

**PROBLEMS OF SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS
AS EXPRESSED THROUGH THE MOONEY
PROBLEM CHECK LIST AND SUGGESTIONS
FOR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS**

BY

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PROBLEMS OF SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS AS EXPRESSED THROUGH THE MOONEY
PROBLEM CHECK LIST AND SUGGESTIONS FOR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

A Research Paper
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
Joyce Crockett Caldarelli

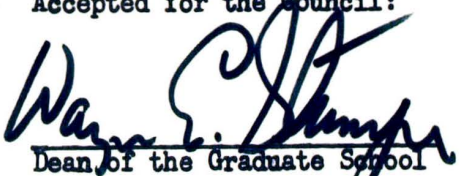
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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Research Paper written by Joyce Crockett Caldarelli entitled "Problems of Seventh Grade Students as Expressed Through the Mooney Problem Check List and Suggestions for Possible Solutions." 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 Psychology: Counseling and Guidance.


Major Professor

Accepted for the Council:


Dean of the Graduate School

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Chapter 1

Introduction to the Problem

In the American society it is deemed in the best interest of all members of that society for all children to attend school and develop their physical, mental, and social potentialities to the highest degree possible for them.

One of the primary purposes of the guidance department is to help the individual understand himself and his world. This cannot be done by a single event, but rather by a series of actions or steps progressing toward a goal.

It is assumed that the individual who understands himself and his world will become a more effective, more productive, and happier person. He will become more fully functioning as a person, and he will achieve greater awareness of who he is and who he can become.

The purpose of this study was to reveal through the Mooney Problem Check List (1) the problems young people are concerned with in their personal lives; (2) the areas in which students registered a need for help and guidance; (3) the areas in which students were relatively free from disturbing problems; (4) the areas in which the most problems exist; (5) to find whether any students would be willing to talk with a counselor or someone else; (6) to find whether any particular group(s) indicated that they had more problems; (7) to find whether students are using the counseling services available to them at the present; (8) to find whether the students understand what guidance and counseling services

are for and how they can help students; and (9) it was intended to show, in so far as the data permits, the need for and the probable direction of further developments of guidance programs to meet the needs of students in this particular school.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

The review of the related literature showed a clear need for young people to discuss personal-social problems with their peers. They need to discuss, not so much to find solutions, but in order to have more accurate information to incorporate into their thought processes as they form a self-concept.

Because of a lack of communication, many young people think that they are unique in having certain problems. They begin to develop bad feelings about themselves and to develop negative self-concepts, thereby adding the extra problems of anxiety and tension to their systems which interferes with the solution of their original problems.

Stetter (1969) saw the advantages of students knowing about their peer's problems. He had the regular teacher administer the Mooney Problem Check List and Form A of I PAT-8 Parallel-Form Anxiety Battery (Cattell and Scheier, 1960) to the experimental and the control groups in his study. The teacher then went over the check list and told the students how many had checked each item. They became very interested in the survey when they learned that their friends had problems also.

The experimental group was then given Form B of the Anxiety Test and the scores of the two groups on the pre- and post-tests were analyzed. The results supported the hypotheses that the anxiety level of students will be lowered when they learn that others their age have personal-social problems similar to their own. They showed relaxed defenses,

a general decrease in tension during the discussion which followed the testing, and increased interest. The study further revealed that because of their hesitancy in communicating, the boys showed a greater decrease of seventy per cent compared to fifty per cent for the girls in their anxiety level.

It was discovered that girls will reveal more personal problems than boys because they have no masculinity to protect. The sixteen girls underlined five hundred ninety-two problems whereas the twenty-five boys underlined three hundred eighty-one problems. Five of the top seven in number of total underlined problems were girls. Five of the seven who underlined the least were boys.

In discussing the characteristics of junior high school students who seek counseling, Esper (1964) studied students and divided them into three groups as they came for counseling. The groups were (1) Referred students, (2) Self-Referred, and (3) Non-Contact (neither referred nor self-referred).

