance is that performance which is failing to meet the expectations of the school program, including both those who are having a lot of difficulty and some repeaters.

For the purposes of this study, certain basic assumptions had to be made.

It was assumed that each child from the sample group had equal opportunity to learn in the classroom situation. It was assumed that each child had the basic intellectual capacity to achieve.

It was assumed that parental responses to questions of the schedule were accurate. The research group was not allowed to check attendance records at activities or ask the children themselves.

Since the school is a middle class institution, run by middle class individuals, it is assumed that middle class values better enable a child to achieve in a middle class institution. One of the things which this study could find is that environmentally deprived children who hold middle class values are the ones who are the most successful in school.

A complete description of the method will be presented in Chapter III. The sources of data were parental responses to a face-to-face interview, using a schedule.

The face-to-face interview was used for gathering our data rather than a mailed questionnaire because a mailed questionnaire may be

forgotten by the recipients and not filled out or mailed back. The personal interview with the interviewer, scheduling a time when both parents were available, had more likelihood of getting dual parental responses. The schedule was pre-tested using a selected sample in November, 1965, and revisions were made.

In Chapter IV the analysis will be presented in detail. Responses were classified into two categories of successful and unsuccessful school performance and compared on the basis of what activities they attended.

It was hoped that this study would add to the knowledge of what environmentally deprived children do in their leisure time. This knowledge might be helpful to social group workers in planning future activities for this type of child, helpful to case workers working with children who are having difficulty in school and helpful to the school system which might be able to provide some of the culturally stimulating activities. The study might point out areas where culturally stimulating activities are needed and may lead to further research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The unsuccessful school performance of children who are capable of performing better is a problem which is of vital concern to today's educators. There are numerous explanations expounded by those authors who see this as a problem. For example, the following are seen as possible reasons for a child who is capable of achieving but not doing so, as expressed by Frank Riessman.¹ Lack of educational stimulation at home, few books, et cetera; inadequate motivation to pursue education for a career; poor estimation of personal ability which may be reinforced by a teacher's reaction to failure; discrimination in intelligence tests geared to the middle class child; antagonism toward teachers and schools; poor health, improper diet; frequent moving, noisy homes, no place to study; child not having the know-how of how to behave in school, how to ask questions, how to take tests; the curriculum which is geared to the middle class culture. Several of these reasons concern more than just the educators, they are of interest to social workers who think in terms of what unsuccessful school performance will mean to the child and his family now and in the future.

There have been many studies of the performance of children in

¹ Frank Riessman, The Culturally Deprived Child (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1962), pp. 3-5.

school from the educational point of view, concerned with teaching methods. One, for example, is John E. Robbins, *The Home and Family Background of Ottawa, Public School Children in Relation to Their I.Q.'s*.² However, there is very limited material using cultural deprivation to explain successful or unsuccessful school performance.

Frank Riessman's definition of culturally deprived was found to be useful for this study. He says that:

The term "culturally deprived" refers to those aspects of middle class culture such as education, books, formal³ language - from which these groups have not benefited.

The family is the basic unit of socialization for the child before he enters school. It is the family which teaches the child culturally determined ways of behaving and responding. In deprived areas there are certain basic and general characteristics of this culture which are necessary to know. Martin Deutsch says that the middle class culture provides more opportunities for normal growth and development and slum conditions are more likely to have a detrimental affect upon development of an individual's potential.⁴ This does not mean that the middle class is faultless, but in general it does provide more opportunity for successful school performance.

Frank Riessman says that culturally deprived children see little

² John E. Robbins, "The Home and Family Background of Ottawa, Public School Children in Relation to Their I.Q.'s", Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1946.

³ Ibid., p. 3.

