

**PERCEIVED CONTRIBUTIONS OF
PUBLIC SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN
EXPERIENCES TO ADJUSTMENT
OR SUCCESS IN FIRST GRADE**

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PERCEIVED CONTRIBUTIONS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL
KINDERGARTEN EXPERIENCES TO ADJUSTMENT
OR SUCCESS IN FIRST GRADE

An Abstract
Presented to
the Graduate Council of
Austin Peay State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in Education

by
Betty Vickery Lambert

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ABSTRACT

It was the purpose of this study to determine how first grade teachers perceived certain kindergarten experiences as contributing to the child's adjustment or success in first grade. Selected instruments, as noted below, were used to determine these perceptions.

A review of the literature revealed that the concept of a good kindergarten has undergone much change since it was first established. Some of the original kindergarten philosophy has remained. However, kindergartens are currently undergoing evaluation brought about by the increased attention to the importance of early childhood education as the result of federal programs and consequent research.

Data for this study were collected through the cooperation of the Fort Campbell Dependent School System, Fort Campbell, Kentucky. The study was limited to those characteristics measured by two instruments. The first of these was Cassel's "Child Behavior Rating Scale." The second was an open-ended opinionaire presented to the first grade teachers seeking their perceptions of the contributions made by the kindergarten to the child's first grade success or adjustment.

It was found that the teachers perceived that the kindergarten made many contributions to the first grade

child's success or adjustment, but the contribution in the area of social adjustment was the most outstanding, in their opinion. Some of the first grade teachers felt that kindergarten should involve more formal readiness activities and less play. Others indicated that the work-play concept found in many kindergartens was adequate. Conclusions from the Child Behavior Rating Scale indicated that ninety percent of the children in the sample ranked average or above average in Total Personality Adjustment. Therefore, it was the conclusion of this study that for the sample involved, kindergarten experiences would tend to make important contributions to the children's overall adjustment and success in first grade.

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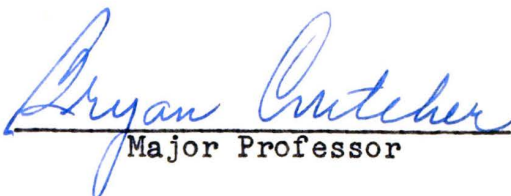
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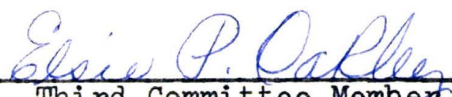
To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Thesis written by Betty Vickery Lambert entitled "Perceived Contributions of Public School Kindergarten Experiences to Adjustment or Success in First Grade." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education with a major in Curriculum and Instruction.

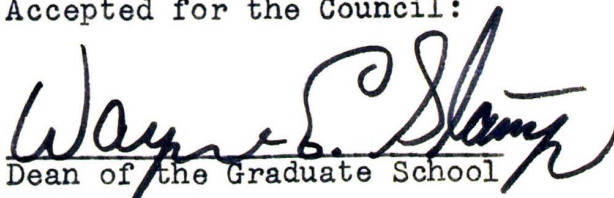

Major Professor

We have read this thesis and
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Chapter 1

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

It is presently the voiced opinion of educators that kindergarten experiences should be provided for all five-year-olds, but the support of public school kindergarten on the same basis as grades one through twelve is far from being implemented in all the schools of this nation. Though proof of the value of kindergarten is beyond the scope of this study, it is the author's opinion that an examination of a reputable and accredited kindergarten program within a given school system might present evidence which would encourage the establishment of more programs of this kind. It was the objective of this study to determine how first grade teachers perceived certain kindergarten experiences as being helpful to children in adjusting to first grade. The instruments used to measure the adjustment of the sample of first grade children and to determine the contributions of the kindergarten to this adjustment, as perceived by the first grade teachers, are described later in this chapter.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Studies have been made concerning the effect of kindergarten education upon the child's subsequent

adjustment or success in school; but few of these have taken a group of children with like kindergarten backgrounds and followed them into their first grade experiences to determine the contributions which a reputable kindergarten, providing appropriate experiences, makes to their adjustment or success in the classroom.

There is a great diversity of quality in kindergarten programs throughout the country.¹ This diversity of method, material and philosophy hampers the evaluation of the overall program of kindergarten education. The Fort Campbell Dependent schools were chosen for this study because the kindergarten classes are an integral part of the four elementary schools in the system and are perceived to be somewhat similar in quality.

The problem can be stated in question form: How does a given group of first grade teachers perceive certain kindergarten experiences as being helpful to children in adjusting to or succeeding in first grade?

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Several terms used in this discussion are subject to various interpretations. The following paragraphs will clarify some of these for the purposes of this paper.

¹"A Study of Head Start," Phi Delta Kappan, L (June, 1969), p. 591, citing The New Republic, April 26, 1969.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten connotes many different school situations. It is interpreted by some individuals as a school which provides for the teaching of songs and the telling of stories to any preschool age group. By others, the kindergarten is seen as a group of four-and/or-five year-olds in a play school type atmosphere. A more common type of kindergarten class might include a rigid reading readiness program perpetuated by parents anxious for their children to be well prepared to compete in space-age schools and by teachers who adhere to this philosophy of early childhood education. It has been the author's personal observation that this latter practice is often promoted in private schools in order to boost enrollment and pacify parents.

The kindergartens which were considered in this study were of a different nature. The author was aware that many private kindergartens maintain higher standards and adhere to a more educationally sound philosophy than the ones mentioned above, but the kindergartens chosen for this study were an integral part of a public school system. The kindergartens included all children who would attend first grade during the following school year. The program was well planned but flexible; it was "real" school but was geared to the developmental needs of the five- and early six-year-old child. It provided experiences appropriate to a classroom atmosphere in which the child not only could

become adjusted to the social situation of the classroom and the routine of school but also an atmosphere in which he could fulfill his physical, social, emotional and aesthetic needs as well as his intellectual potential. One might readily note the differences in this program and the aforementioned programs which stressed the intellectual or social development only.

Early Childhood Education

Early childhood education is a term applied to encompass all formal schooling the child receives from the earliest nursery school experience up to first grade. Benjamin Bloom's research concerning the importance of the earliest years of the child's life in his intellectual development has reinforced the need for early group experiences for those young children whose homes do not provide the environment needed for the child's total development.² Nursery schools of high quality have long been provided in colleges and child development centers. Head Start and other Federally-funded programs have in the past few years provided these opportunities for children whose parents could not financially afford the private school centers.

²Benjamin S. Bloom, Stability and Change in Human Characteristics (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1964), pp. 71-79.

C. B. R. S.

The initials C. B. R. S. refer to Cassel's "The Child Behavior Rating Scale" which is the instrument used in measuring the adjustment of the first grade pupil sample used in this study.³

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It is readily acknowledged that this study was limited in time, sample, and scope. The six months available for the study prohibited measuring any progress or regression made during the year. The sample was limited to forty-two since the population is highly mobile and only those children who had a full year in the Fort Campbell public school kindergarten were considered.

Children who had nursery school experience or other pre-school participation were not differentiated in this study, although it was recognized by the writer that such experiences make important contributions to the child's total adjustment.

No background information was sought for individual children. For the purposes of this study it was known only that these children all attended the Fort Campbell Kindergartens prior to entrance into first grade. The sample included children whose fathers were assigned to Fort

³Russell N. Cassel, "The Child Behavior Rating Scale" (Los Angeles: Western Psychological Services, 1962).

Campbell Military Installation or were assigned to areas where families could not accompany them.

This study was limited to those pupil characteristics measured by The Child Behavior Rating Scale⁴ plus an open-ended opinionnaire presented to each first grade teacher in the sample schools. The C. B. R. S. measured self adjustment, home adjustment, social adjustment, school adjustment, and physical adjustment as perceived by the first grade classroom teacher. Open-ended questions presented to the teachers were: (1) What do you feel is the most valuable contribution kindergarten experiences make to the child's success in school? and (2) What additional contribution would you like to see the kindergarten make? The results of the rating scale and the teacher opinionnaire are discussed in Chapter 4.