The results of this study indicated that the Self-Referred counselees tend to reflect a higher frequency of problems on the Mooney Problem Check List while all three counseling groups exhibit about the same amount of concern in School, and in Money, Work, and Future problems. Other findings are further indicated:

1. Self-Referred and Non-Contact groups appear more sensitive than the Referred group to problems with Relations with People in General.
2. In intelligence test scores, the Non-Contact group surpasses the Referred group but not the Self-Referred.

3. The Non-Contact students appear to check fewer problems on the Mooney Problem Check List than do Self-Referred.

4. Both referral groups (Referred and Self-Referred) display the highest incidence of problems in counseling regarding School. The Referred students display this trend in their Mooney response while the Self-Referred do not.

5. In the intra-group division (a further division of the other groups) the Non-Contact student who attains the higher grades reflects less concern with School problems than do the other Non-Contact students.

6. Within the Non-Contact group, those students who attain the highest intelligence test scores display less concern with School problems than do the other Non-Contact students.

7. It would seem that adolescent girls are more apt to be self-referred and boys more likely to be referred for counseling.

In another study Barnard, Clarke, and Gelatt (1969) found that more counselor contacts were concerned with personal problems and poor educational achievement. Such results lend some support to the notion that the students who saw their counselors most often were students experiencing relatively greater adjustment difficulties. Most were students with average or above ability who were achieving rather poorly in school. These students were tenth graders, but the records indicated that the problem started back in the junior high school.

The majority of the study group tended to express their non-conformity to the school situation in an overt manner--teacher disrespect, rudeness, class disturbance, unexplained absences, leaving a class in session, and plagiarism.

Pflieger (1947) did an important study on pupil adjustment problems comparing the relationships between scores on the California Test of Personality and the Mooney Problem Check List. This study consisted of one hundred twenty-eight students in the last month of their 8A grade in two schools in Detroit. There were fifty boys and seventy-eight girls.

The average number of problems was about two for each area. Two seemingly significant variations from this general average were the high score of 3.06 in School problems and a low of 1.18 in the area of Home and Family. Problems related to School are marked more frequently than any others, while those related to Home and Family are checked least often. The researcher gave three possible reasons for this. They are as follows:

1. Students are taking these tests in a school environment, and so the school problems may stand out as the glaring ones only because of the place in which the students are taking the check list and because it is administered by a teacher.
2. It may be that this is the opportunity which the youngsters have been looking for to get out their gripes about school.
3. It may be that school actually is the place where the youngsters have most of their problems. It may be that the school, by its very nature, presents many problems to children and is not doing enough to help solve these problems. It may be that schools are creating conditions which make these school problems seem very important to children.

In discussing why there are low scores in the Home and Family area, Pflieger gives the three following reasons:

1. In schools we have been prone to put much of the blame for youngsters' problems and troubles on the home and family. If this sampling represents the population, we may be very wrong in this habit of blaming the home and family for many of the things which children do.

2. It may be that youngsters are protective of their families, and so they do not mark the problems which they have at home and with their families. They do not reveal all problems which they actually have. They do not tell the whole story. It should not be assumed, however, that this protection is consciously given.

3. There may still be another reason. Youngsters may have become so accustomed to the kinds of homes and families they have, that they do not recognize the problems in their homes and families. A child's experience with a home and family is largely limited to his own or to others like his. What may be a problem or seem like a problem to an outsider may not be a problem to an individual who is connected with that particular home or family. Problems are recognized as such by reference to widened experiential backgrounds.

Another area found to be high in the number of problems presented was Boy and Girl Relations. Evidently those are the kinds of things which bother and trouble boys and girls as they leave elementary school. They are growing up, they are conscious of it, and they are wondering about the future.

Goldman (1968) did a similar study which was to add to Pflieger's findings.

