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## **SOCIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE CULTURALLY DIFFERENT**

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## DISCUSSION

Culturally different children have defective auditory and visual discrimination. They also have poor judgment of time, number and other basic concepts. These are some of the conclusions drawn from psychological and sociological investigations. Such handicaps are due to poor habits of hearing, seeing and thinking rather than to physical defects of eyes, ears or brains, according to the investigators of these topics.

Apparently, the family environment of many children does not teach them to "pay attention" to what is being said, nor does it teach them to observe accurately what is happening around them. It follows that school performance will not be good if the student has not learned to see or to listen. These skills, of course, are essential to forming concepts and understanding.

Thus, the culturally different child, lacking development of elementary skills, has great difficulty in learning in the school situation. He has little chance of understanding the relevance of school learning. He seems less able to accept the idea of deferred gratification than the student who has been taught before he reaches school to observe, to listen, and to tell what he has seen and heard. With our educational systems constantly stressing symbolic and deferred gratification, the culturally different child suffers frustration and failure. As repeated failure develops into an unremitting pattern, the child becomes more alienated to the school situation.

Simple things like school materials are very different from the things with which the culturally different child is familiar. One of the most difficult learning problems for such a child is the long span of attention required during a long period of reduced physical activity. Facing the problems of unfamiliarity and uninteresting activity in the critical years of elementary school, the culturally different child has little chance of success and much chance of failure. Continuous failure destroys or warps a child's favorable image of himself and he develops a poor attitude toward others. Many such children develop levels of hostility and resentment to match their levels of frustration.

By the time these youngsters reach secondary schools, the psychologist is at a loss to help them. The problem may be one of "labels" at this point because most psychologists admit that they tend to look at people from a negative point of view. What the child lacks is what the psychologist tries to determine. The psychologist's measuring instruments classify and categorize, but the classifications and categories contain no inherent directions for action. By using the "labels," educators are prone to write off any possible helpful action. By negatively classifying the child, failure is expected of him. There is research to indicate that children tend to behave as they are expected to behave. Expect failure of a child and he will tend to fail.

Perhaps a better way to deal with the problem of the culturally different child is to consider all his behavior as adjusted behavior. No matter what the mode of behavior, it has allowed the child to survive. This is a most difficult concept for educators to accept because there is a tendency to consider any behavior different from one's own as bad, ugly and maladjusted.

If change in behavior of a culturally different child is the desired goal, then the child must become convinced that changed behavior will work better for him.

Therefore, the professional teacher should take the child with his own unique method of survival. He "takes the child where he is."

On the other hand, flexible categories and classification systems may aid the busy teacher. Categories provide increased efficiency because they allow the teacher to "plug in" responses of his own. This reduces the need for a teacher to attend to all the stimuli before he responds. Constructs, categories and classifications allow the teacher to get into action more quickly. Such devices are beneficial as long as the teacher is aware of the accompanying dangers of permanent negative classification.

Patterns of behavior of the culturally different child are common to all children. For example, if the home situation is threat oriented, it is likely the child will use a constricted strategy of behavior. He will not be very adventuresome and will not expect much from the teacher. On the other hand, if no one cares about the youngster at home, the child may be pleasure seeking, opportunistic, and have a low level of perseverance.

However, by taking these patterns of behavior and methods of survival and building on the strengths of these children, significant benefits can result. The teacher must get involved with the culturally different child. Of course, setbacks are to be expected. Discomfort for both the teacher and the child are likely to occur.

The following annotated bibliography provides reported research on the sociological and psychological aspects of the culturally different.

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## *Articles*

Ausubel, D. P. "Teaching strategy for culturally deprived pupils: cognitive and motivational considerations." *School Review*, Winter 1963, v. 71, p. 454-63.

The author relates how to cope with the educational frustrations of the culturally deprived. He suggests consolidation of on-going lessons before new material is introduced; structured, sequential materials. Motivation—intrinsic and extrinsic—is an integral part of the teacher's responsibilities.

Blazer, J. A. "Psychological testing in a Head Start program." *Training School Bulletin*, August 1968, v. 65, p. 65-70.

"Results from psychological testing of 50 children from a Head Start Program indicate problems commonly found among such a group, and emphasize the importance of early detection of such problems. Special problems encountered in such testing are noted."