The study was limited in scope. It did not attempt to compare the first grade children who attended kindergarten with those who did not attend kindergarten but merely ranked the scores of those who attended as indicated by the C. B. R. S. However, mean scores of the sample were computed in each adjustment area as well as on the Personality Total Adjustment score. These scores were examined to see whether they fell above or below the mean of the typical children used to validate the instrument.

⁴Ibid.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

In conducting this study the following was assumed:

1. That the kindergartens in the system were similar in quality.

2. That kindergarten was not a cure-all for severe emotional problems and that in a group of this size there were a few children with these problems in spite of the best efforts of the kindergarten teachers.

3. That the first grade teachers understood the basic philosophy of kindergarten education.

4. That the system's kindergarten classes of 1967-68 were similar to those visited by the writer during the 1968-69 school year.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

It was felt that this study would focus attention upon the children who had experienced a year in a reputable kindergarten and in some way establish relationships between the experiences provided in such a kindergarten and the ability of a majority of children to adjust to school in the first grade. Great masses of children who have not had these experiences are meeting with failure in school systems today. This is evidenced by the interest of the government and studies of noted psychologists and educators, and the increasing evidence of the earliest years of the child's life being the most important in his

intellectual development. Diagnosis of learning problems in the preschool years has become increasingly emphasized in research concerned with school failure.⁵ This study emphasized the importance of experiences provided by reputable kindergarten education in the child's subsequent adjustment or success in first grade.

SUMMARY

Although it is the voiced goal of educators to provide kindergarten education for all five-year-olds, the attainment of this goal is not yet a reality. This study was initiated as an attempt to measure some of the contributions made by kindergarten education to the adjustment or success of a group of forty-two children in the first grades of the Fort Campbell, Kentucky Dependent School System. Numerous references were made in this study to a "reputable" kindergarten. The term is defended in that the kindergartens in this system were supported as an integral part of the school system; the teachers are equally as well trained as other members of the faculty; and the kindergartens apparently enjoy the good will of the school staff and the school community.

⁵Katherine C. Cotter, "First Grade Failure: Diagnosis, Treatment and Prevention," Childhood Education, XLIV (November, 1967), pp. 172-176.

This study was limited in time, sample, and scope and was confined to the characteristics measured by the C. B. R. S. and to the open-ended opinionaire presented to the first grade teachers concerning the kindergarten's contributions to the child's adjustment or success in first grade.

A review of literature concerning the history of the kindergarten movement and the value of kindergarten education is presented in Chapter two. Chapter three presents the procedure used in gathering data and a description of the instruments. Chapter four presents interpretation of the data, and the final chapter contains the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter 2

THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The enrollment of five-year-olds in kindergarten and elementary school increased from 58.9 percent of the total age group in 1956 to 72.8 percent in 1966.¹ The most recent figures show thirty-three states providing state aid for public school kindergartens. Although most of these states provide only permissive legislation, Illinois, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island have established laws that kindergartens will be mandatory in their schools by 1970. The Colorado State Board of Education adopted a modified criteria for state accreditation of elementary schools to read that each school must have a kindergarten by September, 1970 to maintain accreditation. Of the seventeen states providing no state aid for kindergartens only South Carolina has projected a goal for their establishment.² Since the time of the publication of the above statistics the Tennessee Legislature has expanded

¹"Newsfront," Phi Delta Kappan, XL (September, 1968), p. 66.

²Minnie P. Berson, "State Aid for Public School Kindergartens," American Education, (October, 1968), as cited by Phi Delta Kappan, L (March, 1969), p. 415.

its limited support to include the requirement of one kindergarten in each school system in the state in the 1969-70 school year.

It has been speculated that the drop in enrollment of first graders by 1972 might encourage more school systems to incorporate kindergarten into their total program of education.³

The importance of kindergarten education is prevalent in current educational literature. The authors' concepts of method may vary as to what constitutes a good program, but there is basic agreement of the fundamentals. The Association for Childhood Education, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and the Department of Kindergarten-Primary Education of NEA have contributed significant literature to this field for many years. But the recent impetus has been provided by Head-start and other federal programs. The special March, 1969 Early Childhood Education issue of Phi Delta Kappan is an example of the national attention which has been focused on this area of education.

This section will present: (1) a brief overview of the history of kindergarten education, (2) some of the recent trends in kindergarten education, (3) a short review

³"Keeping Abreast in Education--'Fewer Little Noses in 1972'", Phi Delta Kappan, XLIX (May, 1968), p. 550.

of the more significant studies dating back to 1949 regarding the relationship of kindergarten education and the child's success in first grade, (4) the objectives of kindergarten education and (5) a summary.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION

The earliest record of a plan of education for early childhood is John Amos Comenius' *School of Infancy* published in 1633. He proposed that children:

. . . learn simple lessons in objects, . . . be taught to know stones, plants, and animals; the names and uses of members of the body; to distinguish light and darkness and colors; the Geography of the cradle, the room, the farm, the street, and the field; trained in moderation, purity and obedience; and taught to say the Lord's Prayer.⁴

Students of children's literature know Comenius best as the author of the first picture book for children, Orbis Pictus, which was published in 1658.

The Froebelian School

Two hundred years after Comenius, Frederick Froebel was successful in establishing the model which led to the kindergartens of today. He was influenced by the philosophies of Rousseau and Pestalozzi, but it was his concept of a school for young children where they could unfold like

⁴W. S. Monroe, ed. Comenius' School of Infancy (D. C. Heath Co., 1808) p. ix, cited by Sarah Hammond Leeper et. al., Good Schools for Young Children (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1968), p. 6.

flowers in a garden that led to the name kindergarten. This first kindergarten was established in Blackenberg, Germany in 1842. Almost immediately the need for a training institution for teachers was realized by Baroness Bertha von Marenholtz Bulow-Wendhausen, a disciple of Froebel.⁵

The Froebelian School emphasized the development of the whole child--physically, morally and intellectually; the importance of unity and more provision for creative expression; and that children be developed physically and socially through outdoor and indoor play. Froebel observed that children's learning seemed to proceed naturally from the concrete to the abstract--that children's learning should be guided by experiences. He emphasized the importance of play in the development of the child and formulated his plan of "gifts and occupations." The word "gifts" referred to various educational toys that he created, while "occupations" referred to the recommended use of the toys in educating the young child.⁶

Kindergarten in the United States

A student of the Froebelian School, Mrs. Carl Schurz, established the first kindergarten in the United

⁵Sarah Hammond Leeper, et. al., Good Schools for Young Children (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1968), p. 6.

⁶William H. Kilpatrick, Froebel's Kindergarten Practices Critically Examined (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1916), p. 109.

States in Watertown, Wisconsin in 1856. Mrs. Schurz planned her school specifically for the children of her German immigrant community. The idea soon spread to Massachusetts where Miss Elizabeth Peabody founded the first English speaking kindergarten in Boston in 1860. As early as 1873 Susan E. Blow, with the encouragement of her school superintendent, William T. Harris, instituted the first public school kindergarten in St. Louis, Missouri.⁷

Maria Montessori

In the early twentieth century Dr. Maria Montessori devised her own plan of teaching the slum children of Rome, Italy the basic skills and knowledge that they needed to become effective citizens. She established the Casa dei Bambini, the Children's House, in the tenement district of Rome. Her materials consisted of such things as form-boards, form block insets, counting rods, frames for lacing, buttoning, tying, etc., geometric forms for naming, tracing, and sandpaper letters and other sensory devices. Formal physical exercises were designed for large muscle development. Social training was achieved through real social undertakings such as serving food, taking care of plants and animals.⁸ Many of her materials are used today

⁷Neith Headley, The Kindergarten, Its Place in Education (New York: The Center for Applied Research in Education, 1965), pp. 8-10.