The results of this study which also used the California Test of Personality and the Mooney Problem Check List showed that those who demonstrated a high degree of adjustment (high score on the CTP) checked fewer problems on the MPCL than those who demonstrated poor adjustment (low score on the CTP). On the basis of his study, which is in agreement with Pflieger's similar work, Goldman asserts that the MPCL may permit an assessment of the person's adjustment status.

In a study by Zunich (1963), the prediction in the hypothesis that parental attitudes toward child rearing and family life are significantly related to problems of junior high school students was clearly borne out. Of the six hundred and forty-four relations examined between parental attitude scores measured by Parental Attitude Research Instrument and students' problems as indicated by the Mooney Problem Check List, ninety-two were significant at the .05 level or beyond.

Girls, as usual, evidenced a higher frequency of problems. Their highest number of problems appeared in the area of Relations to People in General, and the lowest in the area of Self-centered Concerns. Boys, on the other hand, had the highest frequency of problems concerning Self-centered concerns and the lowest was Boy and Girl Relationships.

Rouman (1956) did a study on school problems as related to parental factors. He found that a working mother contributed to only one-fourth of the total number of referrals. The youngest child in this group is the most affected. The older ones adjust better. The children in this group were lacking greater than those in any other group in feeling independent of others, lacking a sense of security, self-respect, and withdrawal in connection with their family.

In the group lacking an adult male, it was revealed that the elementary age child was affected the most and that the female was less affected than the male. The female was affected more at the high school level because of the heavy burden of domestic responsibility and lack of supervision. Their greatest personality problems were a lack of personal worth, a lack of the belief that they are well regarded by others, and that they have faith in their future success. They are lacking in motivation and standards, but not ability. They are strong in self-reliance and family relations.

The step-parents and guardian group showed that the younger are more able to adjust to step-parents than the older ones. Some had begun to leave school and home. Older girls have greater problems here since they cannot leave as easily as boys. In personality problems this group showed more nervousness and lack of social skills.

Information based on Cheney and Van Lydegraf's (1963) findings, indicated that junior high school students who are more transient checked significantly more problems than a similar group of students who were more permanent residents. The students in this study at Montgomery Central are mostly permanent residents. In the previously mentioned study five thousand eight hundred sixty-nine problems were identified by two hundred twenty junior high school students.

In Kemp's study (1965) the fewest problems were indicated in the areas of Money, Work, the Future; Home and Family; and Relations to People in General. The highest numbers indicated were in the area of Money, Work, the Future, and this was by the group who had the highest number of problems. The group with the medium number of

problems indicated that they had more problems in the areas of Relations to People in General, Self-centered Concerns, and Boy and Girl Relations.

Van Riper's survey (1971) investigated how students view the counselor. When asked the question "How often is your school counselor helpful to you?" the mean indicated twenty per cent nearly always, twenty-one per cent usually, twenty-nine per cent sometimes, fifteen per cent seldom, and fourteen per cent almost never. When asked "Which person in your school do you feel you can talk to about almost anything?" the mean indicated twenty-one per cent for the counselor, three per cent a principal, sixty-one per cent a student, six per cent a teacher, and nine per cent no person.

These cited studies reveal important findings concerning the problems of junior high school students.

They have a need to discuss personal-social problems with their peers, and they see school as presenting most of their problems rather than their homes and families which are so often blamed.

The degree of adjustment of the child is also assessed by the Mooney Problem Check List since it indicates that those who are better adjusted have fewer problems. It also points out that the low achievers have the most problems.

This check list can stimulate the student to recognize his needs, it can identify students' problems for the counselor, and it can be used as the basis for homeroom, group guidance, and orientation programs.

Chapter 3

Research Design

Statement of the Problem

What are the expressed problems of seventh grade students at Montgomery Central High School, and what are some possible solutions to these problems?

Importance of the Study

Each year finds too many students who are not developing their talents and abilities to their fullest potential and who are not achieving academically in accordance with their ability. Too many students are unhappy in their daily experiences and find very little which is of interest to them or very little to motivate them.