⁴ Martin P. Deutsch, "The Disadvantaged Child and the Learning Process," Mental Health of the Poor, ed. Frank Riessman, Jerome Cohen and Arthur Pearl (Toronto: Collier-MacMillan Ltd., 1964), pp. 176-177.

value in formal academic routines⁵ e.g. raising one's hand to be acknowledged before speaking. In the average middle class home a child is taught what to do in school by his parents and older siblings so he will be prepared to know what to expect and what is expected of him. The environmentally deprived child may not be prepared for school and just being in school may require all his attention and effort so he has no energy to devote to learning. Martin Deutsch, in discussing the lower class, agrees that the child from this class enters school so poorly prepared to produce what the school demands that failures are almost inevitable and the school experience becomes more negative than positive. The middle class child, having been prepared for school can make a quicker and probably better adjustment. It is the school which must bridge the gap of school know-how from the lower class to middle class socialization.⁶

The popular notion is that parents of such children want them to finish their education as soon as possible and go out to work. It is also commonly believed that the children themselves have this attitude. But Frank Riessman, who has done studies on this says: "Education is desired by the culturally deprived more than is generally believed."⁷ Although many parents share in the larger value system of having high aspirations for their children, they are not aware of the steps required

⁵Riessman, op. cit. p. 1.

⁶Deutsch, op. cit. p. 72.

⁷Riessman, op. cit. p. 13.

to prepare a child to make use of the learning opportunities in school.

Frank Riessman says that education does not have the same meaning for the culturally deprived as it does for the middle class. The former are not interested in the opportunity for self-expression, self-realization and growth. He sees education in the terms of how useful it can be to him for getting a better job and providing a more secure future. He wants education so he can handle the red tape of bureaucracy which trips up his everyday life. The culturally deprived individual has respect for the physical non-symbolic approach to life and he values the scientific road to progress. He wants education so he can be knowledgeable about what is happening in the world around him. However, these motives for wanting education may be the exception and not the rule for these people. A large percentage of them hold the world responsible for their misfortunes. They want to get by and are not too interested in getting ahead, but they do want jobs with security. They are usually proud of their families and have an informal way of establishing relationships with people. They consider the man important, not his job. They like excitement and getting away from the monotony of everyday life.⁸

Frank Riessman says that the deprived child learns in a more physical motoric manner. He has difficulty with abstract thinking.⁹ The stories read in school seem foolish to this child because the experiences appear unreal. According to Allison Davis, middle class children will accept these foolish stories more readily because they

⁸ Ibid., pp. 13-26.

⁹ Ibid., p. 57.

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want to please parents and teachers.

If the child's peer group or family does not care about successful school performance, the child may conceal his good marks if he does receive them. He may be told by his peer group that studying is disgraceful and sissy stuff. He may be warned not to be taken in by the teacher or becoming teacher's pet. If a child is not rewarded by his family for good marks there is little motivation to keep him continuing this performance.

According to Frank Riessman, the homes of these children are crowded, busy, active, and noisy. No one child is the focus of all the attention because there are too many children and there is too little time to devote to the children. The children spend much time with each other or with relatives. Intense parent-child relationships are unlikely. The dangers of rejection are far more likely than that of overprotection. Sibling rivalry is less because the children get less attention and therefore have less to lose when another sibling is born. There is less jealousy and competitiveness and individualism is not encouraged.¹¹ The children don't learn to compete in the family and may have difficulty in the competitive atmosphere of the school.

The children living in environmentally deprived areas do not by any means lack a culture. They are reared in the lower class culture. The environmentally deprived child does not lack stimulation in his culture. He obtains culture which the middle class does not consider

¹⁰ Allison Davis, Social Class Influence Upon Learning (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 8.

¹¹ Riessman, op. cit. pp. 36-37.

desirable or beneficial for education. As a general rule, the greater variety of stimulation to which a growing child is subjected, the more intelligent he becomes.

Blanche Coll says:

Of stimulation in the lower class home there is no lack. If anything, the child may be overstimulated. His environment at home and on the streets is crowded, noisy, and above all monotonous and narrow. The stimulation is noted for quantity, deficient in quality.¹²

What these children do seem to lack is cultural stimulation which is beneficial to learning in a middle class school situation. Martin Deutsch says, "in the homes of these children there is a scarcity of objects of all kinds, but especially of books, toys, puzzles, pencils, and paper. It is not that the mere presence of such things would result in their productive use, but it would increase the child's familiarity with the equipment used in school."¹³

He also says that:

A child from any circumstances who has been deprived of a substantial portion of a variety of stimulation which he is maturationally capable of responding to is likely to be deficient in the equipment required for learning.¹⁴

The stimulation which is available to deprived children is less useful to growth and activation of cognitive potential.