⁸Ibid.

and her methods are still used in the schools which carry her name.

The Child Development Approach

A later major influence in the development of the kindergarten was the work of G. Stanley Hall which helped to structure the "child development approach."⁹ He began to study the various stages of development of children. Arnold Gesell did further research in the ways children grow and develop. These studies helped parents and teachers to realize that children are not just small-sized adults, and that the child's optimum growth will take place through the understanding guidance of the adults in his life.

John Dewey's philosophy of the importance of the practical, the here-and-now in education, augmented this theory and helped to shape the idea of permissive rather than rigid control in the education of children.¹⁰

Summary

The evolution of the kindergarten program has been aptly described in the following paragraph:

As more information became available about the ways in which children develop and learn, about their interests, about what they ought to know to live in their world, kindergarten methods changed. As children were observed and studied, their many needs were recognized, and new ideas were suggested to meet the

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 8.

needs. The trend was away from the adult set standards to which children had been expected to conform. Techniques of teaching and guidance were modified. Larger blocks and "big-muscle equipment" replaced small hand-work as a result of the studies of physical development of the four- and five-year-olds. The growing importance attached to social experiences caused the shift from formal, individual activities to many opportunities requiring cooperative planning and working. Materials and time for creative expression replaced dictated lessons. Children's needs were more accurately evaluated, and instruction was planned in terms of those needs. The child was exposed to concepts he was able to understand.¹¹

This process of change has continued in planning kindergarten curriculum. New pressures from the public, new insights into the process of children's learning, new discoveries of knowledge to be transmitted have to be constantly evaluated for the implications and relevance to changes in good kindergarten education.

CURRENT TRENDS IN KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION

The Child Development Point of View

James Hymes is one of the current defenders of the Child Development point of view. His little book, Before the Child Reads, defended this philosophy well--that readiness cannot be "built" in the child but must grow naturally as the child grows.¹² He emphasized the

¹¹Clarice Wills and Lucile Lindberg, Kindergarten for Today's Children (Chicago: The Follett Publishing Co., 1967), pp. 54-55.

¹²James L. Hymes, Jr. Before the Child Reads (Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson and Co., 1958), pp. 17-40.

importance of a kindergarten enriched with first hand experiences through which the child can learn of the world about him. Paramount in this philosophy is the belief that "Intellectual development at this age (five years) can't feed on words and talk and symbols and what the other fellow has to say."¹³

The Cognitive Approach

Tyler disagreed with the child development theory.¹⁴ He perceived that ". . . readiness depends upon appropriate stimulation and opportunity for relevant learning experiences and that practice and integration are essential to knowledge and skills."¹⁵ He quoted Brownell,¹⁶ and Bruner¹⁷ to defend his theory. Others have dwelled on the "building readiness" theory. Radler and Kephart seem to have suggested a compromise in the title of their book,

¹³James L. Hymes, Jr., "What is a Kindergarten?" Grade Teacher, LXXXII (October, 1965), p. 114.

¹⁴Fred T. Tyler, "Issues Related in Readiness to Learn," Theories of Learning, 63rd Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 228.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶William A. Brownell, "Readiness for Subject Matter Learning," NEA Journal XL (October, 1951), pp. 445-46.

¹⁷Jerome S. Bruner, The Process of Education (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 33.

Success Through Play.¹⁸ They hold that "children develop readiness by piling one skill on top of another. Each skill is acquired by natural maturation on one hand and learning on the other." They suggest many activities and games through which this maturation can be encouraged.¹⁹

The Middle of the Road Approach

Ironically enough it was Bruner who stressed the importance of presenting material to children only in terms that they understand in line with their developmental abilities.²⁰ The writers who so strongly advocate a pendulous movement away from the child development theory only quote Bruner's statement that "Any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development."²¹ But it is in the same chapter of the same book that he pointed out the developmental stages of learning set forth by Jean Piaget and emphasized their importances in the child's cognitive development.

Bloom stressed the importance of environment in the development of the child's intelligence. He described

¹⁸D. H. Radler and Newell C. Kephard, Success Through Play (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), p. 33

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Bruner, Op. Cit., pp. 33-54.

²¹Ibid.

an abundant environment conducive to learning to include:

- (1) good models of language usage; (2) general knowledge of the world in making distinctions--comparing objects and ideas, obtaining vicarious experiences through books, etc.;
- (3) opportunities for logical reasoning and problem solving;
- and (4) nature of interaction between adults and children.

He hypothesizes that since seventeen percent of intelligence develops between the ages of four and six that nursery and kindergarten education could have far reaching consequences on the child's general learning pattern.²²

Summary

Fortunately the kindergarten educator is not forced to choose one school of thought over another but is free to evaluate a number of philosophies. Those discussed in this chapter included Froebel's ideas, Montessori's methods, the Child Development point of view and the Cognitive Approach. An eclectic approach permits the teacher to select the best features of all these philosophies and to discard those features perceived as being irrelevant.

SIMILAR STUDIES

The impetus given to the study of early childhood education by Headstart and other Federal programs has

²²Benjamin S. Bloom, Stability and Change in Human Characteristics (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1964), pp. 77-78.

resulted in a renewal of the interest to provide kindergarten experiences for more of the country's children. The bulk of studies in this field were completed during the last ten years, but a few significant studies prior to this decade seemed important enough for consideration here.

Value of Experiences Prior to First Grade

The most outstanding study regarding the value of early childhood education was done by Almy²³ just following World War II. She hypothesized that learning to read in first grade was positively related to the number of responses to opportunities for reading the child made prior to first grade entrance. Her sample consisted of one hundred and six children in the three elementary schools of Elmont, New York. She found that a significant, positive relationship existed (experiences included looking at books, being read to, interest in words, letters and numbers wherever they might have been found such as on signs, cans, packages, etc.); that interest in one kind of reading followed interest in another kind of reading; also that no significant relationship was found between beginning reading success and either mental age of the child or occupational status of the parents.

²³Millie Corinne Almy, Children's Experiences Prior to First Grade and Success in Reading (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1949), pp. 109-120.

Trusal²⁴ failed to support part of these findings in a later study but showed additional relationships. He found that first grade children with kindergarten experience were average in social readiness for first grade, were superior in academic readiness, showed significant difference in number achievement and total average achievement, but were not significantly better in reading achievement when paired on mental age. Positive correlations were found between social readiness and academic achievement; total readiness and academic achievement; intelligence and total average achievement; and intelligence and social readiness.

Shaw²⁵ concluded that both public and private preschool experiences made significantly greater contributions to the social adjustment of first grade children than did no organized preschool experiences at all.

"A Study of the Effects of Kindergarten Experience on Vocabulary" was made by Sister Candide Pineault using the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. Her conclusions

²⁴Maurice E. Trusal, "Effect of Kindergarten Experience Upon Readiness for Achievement in First Grade" (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 1955), p. 57.

²⁵Martha Luelle Shaw, "The Subsequent Adjustment of First Grade Children in Relation to Age at Entrance, Socio-Economic Status and Type of Pre-School Experience." (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Florida State University, 1957), p. 68.

were: (1) the kindergarten groups, disregarding social class, had a higher mean IQ gain than the non-kindergarten groups; and (2) kindergarten was of greater help to children from lower socio-economic classes (17.7 IQ gain) than from higher socio-economic groups (7.7 IQ gain).²⁶

Experiences for Culturally Deprived Children

A more extensive study, now available in book form, was that of Susan Gray. This was a research demonstration study for the purpose of planning and carrying through of a particular intervention program for young deprived children which would offset their progressive retardation. She stated that

. . . typically such children enter first grade a little behind the more favored children and as the years go by the gap widens, so that by the end of elementary school the deprived child will be two or three years behind the others.²⁷

The children studied were Negro children from a town with a stable population of 25,000. These children were of the third generation in this vicinity and came from families with agricultural backgrounds. The adults of the families were employed at the time in unskilled or

²⁶Sister Candide Pineault, "A Study of the Effects of Kindergarten Experience on Vocabulary," (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Cornell University, 1967) Dissertation Abstracts XXVIII (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, Inc., 1967), p. 972.