It is vitally important, not only for these students but also for the country itself, that as many boys and girls as possible find school a place of excitement, joy, pleasure, and a place that provides meaningful learning experiences.

Counselors and teachers will find this type of data gathered from the check list helpful for guidance of individuals and groups. The obtained results should be useful to the teacher and administrators, in helping students in their adjustment problems. It is assumed that if such data were incorporated into the guidance program, it would help point the way for getting happier and better adjusted students.

Source of Data

The primary data for this study was gathered by administering the Mooney Problem Check List to the seventh grade students at Montgomery Central High School and by reading books and journal articles on the related subjects written by authorities within the field.

Reliability and Limitation of the Data

The study, in common with any study that is wholly or partially dependent on check list information, is limited to the coverage of the check list, and is dependent upon the accuracy of the answers. Published research reports indicate that students check an average of twenty to thirty problems which suggests that the list contains a fairly good coverage of problems that students are willing to acknowledge.

Assumptions

In making this study the following assumptions were made:

1. The student himself knows better than anyone else at school what problems bother him.
2. The anonymity of the checklist allowed free and honest responses to be made by the students.
3. The checklist was a valid means of surveying the problems.
4. The students who were studied in this investigation were a reasonably representative sample of students of this age category.
5. The information gathered from this study will be utilized toward helping the students with the indicated problems.

Chapter 4

Procedure

The sample. The students involved in this survey attend Montgomery Central High School, Cunningham, Tennessee. This is a rural school with eight hundred sixty students. Of this number fifteen to sixteen per cent are Negro.

All the seventh grade students who were present April 25, 1972, were administered the check list. There are one hundred eighty students in this grade, but eighteen were absent on this date. The sample contained a total of one hundred sixty-two students of which eighty-two were boys and eighty were girls. The check list was administered in the mathematics classes.

The instrument. The instrument used for the survey was the Mooney Problem Check List, 1950 revision, Junior High School Form.

The check list comes in four forms (1) the High School Form for grades 9-12 with eleven scores; (2) the College Form for grades 13-16 with eleven scores; (3) Adult Form for adults with nine scores; and (4) the Junior High Form for grades 7-9 which was the one used for this study. This form consists of seven categories of two hundred ten items with thirty items in each area. The seven areas are as follows:

- I. Health and Physical Development (HPD)
- II. School (S)
- III. Home and Family (HF)
- IV. Money, Work, the Future (MWF)

- V. Boy and Girl Relations (BG)
- VI. Relations to People in General (PG)
- VII. Self-centered Concerns (SC)

The students did not sign their names to the check list and in addition to marking the check list, they were asked to indicate the following which was presented on a mimeographed sheet:

1. Is your mother employed full time outside the home?
2. Are you living with step-parents or foster parents?
3. Does your home lack an adult male in it? (18 years or over)
4. How often is your school counselor helpful to you?

(indicate one), Nearly always, usually, sometimes, seldom, and almost never.

5. Which person in your school do you feel you can talk to about almost anything? (indicate one), Guidance counselor, a principal, a student, a teacher, no person, and other.

6. Do you feel that you understand what guidance and counseling services are for and how they can help you? Answer yes or no.

The Manual (1950) states that the Mooney Problem Check List does not pretend to be a measuring device. "Rather, the Problem Check List is a form of simple communication between the counselee and counselor designed to accelerate the process of understanding the student and his real problems."

The forms are composed simply of lists of common problems, and the student is asked to mark those problems he has, to indicate those which are of most concern to him, and to write a statement about his problems in his own words. On the Junior High School, the High School, and the College Forms he is also asked if he would like to discuss his

problems with someone. The lists have been compiled carefully by referring to student statements of their problems, case studies, published literature on student problems, and the counseling experience of the authors.

Reliability with this kind of procedure is a problem and none are given. Retest estimates are subject to error due to rapid changes in the nature of the individual's problems and in the way he perceives them.