The overcrowded environmentally deprived neighbourhood offers the child minimal stimulation. Not only do these children not have the

¹² Blanche Coll, "Deprivation in Childhood: Its Relation to the Cycle of Poverty," Welfare in Review, III, No. 3, (March, 1965), p. 6.

¹³ Deutsch, op. cit. p. 176.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 16.

multi-colored sized and shaped playthings, but also the furnishings and decorations are colorless and sparse. They do not have parks or beauty sights where they could go to play or enjoy nature. Martin Deutsch claims that the homes of these children are not verbally oriented. Life in a crowded tenement or house is noisy and a child learns to be inattentive to it in order to avoid the pressure of the noise. He doesn't get the feedback from adults correcting his grammar, enunciation or pronunciation. If the child learns this before he is of school age, it prevents his taking in some of the stimulation which his culture does offer. Parents may speak to children only when angry or to give a command. If there is little communication between parents and children, the children will not be stimulated to remember and they will be present-oriented. It is the parents who must transmit memory to the children, by recalling their own past shared experiences.¹⁵

Both Martin Deutsch and Frank Riessman discuss lower class use of punishment and rewards. The lower class child is unfamiliar with receiving a reward for a successful completion of a task. The lack of such an expectation means less motivation for doing the task. Lower class children do tasks at home, but they are short and are related to concrete objects or services for people. These children do not receive the same verbal rewards and punishments that middle class children do. Not being used to receiving verbal rewards, the lower class child will not be motivated to seek this in school.

Martin Deutsch says that the lower class child is not encouraged to ask questions in his home because his parents usually can't answer

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 185-186.

them and this causes them to be embarrassed. Often, parents don't have the time to stop what they are doing or are about to do to answer a question. It is also possible that they just don't want to be bothered taking the time to answer a child's question fully.¹⁶

There are positive features in the lower class, one of which is fostering independence in the young child who must care for himself and younger siblings. But, according to Martin Deutsch, the positive features are not transferred to school work.¹⁷

When the weather permits and often even when it doesn't, the children of the environmentally deprived area spend a great deal of time outdoors. This is due to lack of playing space in the majority of homes. The street becomes the focus of attention for activity for all age groups. Walter B. Miller says:

In contrast to the relative seclusion and privacy of the middle class home, the lower class individual readily bridges the physical and social distance between his dwelling unit and the street.¹⁸

The lower class child is exposed to television, movies and other media which expose them to middle class values and ideas. However, these children and their parents see themselves as outsiders, not able to have the things they see and read about. Thus, the immediate community is very important to both children and adults. Martin Deutsch says:

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 186.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 185.

¹⁸ Walter B. Miller, Cultural Features of an Urban Lower Class Community (Department of Health, Education and Welfare Service, n.d.), p. 16.

The child tends to be restricted to his immediate environment, with conducted explorations of the "outside" world being infrequent and sometimes non-existent.¹⁹

It is understandable for a child to be restricted to his immediate living area because a child may not be allowed to cross major streets or go on the bus without an adult or older sibling present. However, even lower class adults can be quite isolated from the rest of society. Walter B. Miller says: "During most of his working hours he moves in a social milieu peopled with others like himself."²⁰ Michael Harrington in The Other American also points out that although the lower class individuals are exposed to the same movies, magazines, and other media as the middle class, they remain on the fringe, not quite part of the rest of society.²¹

Allison Davis points out the importance for a child to mix with the middle class and to get out of his environment and see the larger community. She says:

Now a child cannot learn his mores, social drives, and values, his basic culture—from books. He can learn a particular culture and a particular moral system only from those people who know this behaviour and who exhibit it in frequent relationships with the learner. If a child associates intimately with no one but slum adults and children, he will learn only slum culture.²²

However, the children, like their parents, stay close to their neighborhoods.

¹⁹Deutsch, op. cit. p. 176.

²⁰Miller, op. cit. p. 7.

²¹Michael Harrington, The Other America (New York: MacMillan Co., 1963), p. 178.

²²Davis, op. cit. p. 10.

Members of the lower class do not as a rule belong to unions, fraternal organizations, or to political parties. From an interview with Don Leyden²³ of Neighborhood Service Centres we learned that although children in the neighbourhood attend Neighbourhood Service Centres activities, the parents do not attend or become involved. Even the nursery school, which the Logan unit operates, is not filled to capacity.