²⁷Susan W. Gray et. al. Before First Grade (New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1966), p. 1.

semi-skilled occupations. The families were large and forty percent had no father in the home. Sixty children were chosen from the most deprived group and randomized into three treatment groups. A fourth distal group was used for control purposes. Group one was engaged in a training sequence of three summer sessions of ten weeks each plus contacts from a home visitor in the winter months. Group two was similar but had only two summer sessions with one winter of home visits. Group three represented a local group which was administered pretests and post tests but had no formal training. Group four was similar to group three but represented children from a distal community for control purposes. The summer experiences were concentrated in two main areas: attitudes toward achievement and aptitudes for achievement. The role of the home visitor was to provide materials, to reinforce and support the parent and child in terms of the experimental variables, and to make the mother aware of future opportunities for Negroes.

Upon school entrance it was concluded that group one averaged a consistent IQ gain of nine points; group two, five points. Group three lost three points and group four showed a loss of six points. The report provided excellent details of methods and materials employed in the summer training programs during this period.²⁸

²⁸Gray, Op. Cit., pp. 1-33.

Other studies have not found such positive conclusions. A study done by Mattleman revealed no significant difference in the first grade achievement of children participating in the Learning Centers Project of the School District of Philadelphia.²⁹ Bickham studied the results of an eight-week summer Headstart program and found that the participants evidenced gains in both mean raw and converted total readiness scores but the gains were not statistically significant.³⁰

"A Study of the Effect of the John F. Kennedy Pre-school Program on the First Grade Readiness and Achievement of Culturally Disadvantaged Children" that was done by Block found these children to be superior to non-preschool children in verbal readiness and number readiness but found nothing to substantiate the hypothesis that this preschool experience led to greater achievement in first grade. There was a positive relationship found between readiness and the length of the preschool program. The

²⁹Marciene Schreiber Mattleman, "An Evaluation of Compensatory Education for Selected First Graders with Special Emphasis on Language Behavior," (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Temple University, 1967) Dissertation Abstracts XXVIII (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, Inc., 1967), p. 1005-A.

³⁰Evelyn P. Bickham, "A Study of the Effects of Headstart on First Year Achievement," (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Virginia, 1967) Dissertation Abstracts XXVIII (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, Inc., 1967), p. 3543A.

group with a full year of training had a higher readiness level than the group which had only six weeks of training. The teachers in the program were college freshmen and sophomores rather than certified personnel.³¹

Rogolsky³² pointed out a distinctive value in all kindergarten education that is often overlooked--the opportunity to spot a variety of handicaps which directly affect about forty percent of all children in their capacity to learn. These handicaps included emotional, neurological, auditory, visual, speech and other physical handicaps which hamper the child's learning. She emphasized that "Early identification is needed if these large numbers of children are to be helped effectively."³³ Early evaluation of the large majority of children by professional psychologists is feasible only if public schools make preschool education available for every child especially at the kindergarten level.

³¹Albert C. Block, "A Study of the Relative Effect of the John F. Kennedy Preschool Program on the First Grade Readiness and Achievement of Culturally Disadvantaged Children," (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Miami, 1968), Dissertation Abstracts XXIX (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, Inc., 1968), p. 399A.

³²Maryrose M. Rogolsky, "Screening Kindergarten Children: A Review and Recommendations," Journal of School Psychology, VI (No. 2, 1968-69), pp. 18-25.

³³Ibid., p. 18.

Summary

One factor emerged from the studies reviewed in this section. These studies revealed that although some doubt may remain regarding the contributions made by the kindergarten in some specific areas of learning, the kindergarten does merit a place in the public school systems of this country.

Recent research involving compensatory early childhood education is as yet inconclusive. An unnamed author³⁴ stressed that Headstart programs must not be evaluated on the basis of any one set of statistics due to the limitations involved in these studies. He pointed out that the Westinghouse-Ohio University report noted the inadequacy of its own evaluation in that it failed to measure the medical and nutritional effects of Headstart, and failed to determine its value to the parents of the children and to differentiate between the quality of the centers studied. It would appear that more studies are needed in which experimental control rather than emotional overtones and expediency are the criteria for program development.

OBJECTIVES OF THE KINDERGARTEN

What, then, constitutes good education in the kindergarten? The following description summarizes the

³⁴"A Study of Head Start," Phi Delta Kappan, L (June, 1969), p. 591 cited from The New Republic (April 26, 1969).

philosophy of the major writers of literature for teachers of young children in the 1960's:

Kindergarten is the time to find out that wanting to know is exciting, stimulating, and fulfilling. It is the time to ask questions, seek answers wherever they are to be found, and exchange ideas, knowledge, and impressions; it is a time to learn that mistakes and confusions can be turned into clarification and enlightenment. The kindergarten teacher makes it possible for the children to explore, examine, test and understand that which is a reality to a five-year-old.³⁵

There are many good listings of the major objectives of kindergarten education but the two given below reinforce Rudolph's description and were representative of the other writers in the field. Foster and Headley³⁶ suggested that:

. . . it is the aim of the kindergarten to provide each child with:

1. An opportunity to be in a social situation where his all-around readiness can be appraised before he must face the challenges of the first grade.
2. An opportunity to have a wide variety of experiences particularly adapted to his developmental needs.
3. An opportunity to mesh old and new learnings and, in so doing, to build for himself a broad base of understanding.
4. An opportunity to be in many situations that will help him perceive relationships through problem solving.
5. An opportunity to be in social situations where he can feel needed.

³⁵Marguerita Rudolph and Dorothy Cohen, Kindergarten, a Year of Learning (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1964), p. 9.

³⁶Neith E. Headley, Foster and Headley's Education in the Kindergarten (New York: American Book Co., 1966 revision by Headley), pp. 44-45.

6. An opportunity to be in situations where he can become increasingly aware of the relationship between freedom and responsibility.
7. An opportunity to have many experiences that will help him "grow into reading."

Hefferman³⁷ suggested more specifically:

A good kindergarten program should contribute ten significant things to every child. It should help him:

- . . . maintain and develop optimum health
- . . . further his physical development
- . . . extend his understanding of the social world
- . . . grow in understanding of special and quantitative relationships
- . . . expand his control of language
- . . . know and enjoy his literary heritage
- . . . express himself esthetically through art media
- . . . become acquainted with and learn to enjoy his musical heritage
- . . . establish satisfying relationships with children and adults.

It can then be said that a good kindergarten program seeks to foster intellectual development through planned experiences adapted to the child's developmental needs which offer opportunities for building new learning and understanding based on the concepts he has accumulated in his short lifetime; to provide for optimum physical development and good health; to promote social growth through working and playing with others in activities which allow problem solving and self discipline; to establish an atmosphere for emotional growth where he can develop a

³⁷Helen Hefferman, "Significance of Kindergarten Education," Early Childhood, Crucial Years for Learning, reprints from Childhood Education Membership Service Bulletin 17-A (Washington, D. C.: ACEI, 1966), p. 52.

good self concept; to support aesthetic growth through pleasant experiences with art, music and literature as well as many opportunities to explore the world about him.

SUMMARY

Since the time of Comenius, Froebel and Montessori the kindergarten has undergone much study and change, but it has retained some of the basic philosophy which emerged so many years ago. There is a current trend toward more scientific study to determine the best ways in which five-year-olds can be taught to meet the challenges of their school experience. Many of the earlier studies are inconclusive, but one factor is prominent--kindergarten does merit a permanent place in the public school system. Although methods vary and objectives are worded differently it seems there is basic agreement that the aim of the kindergarten is to help each child develop socially, emotionally, physically, aesthetically and intellectually during his year before first grade.