No norms are given. The author suggests that local norms would be most appropriate, and that significance does not depend on the number of problems reported.

Buros (1965) states that the information available suggests that the popularity of the Mooney Problem Check List is well deserved, and that it may be used appropriately in the ways suggested by the authors.

Administration and scoring. The instrument was administered to five separate classes of seventh graders by this researcher. Care was taken to maintain an impersonal, research-oriented approach when introducing the check list. Each class was reminded not to write their names on their papers. They were instructed that this is not a test. It is just a check list to let researchers see what some of the problems are which are facing boys and girls your age in order that we might try to help you find some solutions.

After administering the check list, an item analysis was made and the data was presented in the forms of tables listing the persons checking each item. The results were analyzed and suggestions were determined which would aid in the solutions to these problems.

Chapter 5

Presentation of the Data

It is of some interest to examine the data obtained from the Mooney Problem Check Lists of the eighty girls and the eighty-two boys in this survey. As evidenced by the data presented the problems of the seventh grade students at Montgomery Central High School are many, and the frequency is varied. This information is presented in the following twelve tables.

Each table, one through seven, contains thirty items from one of the seven areas of the check list along with the number of boys and the number of girls checking each item as a problem of concern to them. The mean number of problems checked in each area is indicated for the boys and for the girls along with the difference between the total number of problems checked by the boys and those checked by the girls.

The seven areas of the Mooney Problem Check List are as follows: Health and Physical Development; School; Home and Family; Money, Work, the Future; Boy and Girl Relations; Relations to People in General; and Self-centered concerns.

In the area of Health and Physical Development (see Table 1) the fact that they were not getting enough sleep and that they were not as strong as some of the other kids was of most concern for the boys. The girls were concerned significantly more with the problems of lack of attractiveness and the fact that they become tired easily.

Table 2 shows that the students themselves feel that school presents most of their problems. Approximately fifty per cent of the boys indicated that they did not like school, that they thought the classes were dull, and that they were not studying as they should. The girls felt that the dull classes and their restlessness in classes bothered them most.

The Home and Family (see Table 3) was rated fifth by the boys and fourth by the girls. The girls checked approximately fifty-five per cent more problems in this area than the boys did, thus indicating that they were more concerned with these problems.

There was no significant difference in the total problems checked for the Money, Work, the Future area (see Table 4); however, an examination of the items indicates that the boys were restless to get out of school and earn their own money whereas the girls were more anxious about their future marital status.

In the Boy and Girl Relations the students were concerned with the opposite sex liking them (see Table 5), and wanting to know more about the opposite sex. The boys ranked this area sixth and the girls ranked it fifth.

Table 6 shows that both the boys and the girls rated third the area of Relations to People in General although the girls scored much higher than the boys.

Not being able to control their temper and disliking someone were rated highest by the girls for this area, and not being able to control their temper and being bashful were the problems of most significance for the boys.

The Self-centered Concerns problems were ranked second by both the boys and the girls (see Table 7). The girls indicated that they were often troubled with thoughts about heaven and hell and with wishing that they had never been born, and the most significant problem of the boys was being nervous.

Table 8 summarizes the responses to the three questions which are at the conclusion of the check list. Thirty-two boys and forty-six girls wrote about three or more problems which were of a wide variety. No particular problems seemed to predominate.

Over fifty per cent of the students said that they would like to talk to someone about their problems, but also over fifty per cent said that they would not like to spend more time in school trying to solve their problems.

Table 9 presents the summarizing data for the questionnaire which was prepared by this researcher and which accompanied the Mooney Problem Check List.

This table points out that although a very high majority of the students understand what guidance and counseling services are for, they still prefer to talk to their peers about their own problems.

Table 10 gives the ranking of the seven areas of the check list for the boys and for the girls along with the total problems checked for all seven areas.

For both the boys and the girls, School, Self-centered Concerns, and Relations to People in General, in that order, were the areas where they felt that they had the most problems.