Michael Harrington says:

The poor person who might want to join an organization is afraid. Because he or she will have less education, less money, less competence to articulate ideas than anyone else in the group, they stray away.²⁴

As far as religious participation is concerned, Michael Harrington says that members of this class are not as religious as they used to be when there were strong ethnic ties to the old country ways.²⁵

²³ Interview with Don Leyden, Unit Director, Neighbourhood Service Centres, October, 1965.

²⁴ Harrington, op. cit. p. 134.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 11.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

In the introduction, it was stated that this study was concerned with the culturally stimulating activities of environmentally deprived elementary school children which took place outside the homes of these children. The specific factors examined were use of library facilities, attendance at religious activities, attendance at secular activities within the immediate community and attendance at secular activities outside of the immediate community.

The method used to obtain the necessary information for this research project was the face-to-face interview with the aid of a schedule.

The sources of data for the study came from the schools, which supplied the Research Committee of the School of Social Work with the names and addresses of the families of the children, and, from the teachers' opinion of how these children were performing in school. Data also came from Metro which identified the environmentally deprived area. This data was given to the research group by the Research Committee, the remainder of the data was obtained from the responses of parents to the schedule administered in the face-to-face interview.

The original sample group was selected by the schools and came to a total of eighty-eight children in grades I to VI. It was

discovered that only fourteen of these children were in grades IV to VI and that they were all from one school. Therefore, it was decided to use this group for the pre-test sample, but three refused to participate, leaving only eleven. It was felt this sample was too small even for a pre-test sample so fourteen additional names were chosen from Henderson's Directory on the basis of the next to the highest number on the street where the fourteen of the pre-test sample lived. Seven of this group had no children of school age, two had moved, two were not interested in participating, and three had children in grades IV to VI and were interested in participating. This made a total of fourteen participating until three refused to participate after the initial contact, leaving eleven schedules from which to tabulate results for the pre-test study.

Of the remaining sample of seventy-four names, forty-seven agreed to be interviewed. Out of the other twenty-seven names, four were eliminated because three of the children were not living with their own parents and one child was not enrolled in grades I, II, or III, but in kindergarten according to the parent, three were not located and twenty were not interested in participating.

Limitations arising from the use of the sample was that it was a selected rather than a random sample and thus lacked representativeness. Results of this study cannot be applied to another group of elementary school children in an environmentally deprived area.

The composite schedule was administered in January, 1966, by members of the four research groups. The composite schedule was made up of four sections and a face sheet of identifying information, with

each section coming from each of the four groups and an introductory letter. Each member of the four research groups was assigned a family to approach and if possible to interview. Prospective respondents were approached by the interviewer, first to make the initial contact, explain the purpose of the schedule, and request their participation in the study, and the second contact to administer the schedule. The composite schedule was organized to proceed from questions on the child's experiences to the parents' experiences in order for the interview to be as non-threatening as possible. Letters of thanks were sent to the families which participated in the study.

The schedule section for the purposes of this study was based on the hypothesis and sub-hypotheses stated in the introductory chapter. The areas of activity in the questions, use of library facilities, church and religious instruction, secular activities in the immediate community and secular activities outside the immediate community, were chosen because they were considered to be culturally stimulating; they were activities in which children of this age could participate after school or on weekends; participation in and attendance of these activities could be measured; and these activities were available to the children.

An initial test of the schedule was made in November, 1965, using the pre-test sample group. This information was compiled and analyzed and it was found that revisions of the schedule would be necessary. It was found that the pre-test schedule was too United Church oriented in the religion and activity questions and the questions had to be revised to include all religions. Some of the questions were

superfluous and were completely eliminated. Because pre-test interviewers were confused on the question about bringing home reading material, comic books were included to make the question clearer. The question on vacations was broadened to include Easter and Christmas holidays as well as summer holidays and information concerning vacations in 1962 was excluded because parents had difficulty remembering four years back. The question about the car was added to the schedule to see if it provided the opportunity for the child to attend activities outside the immediate community. Another question was asked to add depth to the study to see who took the child to church or religious instruction and if this had anything to do with opportunity and encouragement. A copy of the final schedule can be found in the Appendix.