Cagle, L. T. and J. Beker. "Social characteristics and educational aspirations of Northern, lower-class, predominantly Negro parents who accepted and declined a school integration opportunity." *Journal of Negro Education*, Fall 1968, v. 37, p. 406-17.

This article relates how 60 first, second, and third grade Negro youngsters would be bused from an over-crowded Negro elementary school to a predominantly white middle class school. The parents' permission was needed, and thus, the purpose of this study was to ascertain reactions of parents to the desegregation process following completion of the first school year during which their children were bused. The acceptors and refusers were roughly comparable. Social status indicators show virtually no difference. Other factors were also determined through this study and the author points out the need for further research.

Carlton, L. and R. H. Moore. "Effects of self-directive dramatization on reading achievement and self-concept of culturally disadvantaged children." *Reading Teacher*, November 1966, v. 20, p. 125-30.

Culturally disadvantaged elementary school children were the subjects for this study. The method was the use of classroom self-directive dramatization of stories which pupils selected and read. Evidence shows that through this method, favorable changes occurred in the self-concept of the children.

Gegelka, W. J. and P. A. Thomas "Culturally disadvantaged: an analysis of the roles of the environment, the child, and the school." *Training School Bulletin*, August 1968, v. 65, p. 46-56.

"In 1950, approximately one child in ten residing in our largest cities could be termed culturally disadvantaged. Today, this ratio is about one in three and within the next few years it is predicted that it will be one in two. The increasing proportions of disadvantaged children with which education must deal have necessarily made the unique problems which they pose of paramount concern not only to the educational field, but to the nation as a whole.

This concern is compounded by the realization that in education lies the key to many social and economic problems of the disadvantaged."

The purpose of this article is to explore the nature of intellectual differences, to determine the social and educational characteristics of the culturally disadvantaged, and to discuss the implications of these differences and characteristics to educational planning and programming.

**Cody, W. S., Jr. "Control and resistance in a slum school." *Elementary School Journal*, October 1966, v. 67, p. 1-7.**

Reports on how the vacuum ideology manifests itself in the behavior of the teachers, and how the children react to these manifestations. Weekly observations were made of a sixth-grade classroom of boys in a slum district in which the two teachers presiding were white.

**Cunningham, M. and Schulze, R. "Culturally deprived find someone who cares." *Texas Outlook*, August 1966, v. 50, p. 20-1+.**

The Mathews School in Austin, Texas has done a remarkable job with the culturally deprived. The class is made up of Anglo-American, Latin-American and Negro. The wildlife of Texas was their topic. Soon these children started to tackle words such as taxidermist and oxygenator. Field trips and libraries were very useful. The eight-week summer program was a great success.

**Deutsch, M. "Early social environment and school adaptation." *Teachers College Record*, May 1965, v. 66, p. 699-706.**

"We know that the dropout problem has its roots in early experience and is intimately related to matters of social class and ethnic status. But, we still have done little to grapple effectively with the poignantly human issues posed by this understanding." In this paper, Dr. Deutsch, who is Director of the Institute for Developmental Studies and a member of the faculty in the Department of Psychiatry at New York Medical College, outlines a plan of attack while also extending our conception of the difficulties.

**Deutsch, M. "Some Psychosocial aspects of learning in the disadvantaged." *Teachers College Record*, January 1966, v. 67, p. 260-5.**

The author reports what is known about relationships between socio-economic deprivation and cognitive deficiencies and makes some fruitful suggestions for creating the kind of classroom environments which might foster cognitive growth.

**Edwards, T. B. "Teacher attitudes and cultural differentiation." *Journal of Experimental Education*, Winter 1966, v. 35, p. 80-92.**

This article relates how four panels of approximately 20 members were split into two groups and given a series of questions concerning law and education to determine their attitudes and cultural differentiation. The following are the author's conclusions: (1) A valid, reliable instrument is available to test teacher attitudes relevant to the teaching of underprivileged children. (2) Despite the extensive experience provided by the panel discussions, only modest score changes were recorded, (3) Items of the inventory are so extremely complex as to defy conscious rational analysis. (4) Despite the complexity of some items, the subjects made up their minds quickly and surely. (5) Teachers adjust to new experience by

means of free-ranging discussion. (6) Changes in perceptions of the teachers regarding themselves and others and increased ability to use their present selves, with their attitudes largely unchanged, could well have escaped the evaluative net designed and prepared for this study. (7) Solutions to teaching problems are regarded as more or less private by the panel teachers. (8) Classroom activities are difficult to specify in the terms developed by behavioral scientists, but a degree of specificity can be communicated from one teacher to another by means of anecdotal references. (9) To be useful to the teacher, information from the behavioral sciences must be translated into anecdotes describing concrete classroom behavior.