Tables 11 and 12 give illustrations of problems checked most frequently and those checked least frequently by the boys and the girls.

For the boys' most frequently checked problems, all except wanting to earn some of their own money and being nervous came from the School area.

The girls had those same school problems with the addition of the problem of feeling that teachers do not practice what they preach. They also had several problems from the area of Relations to People in General which the boys did not have.

TABLE 1

Problem Area of Health and Physical Development (HPD)
from the Mooney Problem Check List

Item No.	The Problem	Persons Checking Boys	Problem Girls
1.	Often have headaches	12	14
2.	Don't get enough sleep	24	24
3.	Have trouble with my teeth	5	9
4.	Not as healthy as I should be	15	7
5.	Not getting outdoors enough	10	12
36.	Too short for my age	19	21
37.	Too tall for my age	1	11
38.	Having poor posture	6	11
39.	Poor complexion or skin trouble	6	25
40.	Not good-looking	22	35
71.	Not eating the right food	9	24
72.	Often not hungry for my meals	12	14
73.	Overweight	20	27
74.	Underweight	14	14
75.	Missing too much school because of illness	6	4
106.	Often have a sore throat	8	15
107.	Catch a good many colds	14	17
108.	Often get sick	7	11
109.	Often have pains in my stomach	11	27
110.	Afraid I may need an operation	11	4
141.	Can't hear well	5	4
142.	Can't talk plainly	5	7
143.	Trouble with my eyes	14	23
144.	Smoking	15	11
145.	Getting tired easily	13	28
176.	Nose or sinus trouble	8	7
177.	Trouble with my feet	10	5
178.	Not being as strong as some other kids	23	7
179.	Too clumsy and awkward	4	13
180.	Bothered by a physical handicap	3	1
Total Problems Checked		332	432
Difference			100
Mean No. of Problems Checked (82 boys; 80 girls)		4.05	5.40

TABLE 2

Problem Area of School (S) Concerns
from the Mooney Problem Check List

Item No.	The Problem	Persons Checking Boys	Problem Girls
6.	Getting low grades in school	35	32
7.	Afraid of tests	34	36
8.	Being a grade behind in school	17	8
9.	Don't like to study	37	28
10.	Not interested in books	30	14
41.	Afraid of failing in school work	34	26
42.	Trouble with arithmetic	55	47
43.	Trouble with spelling or grammar	13	5
44.	Slow in reading	28	9
45.	Trouble with writing	12	7
76.	Not spending enough time in study	41	33
77.	Too much school work to do at home	27	22
78.	Can't keep my mind on my studies	34	36
79.	Worried about grades	31	30
80.	Not smart enough	26	27
111.	Don't like school	42	40
112.	School is too strict	28	35
113.	So often feel restless in classes	39	42
114.	Not getting along with a teacher	34	36
115.	Teachers not practicing what they preach	24	42
146.	Textbooks hard to understand	29	17
147.	Trouble with oral reports	15	14
148.	Trouble with written reports	13	7
149.	Poor memory	12	13
150.	Afraid to speak up in class	19	27
181.	Dull classes	41	48
182.	Too little freedom in classes	36	39
183.	Not enough discussion in classes	15	14
184.	Not interested in certain subjects	36	45
185.	Made to take subjects I don't like	22	34
Total Problems Checked		859	813
Difference		46	
Mean No. of Problems Checked (82 boys; 80 girls)		10.48	10.16