To ensure standardized application of the questions in all sections, a briefing session was held for all interviewers in which aspects of the schedule questions were explained and clarified. Both parents were to be interviewed unless one was not available. To avoid bias, the interviewers were not aware of the school performance of the child when they interviewed the parents. In spite of the briefing, personal interpretations of the interviewers could influence the respondent's reply due to the fact that the interviewer had no part in the construction of the other three parts of the schedule and thus didn't know the focus of the questions. Also, some of the questions had to be interpreted by the interviewer because some of the respondents had difficulty speaking and understanding English.

The following were the major classifications and definitions used in order to systematically analyze the material from the schedules.

The major classifications for this study were successful school performance and unsuccessful school performance. Sub-classifications were established as attenders and non-attenders pertaining to the use of library facilities; attenders and non-attenders pertaining to church and religious instruction; attenders and non-attenders at activities within the immediate community; and attenders and non-attenders at activities outside the immediate community. Consideration was also given to opportunity, encouragement, parental income, one or two parent families. Cross classifications were made relating successful children and unsuccessful children to opportunity, one or two parent families, reading, family income, and encouragement.

Multiple choice questions were used in which often, sometimes, rarely, and never were substituted for straight yes or no answers. For the purposes of this study, the research group considered the first two, often and sometimes, to denote a positive answer and the last two, rarely and never, to denote a negative answer. This method was used in tabulating all multiple choice questions of this nature.

In questions relating to sub-hypothesis (1), a sometimes or often response designated a positive answer and this indicated attendance. Therefore, an attender was defined as anyone who had been classed as an attender in either of the two questions relating to this sub-hypothesis according to the above explanation of the tabulation of multiple choice questions. A non-attender was defined as any child who had been classed as a non-attender according to the multiple choice

tabulation scheme.

For the multiple choice question relating to sub-hypothesis (2), attender or non-attender were determined as explained above and for the other related question, any child who gave a yes response was considered an attender. Thus cumulatively, for this sub-hypothesis, an attender was any child who had been classed as attending in either one of the two questions.

For sub-hypothesis (3), the sub-classification of attender in the multiple choice questions was determined as explained above and a yes answer determined attender in the remaining question. Thus, cumulatively, an attender was any child who had been classed as an attender in two of the three questions relating to this sub-hypothesis.

For sub-hypothesis (4), different criteria to define attender were used in each question. The breakdown was as follows for attendance before starting grade I and since starting grade I. An attender was any child who had attended any activity as listed before starting grade I and/or any child who had attended once, as listed, since starting grade I. Attender in the multiple choice question was determined on the basis of the previously stated explanation. Attendance in the remaining related questions was defined as any child who had attended any activity out of a possibility of five over the past three years. Thus, cumulatively, attender for sub-hypothesis (4) was defined as any child who was defined as attender in at least three of the four questions relating to this sub-hypothesis.

Any child who didn't meet the criteria set out in the above for an attender was considered a non-attender.

Due to the fact that in the final sample there were more unsuccessful children than successful children, the responses are presented in percentages. ✓

The method of analysis as described will be found in the following chapter. ✓

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The analysis is the result of an examination of material obtained from the schedules used during the interviews with the parents of the children in the sample.

Of the original sample of seventy-four names, forty-seven agreed to be interviewed. Out of the other twenty-seven names, four were eliminated because three of the children were not living with their own parents and one child was not enrolled in grades I, II, or III, but in kindergarten according to the parent, three were not located, and twenty were not interested in participating. A total of forty-seven schedules were examined, concerning twenty successful children and twenty-seven unsuccessful children.

The attendance of successful and unsuccessful children at church, religious instruction, and, at either of these activities, is indicated in Table 1.

TABLE 1

ATTENDANCE OF SUCCESSFUL AND UNSUCCESSFUL CHILDREN
AT CHURCH AND RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN
RELATION TO SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Activity Attended	Successful School Performers		Unsuccessful School Performers	
	Number of Children	Percent	Number of Children	Percent
Church Service	9	45	18	66.6
Religious Instruction	10	50	17	62.9
Either Church Service or Religious Instruction	11	55	22	81.4

The figures shown in Table 1 fail to substantiate the sub-hypothesis which stated that a greater proportion of the successful children than the unsuccessful attend religious activities. Instead, 45% of the successful children attended church as compared to 66.6% of the unsuccessful children who attended church. Also, 50% of the successful children attended religious instruction as compared with 62.9% of the unsuccessful children who attended religious instruction. In addition, it was found that 55% of the successful children attended either church and religious instruction as compared to 81.4% of the unsuccessful children who attended either.