**Fowler, W. "Concept learning in early childhood." *Young Children*, November 1965, v. 21, p. 81-91.**

Interest in cognitive learning has exploded in the past few years, encouraging much research in early child development. In this paper, the author has elaborated a conceptual schema which has been used in a variety of educational projects in the University of Chicago Nursery School as well as in projects with disadvantaged children and on infant learning. The description in this paper is applied to concepts in community structure."

**Frost, J. L. "Effects of enrichment program on personality development of disadvantaged children." *Childhood Education*, December 1965, v. 42, p. 271-2.**

This study yielded the most recent findings concerning the effects of total school environment (nursery through grade 6) upon school adjustment and progress of disadvantaged children. Data was from 763 (277 disadvantaged) subjects in four rural elementary schools. The data seeking instruments and methods were standardized tests, sociometric techniques, investigator conducted tests, questionnaires, pupil-teacher investigator interviews, cumulative records and direct observation. School A was the highest ranking among the four schools.

**Gordon, E. W. "Characteristics of socially disadvantaged children." *Review of Education Research*, December 1965, v. 35, p. 377-88.**

A review of research related to the education of socially disadvantaged children is the basis of this article along with the characteristics of this population. The author focuses on home environment and family status, language, cognition, and intelligence, perceptual styles and patterns of intellectual function, and motivation and aspiration.

**Greenberg, J. W. and others. "Attitudes of children from a deprived environment toward achievement-related concepts." *Journal of Educational Research*, October 1965, v. 59, p. 57-62.**

"This study sought to investigate the attitudes of children from a severely deprived environment toward a number of concepts presumed to be important for school learning and to determine whether there were variations in attitudes associated with differences in school achievement and with sex." Subjects were 115 fourth-grade Negro children. A semantic differential instrument was developed using Osgood's technique dealing with 13 concepts. The findings revealed that this

group expressed favorable attitudes, particularly toward important authority figures. It was suggested that the relatively high favorable ratings of the poor achievers, particularly the boys, might stem from their greater defensive needs. The good achievers, on the other hand, seemed to demonstrate greater critical ability, self-confidence, and reality orientation which may be related to their success in school.

**Hanson, E. and H. A. Robinson. "Reading readiness and achievement of primary children of different socio-economic strata." *Reading Teacher*, October 1967, v. 21, p. 52.**

This article describes a study using disadvantaged subjects and average subjects. The Goodenough Draw-a-Man Scale, Metropolitan Readiness Tests, and Metropolitan Achievement Tests were administered. The intelligence, reading readiness and reading achievement scores were higher in each grade for the advantaged children. Differences in the performance of advantaged and average subjects were generally smaller and less uniform. Differences between the two groups were somewhat less pronounced.

**Hawk, T. L. "Self-concepts of the socially disadvantaged." *Elementary School Journal*, January 1967, v. 67, p. 196-206.**

The author takes the self-concept and reviews what other American psychologists have written. He discusses the meaning of self, development of self, the changing of the self-concept, and how the school plays an essential part in the self-concept.

**Herman, Sister Mary. "Self-concept of the Negro child." *Catholic School Journal*, April 1966, v. 66, p. 62-3.**

The author of this article stresses the need for Negro children to have a model to imitate, thereby helping to overcome his inferiority complex. He also states how teachers can help to improve the Negro child's self-concept.

**Herson, P. F. "Assessment of changes in achievement motivation among upward bound participants at the University of Maryland." bibliog. *Journal of Negro Education*, Fall 1968, v. 37, p. 383-91.**

The purpose of this study was to assess changes in achievement motivation among Upward Bound participants at the University of Maryland. Experimental Subjects were 30 males of low-income families who had completed the tenth grade at two inner-city comprehensive high schools. The control group was 30 miles from the same schools. The author gives the results and gives implications for further research.