TABLE 3

Problem Area of Home and Family (HF)
from the Mooney Problem Check List

Item No.	The Problem	Persons Checking Problem	
		Boys	Girls
11.	Being an only child	2	3
12.	Not living with my parents	6	4
13.	Worried about someone in the family	22	35
14.	Parents working too hard	11	23
15.	Never having any fun with mother or dad	15	11
46.	Sickness at home	8	10
47.	Death in the family	6	7
48.	Mother or father not living	2	3
49.	Parents separated or divorced	7	10
50.	Parents not understanding me	21	30
81.	Being treated like a small child at home	19	23
82.	Parents favoring a brother or sister	12	24
83.	Parents making too many decisions for me	11	22
84.	Parents expecting too much of me	17	17
85.	Wanting things my parents won't give me	21	31
116.	Being criticized by my parents	7	12
117.	Parents not liking my friends	14	14
118.	Parents not trusting me	14	18
119.	Parents old-fashioned in their ideas	22	35
120.	Unable to discuss certain problems at home	15	30
151.	Family quarrels	13	19
152.	Not getting along with a brother or sister	22	32
153.	Not telling parents everything	19	40
154.	Wanting more freedom at home	17	25
155.	Wanting to live in a different neighborhood	5	18
186.	Clash of opinions between me and my parents	8	14
187.	Talking back to my parents	18	30
188.	Mother	10	16
189.	Father	14	15
190.	Wanting to run away from home	15	33
Total Problems Checked		393	604
Difference			211
Mean No. of Problems Checked (82 boys; 80 girls)		4.79	7.55

TABLE 4

Problem Area of Money, Work, the Future (MWF)
from the Mooney Problem Check List

Item No.	The Problem	Persons Checking Problem	
		Boys	Girls
16.	Spending money foolishly	26	16
17.	Having to ask parents for money	27	25
18.	Having no regular allowance	26	22
19.	Family worried about money	14	17
20.	Having no car in the family	0	2
51.	Too few nice clothes	9	15
52.	Wanting to earn some of my own money	45	38
53.	Wanting to buy more of my own things	24	33
54.	Not knowing how to buy things wisely	11	12
55.	Too little spending money	22	15
86.	Restless to get out of school and into a job	23	8
87.	Not knowing how to look for a job	8	2
88.	Needing to find a part-time job now	18	12
89.	Having less money than my friends have	18	15
90.	Having to work too hard for the money I get	8	7
121.	Choosing best subjects to take next term	16	16
122.	Deciding what to take in high school	11	18
123.	Wanting advice on what to do after high school	7	15
124.	Wanting to know more about college	13	12
125.	Wanting to know more about trades	7	4
156.	Needing a job during vacations	22	16
157.	Needing to know my vocational abilities	5	3
158.	Needing to decide on an occupation	9	5
159.	Needing to know more about occupations	4	3
160.	Wondering if I've chosen the right vocation	5	5
191.	Afraid of the future	10	19
192.	Not knowing what I really want	12	24
193.	Concerned about military service	19	2
194.	Wondering if I'll ever get married	23	44
195.	Wondering what becomes of people when they die	14	24
Total Problems Checked		448	449
Difference			1
Mean No. of Problems Checked		5.46	5.61

TABLE 5

Problem Area of Boy and Girl Relations (BG)
From the Mooney Problem Check List

Item No.	The Problem	Persons Checking Problem	
		Boys	Girls
21.	Not allowed to use the family car	10	9
22.	Not allowed to run around with the kids I like	17	22
23.	Too little chance to go to parties	15	15
24.	Not enough time for play and fun	10	13
25.	Too little chance to do what I want to do	21	26
56.	Girls don't seem to like me	29	3
57.	Boys don't seem to like me	6	33
58.	Going out with the opposite sex	15	16
59.	Dating	13	19
60.	Not knowing how to make a date	17	5
91.	Nothing interesting to do in my spare time	14	22
92.	So often not allowed to go out at night	17	15
93.	Not allowed to have dates	7	20
94.	Wanting to know more about girls	22	5
95.	Wanting to know more about boys	2	34
126.	No place to entertain friends	7	20
127.	Ill at ease at social affairs	2	5
128.	Trouble in keeping a conversation going	13	19
129.	Not sure of my social etiquette	2	4
130.	Not sure about proper sex behavior	11	23
161.	Not knowing what to do on a date	9	15
162.	Girl friend	22	5
163.	Boy friend	4	38
164.	Deciding whether I'm in love	13	27
165.	Deciding whether to go steady	11	22
196.	Learning how to dance	14	13
197.	Keeping myself neat and looking nice	16	24
198.	Thinking too much about the opposite sex	27	37
199.	Wanting more information about sex matters	9	26
200.	Embarrassed by talk about sex	14	33
Total Problems Checked		389	568
Difference			179
Mean No. of Problems Checked (82 boys; 80 girls)		4.74	7.10