Some of the more recent studies have been related to compensatory education. Although they have been numerous the results are inconclusive. This is generally attributed to the fact that much of the research has not been experimentally controlled.

Chapter 3

COLLECTION OF DATA

The Fort Campbell Dependent Schools were chosen for this study because they have the only system-wide public school kindergartens in close proximity to the Austin Peay State University campus and because of their reputation for close cooperation with the university in students' educational research projects.

It was decided that a total of at least thirty-five children was needed for the study. The superintendent suggested that a representative sample of the first grade population of the system could be secured from two of the elementary schools--Lincoln and Marshall. These two schools served as a cross section of the military community including children of both officers and enlisted men. The schools represent a total of six kindergarten classes composed of two daily sessions, and five first grades.

Presented in this chapter is a discussion of the procedure used for collecting data, a description of the instrument used, the teacher opinionaire and the summary.

THE GATHERING OF DATA

Procedure for Securing School Cooperation

Permission for a study of the kindergarten and first grades was received in an interview with the superintendent of the Fort Campbell, Kentucky Dependent Schools. Copies of the written communication are in the appendix. The superintendent assured the cooperation of his staff in the study.

Meetings with Teachers and Principals

The principals of Marshall and Lincoln elementary schools were contacted and appointments arranged for a meeting with the kindergarten and first grade teachers in each school. The study was explained to the groups and permission was requested and granted for the writer to visit each of the kindergarten classes in order to describe the program. In addition, an appointment was made with a kindergarten teacher in a third school to determine the similarity of that program.

The first grade teachers were asked to secure a list of their pupils who had experienced a full year of kindergarten in the Fort Campbell schools the previous year. For each of these pupils the teacher was requested to administer the C. B. R. S. On each item the child was to be rated on a six-point scale as to the negative or positive degree the teacher felt he exhibited the behavior described. The teachers were instructed to check "no"

(the number six box) if the child's behavior on any item was unknown, according to the test instructions.

In addition to the C. B. R. S. the teachers were each presented with two questions which they were requested to answer and return to the principal's office with the rating scales. A date was agreed upon for these to be collected by the writer for scoring and analyzing.

Observations in the Kindergartens

In order that a description of the kindergarten program might be obtained three visits were made to the Fort Campbell kindergartens. These observations reinforced the writer's belief that there are many methods which can be used in the kindergarten classroom to reach the objectives outlined in chapter two of this study. The freedom of each teacher to organize her own teaching the way in which she feels most comfortable was rewarded in a relaxed atmosphere and friendly interaction in each of the classrooms. Each of these kindergarten teachers was obviously working toward the meeting of the objectives of the kindergarten as set forth by Rudolph, Headley and Hefferman who were quoted in chapter two, pages twenty-seven and twenty-eight. The teachers were well trained and working under the supervision of able principals, an elementary supervisor, and an interested central office staff. It was the opinion of the writer that this kindergarten program represented the best from both the child

development and cognitive fields of thought.

As stated in the basic assumptions in chapter one it is understood that the first graders who attended these same kindergarten classes (or others within this system) in the 1967-68 school year received a similar type of education that was observed during 1968-69. Upon this assumption the C. B. R. S. was administered by the first grade teachers.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INSTRUMENTS

The Child Behavior Rating Scale

The Child Behavior Rating Scale was developed and standardized for use with young children to be administered by a parent, teacher or clinician who knows the child well. It consisted of seventy-eight items which were classified into five adjustment areas: self adjustment, home adjustment, social adjustment, school adjustment, and physical adjustment. Each item was rated on a six-point scale as to the negative or positive degree the rater perceived the child exhibited the behavior described. If the rater did not know about any item he was instructed to check the "no" column.¹

¹Russell N. Cassel, The Child Behavior Rating Scale Manual (Los Angeles: Western Psychological Services, 1962), n. p.

Purpose of the C. B. R. S. This scale is designed specifically for children in kindergarten through third grades, children who cannot read or who are handicapped in other ways so that they cannot participate in the usual pencil and paper type of personality inventory. The purposes of the scale as it relates to this study are listed as follows:

1. To obtain objective ratings of the behavior of children by raters who have observed or know the children to be rated.
2. To compare ratings of a specific child with the normative data of both typical children and emotionally handicapped children. Normative data have been obtained through the standardization of the C. B. R. S.
3. To provide objective measurements of adjustment in five significant adjustment areas.
4. To provide a single meaningful score to indicate total adjustment: The Personality Total Adjustment Score (PTAS).
-
8. To provide another approach to facilitate research studies of the young child, especially the young child in his first years of adjustment to the school milieu.²

Validity of the Scale. The test items were obtained directly from case reports and are presumed to have face validity. The relationship of C. B. R. S. scores and the scores of Metropolitan Achievement Tests and the Vineland Social Maturity Scale indicate that the test has construct

²Ibid.

validity of .01 and .05 levels of confidence. The classification of items was determined by six psychologists, all members of the American Psychological Association.³

It has been determined that the test also differentiates between well adjusted children and those diagnosed by qualified professional workers as maladjusted children. Computations to determine the reliability of the test indicate a high degree of test reliability or consistency in the scoring. Details regarding these tests of validity and reliability may be referred to in the C. B. R. S. Manual.⁴

Scoring the C. B. R. S. The scoring of each test is a very simple operation. The scorer counts the check marks in the first column and places the total in the first column of the self adjustment area. The same procedure is followed for the other five columns. This process is repeated for each of the adjustment areas. The weighted values were then determined by multiplying the total under each column by the number of that column (total of 3 x 1 in column one, total of 2 x 2 in column two, etc.). The product was then placed immediately under the first total in each column. The weighted score for each area is the sum of the weighted columns in that area. To compute the

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

Personality Total Adjustment Score only three of the five adjustment area weighted scores are used. The Self Adjustment weighted score and the Home Adjustment weighted score were each multiplied by two, then added to the School Adjustment weighted score. The sum was the PTAS. T-scores can be obtained by use of the C. B. R. S. Profile provided on the front of each test.

Interpretation of the C. B. R. S. The overall most adjustment of the child is indicated by his Personality Total Adjustment Score (PTAS).

. . . If the T-Score as tabulated on the Profile chart is between 40 and 60 it can be said that the adjustment of the child is comparable to that of the average typical child. If the PTAS T-Score is 60 or higher it can be said the child is making an excellent personality adjustment. If the PTAS T-Score is below 40, it can be said the child, in some way, is emotionally handicapped.⁵

Summary. The Child Behavior Rating Scale was developed and standardized by Cassel for use with the young child by a parent, teacher or clinician who knows the child well. The scale was designed specifically for children in kindergarten through third grades. Details regarding the validity and reliability of the test are found in the C. B. R. S. Manual. The scales are easily scored by hand yielding a score in each of the adjustment areas plus a Personality Total Adjustment Score. T-Scores were found on

⁵Ibid.

the Profile provided on the front of each test which differentiated the emotionally adjusted child and the child who was in some way emotionally handicapped.

The Teacher Opinionnaire

Two direct questions were presented to each of the first grade teachers concerning the contributions of public school kindergarten experiences to the child's success in first grade. These were: (1) What do you feel is the most valuable contribution kindergarten makes to the child's success in school? and (2) What additional contribution would you like to see the kindergarten make? The results of this opinionnaire are discussed in chapter four.

SUMMARY

Permission to study a sample of first grade children in the Fort Campbell Dependent Schools of Fort Campbell, Kentucky was granted by the superintendent. Full cooperation of the personnel was assured and received. Meetings were held with the principals and teachers of the two schools chosen upon recommendation of the superintendent as offering a sufficient sample. The design of the study was explained, the Child Behavior Rating Scales distributed and plans for observing in the kindergarten were made. A date was set for the completion of the ratings and the return of the teacher opinionnaires.