**Hess, R. D. and V. C. Shipman. "Early experience and the socialization of cognitive modes in children." *Child Development*, December 1965, v. 36, p. 869-86.**

This paper deals with the question: what is cultural deprivation and how does it act to shape and depress the resources of the human mind? The author proceeds to present the arguments. The research group was composed of 160 Negro mothers and their 4-year-old children from four different social status levels. The data presented showed the social status differences among the groups concerning

cognitive functioning and linguistic codes and offered examples of relations between maternal and child behavior that are congruent with the general lines of the argument laid out.

**Jansen, V. G. and J. J. Gallagher. "Social choices of students in racially integrated classes for the culturally disadvantaged talented." *Exceptional Children*, December 1966, v. 33, p. 221-6.**

"Sociometric choices of 100 'gifted' disadvantaged children in four intermediate racially integrated classrooms were analyzed. The relationship of choice of seating, working, and playing companions to race, sex, and intelligence was studied. Substantial cross racial choices were made; however, various factors, such as sex and racial proportion in the classroom, appeared to influence the nature and kind of choice. Resulting sociometric patterns did not justify generalizations regarding social structures in integrated classrooms beyond the statement that some cross racial social choices can be expected for this age group.

**Johnson, S. R. "Measure of students' attitudes toward new curricula." *Claremont Reading Conference Yearbook*, 1968, v. 32, p. 213-17.**

This article deals with two groups of students: those "most positively disposed" toward school and those "most negatively disposed" toward school. The dilation of the pupil was to be noted more in the "positively disposed" student than the other. The conclusions are that pupillary dilations theories bear replication and explanation.

**Kerckhoff, R. K. "Race and social class as opportunities for early childhood education." *Young Children*, September 1965, v. 20, p. 357-62.**

Before rushing headlong into more Head Start, educators should ask whether or not they want to promote segregation by thus separating "disadvantaged" children from the rest of society. Early childhood education presents an opportunity to encourage integration in the deepest sense. There is not so much racial discrimination as there is social class discrimination.

**Kraft, L. C. and W. R. Kraft. "Survey of attitudes of rural disadvantaged pupils toward their school: a model." *Journal of Negro Education*, Fall 1968, v. 37, p. 447-51.**

Pupils and their teachers in grades 6, 7, and 8 were selected for this study. The school district was a rural unit in southern Illinois. The Illinois Inventory of Pupil Opinion and the Illinois Inventory of Teacher Opinion were the two instruments selected. The result was the setting up of a faculty curriculum committee to use the data from the study and possible revision of the curriculum.

**Lefevre, C. "Inner-city school: as the children see it." *Elementary School Journal*, October 1966, v. 67, p. 8-15.**

Eighteen Negro children were interviewed by the author in this study. Four pictures of children with various expressions were shown to each child. Their answers and comments were taken down verbatim and transcribed. The majority of the children described the expressions as associated with injury, pain and disciplinary action. Only one child saw each picture as "happy."

**Love, R. B. "Counseling the disadvantaged youth." *CTA Journal*, March 1965, v. 61, p. 32-4.**

The author explains how the guidance counselor can help the disadvantaged to

adjust more readily to the pressures of the school and middle-class world. She lists the questions parents are asking about terminal courses assigned to their children rather than the academic ones and then submits a few basic beliefs which belong to counseling and teaching.

**Kantrowitz, V. "Bibliotherapy with retarded readers." *Journal of Reading*, December 1967, v. 11, p. 205.**

The author describes her methods with retarded readers using three case studies as illustrations.

**Mathis, H. I. "Relating environmental factors to aptitude and race; EPI and GATB." bibliog. *Journal of Counsel Psychology*, November 1968, v. 15, p. 563-8.**

"An attempt to develop an index for estimating the exposure of youth to middle-class cultural experiences, found that a checklist of possessions and activities correlated from .67 with intelligence to .31 with manual dexterity on an unselected sample of 259 job applicants. When 45 pairs of Negro and white Ss were matched on age, education and the checklist; racial aptitude differences were severely reduced, and whereas the white group means were significantly higher on all aptitudes prior to matching, after matching the Negro group exceeded on motor dexterity tests. It was concluded that the checklist was a practical method of assessing cultural exposure for male Ss."