The findings indicate that six successful children or 54.5% were taken to church services and/or religious instruction classes as compared to fourteen unsuccessful children or 63.3% who were taken.

Consideration was also given to determining why children did not go to church or religious instruction. Responses indicated that children of this age needed someone to take them to church and/or religious instruction and the reasons given for non-attendance were: distance too far, weather, can't go alone and no religious affiliation.

Seventeen successful children or 85% brought books home from the public library as compared to fourteen unsuccessful children or 51.8% who brought home books from the public library. These findings indicate that a higher percentage of successful than unsuccessful children bring home books from the public library.

Consideration was also given to use of the public library for doing homework, reading, story-telling hour, and the movie program. The findings had to be eliminated because of lack of response to these questions. Only six out of forty-seven children in the sample used these library facilities. It was found that two of the school areas were serviced only by the mobile public library which does not provide such facilities, but only lends reading material.

Thus, the sub-hypothesis that a greater proportion of the successful children than the unsuccessful use library facilities was substantiated.

Eleven successful children or 55% attended club groups, playgrounds and other secular activities within the immediate community as compared with twenty-three unsuccessful children or 85.1% who attended these activities.

Consideration was also given to attendance at movie theatres within the immediate community, but the findings had to be eliminated

because attendance could not be differentiated between movie theatres located within the immediate community or outside of the immediate community.

A third type of secular activity which could have taken place within the immediate community, music lessons, was singled out for consideration. The findings had to be eliminated because only four children out of the sample group of forty-seven took music lessons.

Thus, the sub-hypothesis that a greater proportion of the successful children than the unsuccessful attend secular activities inside of the immediate community was not substantiated.

The attendance at secular activities outside the immediate community and use of vacations for trips, camp, etc., is indicated in Table 2, as well as attendance at both.

TABLE 2

ATTENDANCE AT SECULAR ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE
IMMEDIATE COMMUNITY AND VACATION TRIPS
IN RELATION TO SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Activity Attended	Successful School Performers		Unsuccessful School Performers	
	Number of Children	Percent	Number of Children	Percent
Secular activities	19	95	22	81.4
Vacation trips	17	85	22	81.4
Both secular activities and vacation trips	16	80	19	70.3

As Table 2 indicates, nineteen successful children or 95% attended secular activities outside the immediate community as compared with twenty-two unsuccessful children or 81.4% who attended. The findings also indicate that seventeen successful children or 85% took trips or made use of vacation time in this way outside of the immediate community as compared to twenty-two unsuccessful or 81.4% of the children who did so. The table shows that sixteen successful children or 80% attended both as compared to nineteen unsuccessful children or 70.3% who attended both. Out of the sample of forty-seven, only two unsuccessful children or 4.2% did not attend any of the activities mentioned outside the immediate community.

Consideration was also given to attendance at movie theatres outside the immediate community, but findings had to be eliminated because attendance at theatres inside the community could not be differentiated from attendance at theatres outside the immediate community.

Thus, the figures substantiate the sub-hypothesis that a greater proportion of the successful children than the unsuccessful attend secular activities outside the immediate community.

For added interest, attendance at activities outside the immediate community was cross-classified with the mean income of the families of successful and unsuccessful children.

TABLE 3

MEAN INCOME OF THE FAMILIES IN RELATION TO ATTENDANCE
AT SECULAR ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE
THE IMMEDIATE COMMUNITY

Attendance	Mean Income of Families	
	Successful Performers	Unsuccessful Performers
Attenders	\$4,610	\$3,514
Non-attenders	3,225	2,712

The findings indicate that the families of successful attenders at activities outside the immediate community had a higher mean income than the families of unsuccessful attenders, successful non-attenders, and unsuccessful non-attenders.

The data was analyzed to see if one or two parent families had any bearing on the performance of the children in the sample. The findings show that four successful children or 20% had one parent families as compared to ten unsuccessful children or 37% who had one parent families.