A general description of the instruments was presented in the final section of this chapter with reference to the manual for further information.

Chapter four presents an interpretation of the data.

Chapter 4

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Lincoln and Marshall Elementary Schools of the Fort Campbell Dependent School System had a total of five first grades. All five teachers responded to the Teacher Opinionnaire and cooperated in administering The Child Behavior Rating Scale.

Upon examination of the class rolls, forty-five children were found in these two schools who had attended a full year of kindergarten in the system. Three of the rating scales were incomplete and were disregarded. Therefore the sample included forty-two pupils. No background information on the individual children was examined by the writer. The teacher ratings were accepted as representing their best judgement, although individual perceptions might have differed.

This chapter will present (1) the results of the teacher opinionnaire, (2) results of the Personality Total Adjustment Score and the five areas of adjustment measured by the C. B. R. S., and (3) a summary.

THE TEACHER OPINIONNAIRE

To the question, "What do you feel is the most valuable contribution kindergarten makes to the child's

success in school?" four of the five teachers responded, "Social adjustment." The wording of the responses varied in the following ways: (1) "Social and emotional adjustment," (2) "Learning to cooperate with peer group and teachers," and (3) "Learning to live and cooperate with other children." One teacher simply answered, "Social adjustment." The fifth wrote, "Over-all adjustment--especially the ability to listen."

Some of the respondents added other valuable contributions. These included (1) "Helpful records which are kept and forwarded to the first year teachers," (2) "Reading readiness experiences which prepare the children to ease right into the formal readiness program of the first grade," (3) "Readiness for math and language," and (4) "Learning to follow directions."

To the second question, "What additional contribution would you like to see the kindergarten make?" two teachers responded, "None." Two others replied, in different words but with the same idea--kindergarten children need to realize that school is not play; it is fun, but it is work. One teacher suggested that the kindergarten children should attend school for a full day by the end of the kindergarten year pointing out that there is a great deal of difference in attending school for a half day and a whole day. Others wished to see more readiness work in the areas of math and language and in reading readiness.

The C. B. R. S. revealed six sets of scores which were converted by the use of Table 7 in the manual¹ to a T-Score. If the T-Score was between forty and sixty the child could be said to have the average adjustment of the typical child. If the T-Score was sixty or above the child could be said to have above average adjustment. But if the T-Score was below forty the child could be said to be emotionally handicapped in some way.

Total Personality Adjustment Scores

It has been pointed out that the total personality adjustment score indicated the overall adjustment of the child rated on the C. B. R. S. Table 1 presents these scores obtained from the sample.

The scores from the sample ranged from 192 to 547 out of a possible 552. The mean score on the scale for typical children was 452. Seventy-four percent of the sample scored above the C. B. R. S. mean on Total Personality Adjustment. Twenty-six percent scored below the mean, but 16.5 percent of these scores were within the over-all adjustment of the average typical child. One of the children scored below the level indicated for the well adjusted emotionally handicapped child. A total of 90.5

¹Cassal, Loc. Cit.

Table 1

Total Personality Scores of First Grade Children Who Attended Kindergarten and Percentages of the Total Sample Who Ranked Average, Above Average or Below Average on the Child Behavior Rating Scale

Over-all Adjust. Rank C. B. R. S.	Total Person- ality Adjust. Score (x)	Fre- quency	fx	Percent. total sam.	T-Score
Above Average	547	1	547		75
	542	2	1084		70
	538	1	538		65
	533	1	533		65
	532	4	2128		65
	527	1	527		65
	524	1	524		60
	522	3	1566		60
	513	2	1026		60
	509	1	509		60
	508	1	508		60
	502	1	502		60
	501	2	1002		60
	500	3	1500	57.5	60
Average	496	1	496		55
	483	1	483		55
	475	1	475		55
	462	2	924		50
	461	1	461		50
	456	1	456		50
	442	1	442		45
	437	1	437		45
	430	1	430		45
	427	1	427		45
	407	1	407		40
	402	1	402		40
	377	1	377	33	40
Below Average	373	1	373		35
	370	1	370		35
	349	1	349		35
	192	1	192	9.5	20-
Totals		42	19,995	100	

C. B. R. S. Mean = 452

Sample Mean = 476

$$\frac{\sum fx}{n} = \frac{19,995}{42} = 476$$

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percent of the first graders with a full year of kindergarten who were tested on the C. B. R. S. scored average or above average in Total Personality Adjustment, while a total of 9.5 percent scored below average.

Self Adjustment Scores

The self adjustment scores are presented in Table 2. These scores range from 45 to 120. The mean score on the scale for typical children was ninety-nine. Of the sample 85.7 percent scored average or above average in self-adjustment while 14.3 percent scored below the average adjustment for the typical child. Two of the children scored below average for the emotionally handicapped child in this area.

There was indication that more needed to be done in both the kindergarten and first grade to aid children in developing better self concept for it was in this area that social and school adjustment heavily depended.

Home Adjustment Scores

Some doubt may arise in the reader's mind concerning the teacher's having enough accurate information on the child for this section of the rating scale. However, the C. B. R. S. manual validates the fact that there was no significant difference in teacher ratings and parent ratings on the C. B. R. S.² Table 3 presents the home

²Ibid.

Table 2

Self Adjustment Scores of First Grade Children who Attended Kindergarten and Percentages of the Total Sample who Ranked Average, Above Average or Below Average on The Child Behavior Rating Scale

Self Adjust. Rank, CBRS	Self Adjust. Scores	Frequency	fx	Percentage of total sample
Above Average	120	3	360	
	119	2	238	
	118	2	236	
	117	2	234	
	116	1	116	
	115	5	575	
	114	1	114	
	113	1	113	
	110	2	220	
	109	1	109	
	105	1	105	
	104	2	208	
	103	3	309	
	101	2	202	66.7
Average	97	1	97	
	94	1	94	
	92	1	92	7.4
	91	1	91	
	90	1	90	
	80	3	240	19.6
Below Average	76	1	76	
	74	1	74	
	70	1	70	
	64	1	64	14.3
	50	1	50	
	45	1	45	
Totals		42	4,222	100

C. B. R. S. Mean = 99

Sample Mean = $\frac{\sum fx}{n} = \frac{4,222}{42} = 100.5$

Note: Numbers were rounded off for convenience where applicable.

Table 3

Home Adjustment Scores of First Grade Children who Attended Kindergarten and Percentages of the Total Sample who Ranked Average, Above Average or Below Average on The Child Behavior Rating Scale

Home Adjust. Rank CBRS	Home Adjust. Scores	Frequency	fx	Percentage of total sample
Above Average	120	6	720	90
	115	12	1380	
	114	1	114	
	113	4	452	
	112	2	224	
	111	1	111	
	110	3	330	
	108	1	108	
	107	1	107	
	105	2	210	
	103	1	103	
	102	1	102	
	101	1	101	
Average	91	1	91	7.4
	85	1	85	
	84	1	84	
	75	1	75	
Below Average	61	1	61	2.6
	39	1	39	
Totals		42	4,497	100

C. B. R. S. Mean = 98

$$\text{Sample Mean} = \frac{\sum fx}{n} = \frac{4,497}{42} = 104.69$$

Note: Numbers were rounded off for convenience where applicable.

adjustment scores obtained in this study.

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The scores in the sample ranged from 39 to 120. The mean score on the scale for typical children was ninety-eight. Of the sample 90 percent scored above the C. B. R. S. mean on Home Adjustment, 7.4 percent fell within the average range, while 2.6 percent were below average in Home Adjustment. A total of 97.4 percent of the sample scored average or above average in Home Adjustment.

The mean score on the scale for Home Adjustment was 98, but the mean score for the sample first graders was 104.69. It was perceived by the writer, however, that too many variables were involved to conclude that this high score was attributed to kindergarten experience.