**McAllister, J. E. "Affective climate and the disadvantaged; project enrichment." *Educational Leadership*, April 1965, v. 22, p. 481-5+.**

This article relates how 200 youths from Mississippi, during the crucial times of integration, were made to feel needed and respected. Their outlook on life greatly improved, they surged ahead to better themselves, their community and, in some respects, even their parents.

**McCullers, J. C. and W. T. Plant. "Personality and social development: cultural influences, the culturally deprived child." *Review of Education Research*, December 1964, v. 34, p. 599-604.**

"One means of assessing the role which culture plays in the personality and social development of the individual is to examine the consequences of exposure to an atypical cultural or social environment." The aim of the writers of this chapter is to summarize current research findings that illustrate effects of cultural deprivation and cultural enrichment. The first section is concerned with implications for the child's personality development of prolonged isolation from social experiences considered normal by white, middle class standards. In the second section, the writers explore the consequences of college experience and offer a reinterpretation of 'college impact' research, particularly as it relates to personality change.

**North, G. E. "Illinois test of psycholinguistic abilities (ITPA) before and after a poverty area program." *Journal of Educational Research*, October 1968, v. 62, p. 93.**

"There are reports of assessment of the language functioning of poverty area children with the ITPA. An early finding which was reported by the test constructors, as well as by a reviewer, has it that such children are relatively more handicapped at auditory and vocal tasks." This report casts doubt on this

assumption and notes further findings.

**Ozman, H. A. "Let's have more men teachers in the grades." *Grade Teacher*, April 1966, v. 83, p. 34+.**

The content of this article is concerned with the feeling among women teachers that "men don't belong in the elementary classrooms." The author states that many schools will not hire a man for grades 1-4. The women teachers feel they have more compassion but the author feels that young boys need a man to look up to.

**"Psychoeducational appraisal of disadvantaged children; identification and appraisal in the schools." *Review of Education Research*, December 1965, v. 35, p. 406-8.**

"Many issues and problems pertaining to the identification of the socially disadvantaged still remain despite attempts to rectify difficulties in the testing area. The author proceeds to review the literature and research around this problem."

**Shaftel, F. R. and G. Shaftel. "Role-Playing as a learning method for disadvantaged children: excerpts from role-playing for social values; decision making in the social studies." *School and Society*, December 24, 1966, v. 94, p. 494-8.**

This article is a book preview on how role-playing can serve a most useful function as a method for enabling slow learners to improve their classroom achievement markedly. The article deals with the slow learners, improving the child's poor self-concept, the slow, gifted children and the aspects of a teaching program for the disadvantaged.

**Spaulding, R. L. "Common blocks to learning; with study-discussion program by E. Harris and D. Harris." *PTA Magazine*, September 1966, v. 61, p. 28-30, 35-6.**

Children's learning is held back because of numerous blocks—emotional, psychological, geographic or cultural, and physical. National awareness of the problems and a cooperative educational response to them, supported by a massive infusion of funds are the solutions to the problem.

**Spellman, C. L. "Psycho-social retardation in education." *School and Society*, February 19, 1966, v. 64, p. 101-2.**

This article stresses that the poor and underprivileged are not "culturally deprived" but rather they are psycho-social retardates in education. The author gives his solutions to the problems concerning the poor.

**Wilson, L. G. "Intellectual Growth: Six-year-olds, a base for literacy." *Claremont Reading Conference Yearbook*, 1966, v. 30, p. 117.**

A project in Tucson is attempting to move children forward in their language development basing the experiences provided children upon each child's oral language. It was designed as a 3-year project. Throughout this period, an attempt will be made to meet Deutch's recommendation that children be engaged as active participants in the learning process rather than passive recipients of a school experience.

**Zigler, E. and E. C. Butterfield. "Motivational aspects of changes in IQ test performance of culturally deprived nursery school children." bibliog. *Child Development*, March 1968, v. 39, 1-14.**

Intelligence testing procedures allowing the separation of motivational from cognitive-achievement determinants of changes in Stanford-Binet IQ's were employed with culturally deprived children who did or did not attend nursery school. The children who attended nursery school increased significantly more in their IQ scores (standard administration) from the beginning to the end of the nursery school year than the children who did not attend nursery school. The findings indicated that the increase in IQ which resulted from the nursery school experience was due to a reduction in the effects of debilitating motivational factors rather than to changes in rate of intellectual development.

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