Consideration was given to the opportunity of using a car for taking children to activities outside the immediate community. Of the eight successful children of families with cars, seven, or 35% used them for taking their children to these activities, as compared to four unsuccessful children of families with cars, or 14.8%, with all the families using their cars for this purpose.

Chapter IV has presented an analysis of the material obtained

from the schedules used in the interviews of the parents of the children in the sample. Chapter V will be concerned with some of the broader implications of the material collected, especially in relation to the original hypothesis and will draw certain conclusions.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter the findings of Chapter IV will be examined with reference to the main hypothesis and the four sub-hypotheses. The conclusions will be drawn and the study as a whole will be assessed.

A sample group of forty-seven children was studied in order to determine the relationship between their school performance and the culturally stimulating activities which they attended both in and out of the immediate community. The following activities were selected for study: religious instruction and religious services; use of library facilities; secular activities inside the immediate community; and secular activities outside of the immediate community.

The major hypothesis which stated that the successful or unsuccessful school performance of a selected group of elementary school children living in an environmentally deprived area of Winnipeg is related to their attendance at culturally stimulating activities was found to be inclusive. Of the four sub-hypotheses, two were substantiated by the findings and two were not. It was not possible to conclusively establish that successful children attended more culturally stimulating activities than the unsuccessful children.

The first sub-hypothesis stated that a greater proportion of the successful children than the unsuccessful attend religious activities.

This sub-hypothesis was not substantiated by the findings, a negative relationship existed with 66.6% of the unsuccessful children as compared to 45% of the successful attending church services; with 62.9% of the unsuccessful children as compared with 50% of the successful children attending religious instruction; and with 81.4% of the unsuccessful children attending either as compared with 55% of the successful children attending either.

Thus, more unsuccessful children than successful children attend religious activities. There is the possibility that the higher percentage of attendance by the unsuccessful children may be due to a heavy influx of non-English speaking children who are religious, but have difficulty in other areas due to the language problem. Due to the limited responses, a direct conclusion cannot be drawn that children of this age are too young to attend religious services or religious instruction classes alone, but this is strongly suspected.

The second sub-hypothesis stated that a greater proportion of the successful children than the unsuccessful use library facilities. This sub-hypothesis was substantiated in that 85% of the successful children as compared to 51.8% of the unsuccessful children brought books home from the public library.

From the literature, the stress which today's educators place on the skill of reading and the use of books is seen. Thus, it can be concluded that reading is a positive factor in a child's school performance, and that children who read more are more likely to be successful in school.

The third sub-hypothesis stated that a greater proportion of

the successful children than the unsuccessful attend secular activities inside of the immediate community. This sub-hypothesis was not substantiated by the findings and a negative relationship exists in that 85.1% of the unsuccessful children attended secular activities inside the immediate community as compared to 55% of the successful who attended.

Although the findings indicated that the unsuccessful children attended more secular activities within the immediate community, the successful children participated in a wider range of activities; while the unsuccessful children mostly attended playgrounds. It is possible that due to the fact that more unsuccessful children came from one parent families, they had less supervision and therefore were able to get out of the house more easily.

The fourth sub-hypothesis stated that a greater proportion of the successful children than the unsuccessful attended secular activities outside of the immediate community. This sub-hypothesis was substantiated in that 95% of the successful children as compared with 81.4% of the unsuccessful children attended secular activities outside the immediate community; 85% of the successful children took vacation trips as compared to 81.4% of the unsuccessful children who did so and 80% of the successful children participated in both as compared to 70.3% of the unsuccessful children who did so.

Thus, it can be concluded that the successful school performers attended more secular activities outside of the immediate community. The income of the families of successful school performers was higher indicating that greater financial resources provides the wherewithal to

attend activities outside the immediate community.

The findings and conclusions that have been reported in this study are subject to many limitations that affect reliability and validity of the study. Some limitations of the sample and method were already mentioned in Chapters I and III.

The change of focus of the study from children in grades I to VI to children in grades I to III limited the number of culturally stimulating activities in which these children could participate. The environmentally deprived area in which the children studied lived provided few supervised culturally stimulating activities for children in this age range. Children of this age are still engaged in solitary play and play in small groups of threes and fours. Although this factor does not affect use of the library and attendance at religious activities, it does affect attendance at activities inside and outside the immediate community.