Social Adjustment Scores

The social adjustment scores presented in Table 4 ranged from 40 to 120. The mean C. B. R. S. score for typical children was ninety-nine. The mean score for the sample was 103.6. Of the sample 83.3 percent scored above average with two subjects falling below average for the emotionally handicapped. It came as no surprise that the two low scorers in the area of Social Adjustment were the same children who scored lowest in Self Adjustment, and both were below average in Total Personality Adjustment.

School Adjustment Scores

Table 5 reveals the school adjustment scores of the sample. Ten children from the sample scored the maximum

Table 4

Social Adjustment Scores of First Grade Children who Attended Kindergarten and Percentages of the Total Sample who Ranked Average, Above Average or Below Average on The Child Behavior Rating Scale

Social Adjust. Rank, CBRS	Social Adjust. Scores	Fre- quency	fx	Percentage of total sample
Above Average	120	7	840	
	118	1	118	
	117	2	234	
	116	1	116	
	115	6	690	
	113	1	113	
	112	1	112	
	111	2	222	
	110	2	220	
	109	3	327	
	107	1	107	
	106	1	106	66.7
Average	105	1	105	
	104	1	104	
	96	1	96	
	95	2	190	
	88	1	88	
	87	1	87	16.6
Below Average	80	2	160	
	78	1	78	
	73	1	73	
	72	1	72	
	52	1	52	
	40	1	40	16.7
		42	4,350	100
Totals				

C. B. R. S. Mean = 99

$$\text{Sample Mean} = \frac{\sum fx}{n} = \frac{4,350}{42} = 103.6$$

Note: Numbers were rounded off for convenience where applicable.

Table 5

School Adjustment Scores of First Grade Children who Attended Kindergarten and Percentages of the Total Sample who Ranked Average, Above Average or Below Average on The Child Behavior Rating Scale

School Adjust. Rank, CBRS	School Adjust. Scores	Fre- quency	fx	Percentage of total sample
Above Average	72	10	720	
	71	2	142	
	70	2	140	
	69	2	138	
	68	2	136	
	67	3	201	
	65	1	65	
	64	2	128	57
Average	62	1	62	
	61	1	61	
	60	1	60	
	59	1	59	
	57	1	57	
	54	1	54	
	53	2	106	
	51	2	102	24
Below Average	50	1	50	
	48	2	96	
	45	1	45	
	45	1	41	
	41	1	39	
	39	1	34	
	34	1	24	19
	24			
		42	2,560	100

Totals

C. B. R. S. Mean = 59

$$\text{Sample Mean} = \frac{\sum fx}{n} = \frac{2,560}{42} = 60.0$$

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of seventy-two. This was the second largest in rank order in which such a large number received the maximum score. Fifty-seven percent of the total sample rated above average in this area; twenty-four percent fell within the average scores. However, nineteen percent scored below average showing the largest percentage of below average scores in the entire rating scale. It was interesting to note that no other area revealed such extremes in adjustment.

Physical Adjustment Scores

Table 6 indicates the excellent physical adjustment of the sample. Over ninety percent of the children were rated above average in physical adjustment with the remainder scoring in the average range. None were found to be below average in physical adjustment.

Summary

Table 7 provides a summary of the scores in the five adjustment areas of the Child Behavior Rating Scale and the Total Personality Adjustment scores.

As measured by the Child Behavior Rating Scale, the children in the sample scored highest in the area of Physical Adjustment. This was followed by Home Adjustment, Total Personality Adjustment, Self Adjustment, and Social Adjustment with the poorest adjustment being indicated in the School Adjustment area.

Table 6

Physical Adjustment Scores of First Grade Children
Who Attended Kindergarten and Percentages
of the Total Sample Who Ranked Average,
Above Average or Below Average on
The Child Behavior Rating Scale

Physical Adj. Rank, CBRS	Physical Adj. Scores (x)	Frequency (f)	fx	Percentage of total sample
Above Average	36	32	1152	90.5
	35	3	105	
	34	2	68	
	33	1	33	
Average	32	1	32	9.5
	31	1	31	
	30	2	60	
Below Average	Below 30	0	0	0
		42	1,481	100
Totals				

C. B. R. S. Mean = 30

Sample Mean = $\frac{\sum fx}{n} = \frac{1,481}{42} = 35+$

Table 7

Summary of the Percentages of Scores Derived
from the Child Behavior Rating Scale

Area of Adjustment	Above Average Adjustment	Average Adjustment	Total Well Adjusted	Below Average
Self Adjustment	66.7	19	85.7	14.3
Home Adjustment	83.3	9.5	92.8	7.2
Social Adjustment	66.7	16.6	83.3	16.7
School Adjustment	57	24	81	19
Physical Adjustment	90.5	9.5	100	0
Total Personality Adjustment	57.5	33	90.5	9.5

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine how first grade teachers perceived certain kindergarten experiences as contributing to the child's adjustment or success in first grade. It was the author's opinion that an examination of a reputable kindergarten program within a given school system might present evidence which would encourage the establishment of more programs of this kind.

Two instruments were used to measure the adjustment of the sample of first grade children and to determine the contributions of the kindergarten to this adjustment as perceived by their first grade teachers. The first of these was Cassel's "The Child Behavior Rating Scale"¹ and the second was an open-ended opinionnaire presented to each first grade teacher in the sample schools.

The study was limited in time, sample, and scope and was confined to the characteristics measured by the

¹Russell N. Cassel, "The Child Behavior Rating Scale" (Los Angeles: Western Psychological Services, 1962).

The Review of Literature

Since the time of Comenius, Froebel, and Montessori the kindergarten has undergone much study and change, but it has retained some of the basic philosophy which emerged in its earliest years. There is currently an apparent conflict in kindergarten research between those who support the child development point of view and those who support a cognitive approach to learning. There seems to be a trend, however, toward more scientific study to determine the best ways in which five-year-olds can be taught to meet the challenges of a changing world. Many of the studies regarding the specific contributions made to school success are inconclusive but one factor is prominent--kindergarten does make a significant contribution to the child's ability to cope with the beginning demands of school and thus merits a permanent place in the public school system. Although methods vary and objectives are worded differently there is basic agreement that the aim of the kindergarten is to help each child develop socially, emotionally, physically, aesthetically and intellectually prior to his entry into first grade. There is a conflict, however, in the recommended methods for obtaining these objectives.

Collection of the Data

Permission to study a sample of first grade children in the Fort Campbell Dependent Schools was granted by the

superintendent. Two schools were chosen upon recommendation of the superintendent as offering a sufficient sample. Meetings were held with the principals and teachers to discuss the plan of the study. The plan of the study included the teachers' use of The Child Behavior Rating Scale with those first grade children who attended the Fort Campbell Kindergartens during the year 1967-68, and the teachers' responses to the open-ended opinionnaire. The latter was related to the teacher's opinion of the contributions made by kindergarten experience to first grade adjustment or success. The results of the test and opinionnaire were examined by the writer and were interpreted as yielding the following conclusions.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions from the Teacher Opinionnaire

1. The first grade teachers in the Fort Campbell Dependent School System perceived that social adjustment was the most important contribution that kindergarten education made to the child's adjustment or success to first grade.

2. The first grade teachers in the system perceived that other important contributions made by kindergarten education to the child's adjustment or success in first grade included helpful records which were kept by the kindergarten teacher and forwarded to first grade teachers, reading readiness experiences, readiness

55

experiences for math and language, and planned experiences in which children were taught to follow directions.

3. Two of the teachers perceived that the kindergarten did not need to make additional contributions to the child's adjustment or success in first grade.

4. Two of the teachers perceived that kindergarten children need to learn that school is not play.

5. One teacher perceived that kindergarten should progress from a half-day at the beginning of the year to a full day at the end of the kindergarten year in preparation for the full day of first grade.