In determining attendance at activities, only quantity was considered and not quality of the activities. Determining quality as well as quantity of the activities attended might have made a significant difference in the sub-hypotheses dealing with attendance at activities inside and outside of the immediate community. Findings were also limited because responses to all the questions could not be used. Related to determining attendance are the arbitrary definitions of attenders. Results may have differed had a consistent definition of attenders been used in each of the schedule questions.

A limitation which appeared throughout the study was the small sample which forced the group to eliminate questions due to lack of

sufficient response. This limited the significance of percentages and proportions that were established. The fact that it was a selected sample renders it inapplicable to other environmentally deprived areas.

The research group was limited to culturally stimulating activities which took place outside the home, limiting the awareness of other impinging factors ^{such} as parental attitudes to the activities, home conditions and emotional stability of the children, upon the childrens' school performance. There is need for an accumulation of findings of all four research groups to provide each group with more information to work with that will have bearing on the findings.

Further studies could be conducted to determine the effect of attendance at culturally stimulating activities outside the home on school performance including parental attitudes to these activities.

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APPENDIX

Part I

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

RESEARCH PROJECT 1965-66

Schedule No.

Interviewer

Family Name Performance S U

Address School A B C D

Family Members	<u>Name</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Living in Home</u>	
Father	Yes	No
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 five years?

.....

.....

Father's Occupation
Mother's Occupation
Gross Family Income

Part D

1. Does your child bring home books from the public library:

Often Sometimes Rarely Never

2. Does your child use the public library for:

a) doing homework	Yes	No
b) reading	Yes	No
c) story telling hour	Yes	No
d) the movie program	Yes	No

3. Does your child bring home reading material (including comic books) from anywhere other than the public library? If Yes, from where?

a) borrowing	.....
b) school library (other than texts)	.....
c) other (explain)	.....

4. Does your child go to church often?***

sometimes -	.....
rarely -	.....
never -	.....

5. Does your child attend religious instruction classes?
(e.g. Catechism classes, Sunday School, etc.)

often -	.....
sometimes -	.....
rarely -	.....
never -	.....

**often - two or more times monthly
sometimes - once a month
rarely - less than once a month

6. If the answers to (4) and (5) are other than never, who takes the child to the Church or to his religious instructions?

- a) himself
- b) parent
- c) sibling (brother/sister)
- d) other

7. If the answers to (4) and (5) are never, why doesn't the child go?

- a) distance is too great
- b) lack of money for fare
- c) other

8. Has your child attended, or has he/she ever attended, any club in this area?

	<u>Specify</u>	<u>Of</u>	<u>Attends</u>			<u>Has Attended</u>
			<u>So</u>	<u>Ra</u>	<u>Ne*</u>	
Boys:						
Neighbourhood Service Centres
Winnipeg Central Boys Club
Playgrounds (local)
Other
Girls:						
Neighbourhood Service Centres
Playgrounds (local)
Other

9. Which of the following has your child attended:

	<u>before he started</u> <u>grade I</u>	<u>since he started</u> <u>grade I</u>
zoo (Assiniboine Park)
arena (circus, hockey)
museum

*Of - Often; So - Sometimes; Ra - Rarely; Ne - Never

	<u>before he started grade I</u>	<u>since he started grade I</u>
stadium (football, etc.)
children's theatre
ballet
swimming pools
symphony
Kildonan Park
Musical Festival
Other

10. Does your child attend movies?

often sometimes rarely never

If answer is other than never, to what movie theatre(s) does he/she usually go?

.....

11. What has your child done during vacations:

	<u>1965</u>	<u>1964</u>	<u>1963</u>
Trips to the lake or farm
Vacation trips (other than to lake or farm)
Day Camp
Resident Camp
Other (Specify)
.....

12. Does your child take music lessons? Yes No

If yes,

a) what instrument?

b) where are lessons
taken?

13. What other activities does your child do outside of the home?

a) after school

.....

b) after supper

.....

c) Saturday and
Sunday

.....

14. Do you own a family car in good operating condition? Yes.... No....

If yes, do you use the car to take the children to
any of the above activities?

Yes.... No....