6. Two teachers perceived that more readiness work should be done in math, language, and reading.

Conclusions from The Child Behavior Rating Scale

1. One hundred percent of the sample were rated average or above average in physical adjustment.

2. Ninety-three percent of the sample were rated average or above average in home adjustment.

3. Eighty-six percent of the sample were rated average or above average in self adjustment.

4. Eighty-three percent of the sample were rated average or above average in social adjustment.

5. Eighty-one percent of the sample were rated average in school adjustment.

6. Ninety percent of the sample were rated average or above average in total personality adjustment.

As a result of the reading of related literature, observing in the kindergarten classrooms, and examining the Child Behavior Rating Scales and teacher opinionnaires the writer made the follow recommendations:

1. That a controlled group study be made to test the hypothesis that kindergarten contributes to social adjustment in first grade employing pretests and post-tests which this study did not utilize.

2. That school administrators study in depth literature related to the kindergarten program and establish kindergartens where justified.

3. That kindergarten teachers' associations strengthen their programs in an attempt to upgrade the kindergartens now in existence using as models classes such as those found at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

4. That more teachers make use of instruments such as the Child Behavior Rating Scale which could aid in the guidance of the individual child by identifying his specific problems and by referring him for professional aid.

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1961 Norwood Trail
Clarksville, Tennessee 37040
December 31, 1970

RECEIVED

JAN 4 1971

Western Psychological Services
Publishers and Distributors
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Los Angeles, California 90025

WESTERN PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Gentlemen:

During the Winter school quarter of 1968 I purchased from you fifty copies of your "Child Behavior Rating Scale" by Russell N. Cassel for use in a study for my Master's thesis at Austin Peay State University.

The librarian tells me that before my thesis can be shelved in the University Library that I must have written permission from you to place a copy in the appendix of the bound thesis. Will you please advise me on this.

Sincerely,

Betty V. Lambert

Betty V. Lambert (Mrs. D. B.)

1/4/71

→ Permission for the above is granted.

Western Psychological Services

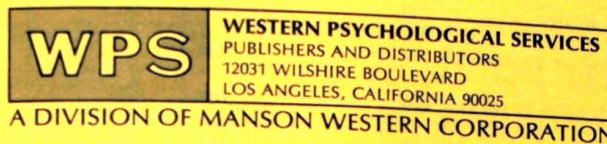
by *Ira R. Manson*
Ira R. Manson, President

The Child Behavior Rating Scale

By

Russell N. Cassel, Ed.D.

Published By



Name				School
Address				Grade
Birthdate	Age	Boy	Girl	Rated By:
Date				Position of Rater:

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

This rating scale is designed to assess the personality adjustment of primary grade school children who do not have sufficient reading skill to complete the group type of psychological tests. The ratings are to be accomplished by the teacher and/or parents. The person rating the child should read each item on the scale carefully, and then place a check mark (✓) in the appropriate place where he believes the particular child belongs for the specific item involved. If the item is "yes" for the child, put a check mark on the "yes". If the item is "no", put a check mark on the "no". If the answer is somewhere in between the yes and no, put a check mark on the four point scale indicating where the item is most true. Study the example.

Example: Mary is prettier than Lois.

yes		✓		no
-----	--	---	--	----

C.B.R.S. Profile (2000 Typical Pupils)

T-Score	Self-Adjustment	Home-Adjustment	Social-Adjustment	School-Adjustment	Physical-Adjustment	Personality Tot. Adjust.
80	120	120	120	72	36	552
75	119	119	119	71	36	547
70	118	118	118	70	35	542
65	117	117	117	68	34	536
60	112	112	112	65	33	513
55	105	105	105	62	32	483
50	99	98	99	59	30	452
45	92	91	92	56	29	421
40	85	84	85	53	27	390
35	78	77	78	50	26	360
30	72	70	72	46	24	329
25	65	62	65	43	22	298
20	58	55	58	40	21	267
Weighted Scores						P.T.A.S.
Weight Values	2	2	0	1	0	
Personality Total Adjustment Score		+	X	+	X	=

56. Often has difficulty finding things to do with self.
57. Often tends to be very selfish and self-centered.
58. Often is not a very good listener in conversation.
59. Often is dishonest and not very trustworthy.
60. Often does not attend Sunday school or church.

Scale Values						
1	2	3	4	5	6	
yes					no	
yes					no	
yes					no	
yes					no	
yes					no	
NUMBER CHECKS						TOTAL WEIGHTED SCORE
WEIGHTED VALUES						

School Adjustment

61. Often expresses a strong dislike for school.
62. Often is very sleepy or restless in school.
63. Often has difficulty expressing self in words.
64. Often seems afraid to speak-out in class.
65. Often has difficulty keeping "mind" on school work.
66. Often distracts other students in school program.
67. Often has difficulty doing school work.
68. Takes little or no part in co-curricular activities.
69. Gets along poorly with one or more teachers.
70. Parents often "nag" child about school work.
71. Seldom works hard or long on school assignments.
72. Quality of school work varies from day-to-day.

yes					no	
yes					no	
yes					no	
yes					no	
yes					no	
yes					no	
yes					no	
yes					no	
yes					no	
yes					no	
yes					no	
NUMBER CHECKS						TOTAL WEIGHTED SCORE
WEIGHTED VALUES						

Physical Adjustment

73. Generally is in rather poor health.
74. Has poor muscular control and coordination.
75. Teeth are often unclean; and is unkempt.
76. Often doesn't have much energy or "pep".
77. There is evidence of perceptual malfunctioning.
78. Has uncorrected poor vision or poor hearing.

yes					no	
yes					no	
yes					no	
yes					no	
yes					no	
yes					no	
NUMBER CHECKS						TOTAL WEIGHTED SCORE
WEIGHTED VALUES						

TEACHER OPINIONAIRE

In terms of the children in your class who attended the Fort Campbell kindergartens, please answer the following questions:

1. What do you feel is the most valuable contribution kindergarten makes to the child's success in school?

2. What additional contribution would you like to see the kindergarten make?

244 West Avenue
Clarksville, Tennessee
February 25, 1969

Dr. C. O. McKee, Supt.
Fort Campbell Dependent Schools
Fort Campbell, Kentucky

Dear Dr. McKee:

Some time ago I spoke with you concerning a study of the value of kindergarten education which I wished to make in the Fort Campbell elementary schools. Since that time plans have been finalized to the point that I can present them to you for final approval.

Each of the first grade teachers in the Marshall and Lincoln schools would be asked to examine their records to obtain names of children who attended the system's kindergarten classes for the full year, 1968-69. If this number exceeds thirty-five these two schools will provide a sufficient sample. Otherwise the other two elementary schools would be included also.

The teachers would be asked to administer the Child Behavior Rating Scale for each of these children (requiring about ten minutes each). In addition she would be asked to list the most valuable contribution she feels the kindergarten makes to the adjustment of this group in her first grade and any additional contribution she would like to see it make.

The study will consist then, of my ranking these scores to determine in what ways kindergarten experiences are helpful to first grade teachers and children. I realize that this plan is different from the original one we discussed which was to measure achievement of the kindergarten children in the first grade. This proved to be too difficult a task on the Master's level.

If this meets with your approval I shall make arrangements with the principals and teachers to begin work as soon as the Rating Scales arrive.

Sincerely,

Betty V. Lambert (Mrs. D. B.)

DEPENDENT SCHOOLS
Office of the Superintendent
Fort Campbell, Kentucky 42223

14 March 1969

Mrs. Betty V. Lambert
244 West Avenue
Clarksville, Tennessee 37040

Dear Mrs. Lambert:

This letter is in reply to your request for gathering data from our kindergarten and first grade operation.

The plan that you suggested in your letter that we received on March 14, 1969 is approved. I suggest that you contact the principals of the schools concerned and work out the details providing your contact with the teachers. If this office can be of any further service to you please feel free to call upon us.

Sincerely yours,

Clinton O. McKee
Superintendent

COM/emr