TABLE 6

Problem Area of Relations to People in General (PG)
from the Mooney Problem Check List

Item No.	The Problem	Persons Checking Problem	
		Boys	Girls
26.	Slow in making friends	4	10
27.	Bashful	25	22
28.	Being left out of things	19	26
29.	Never chosen as a leader	16	13
30.	Wishing people liked me better	22	30
61.	Being teased	21	34
62.	Being talked about	22	34
63.	Feelings too easily hurt	21	37
64.	Too easily led by other people	6	13
65.	Picking the wrong kind of friends	10	23
96.	Wanting a more pleasing personality	14	22
97.	Being made fun of	24	24
98.	Being picked on	28	32
99.	Being treated like an outsider	10	12
100.	People finding fault with me	10	17
131.	Awkward in meeting people	8	14
132.	Wanting to be more like other people	10	21
133.	Feeling nobody understands me	11	20
134.	Missing someone very much	22	43
135.	Feeling nobody likes me	11	27
166.	Getting into arguments	16	29
167.	Getting into fights	17	18
168.	Losing my temper	34	44
169.	Being stubborn	9	30
170.	Hurting people's feelings	11	24
201.	Being jealous	12	38
202.	Disliking someone	29	44
203.	Being disliked by someone	22	29
204.	Keeping away from kids I don't like	18	22
205.	No one to tell my troubles to	8	14
Total Problems Checked		490	766
Difference			276
Mean No. of Problems Checked (82 boys; 80 girls)		5.98	9.58

TABLE 7

Problem Area of Self-centered Concerns (SC)
from the Mooney Problem Check List

Item No.	The Problem	Persons Checking Boys	Problem Girls
31.	Being nervous	35	27
32.	Taking things too seriously	10	20
33.	Getting too excited	15	21
34.	Being afraid of making mistakes	25	24
35.	Failing in so many things I try to do	20	12
66.	Getting into trouble	27	22
67.	Trying to stop a bad habit	27	30
68.	Sometimes not being as honest as I should be	27	35
69.	Giving in to temptations	10	11
70.	Lacking self-control	14	10
101.	Not having as much fun as other kids have	12	23
102.	Worrying	18	25
103.	Having bad dreams	14	22
104.	Lacking self-confidence	14	16
105.	Sometimes wishing I'd never been born	21	40
136.	Being careless	17	18
137.	Daydreaming	24	33
138.	Forgetting things	27	28
139.	Being lazy	20	29
140.	Not taking some things seriously	22	22
171.	Feeling ashamed of something I've done	13	33
172.	Being punished for something I didn't do	17	32
173.	Swearing, dirty stories	10	18
174.	Thinking about heaven and hell	24	40
175.	Afraid God is going to punish me	11	26
206.	Sometimes lying without meaning to	24	35
207.	Can't forget some mistakes I've made	21	37
208.	Can't make up my mind about things	24	28
209.	Afraid to try new things by myself	17	24
210.	Finding it hard to talk about my troubles	27	38
Total Problems Checked		587	779
Difference			192
Mean No. of Problems Checked (82 boys; 80 girls)		7.16	9.74

TABLE 8
Questions on the Mooney Problem Check List

Item No.	The Problem	Persons Checking Boys	Problem Girls
1.	What problems are troubling you most? Write about two or three of these if you care to.		
	Writing about one problem	18	16
	Writing about two problems	15	16
	Writing about three problems	23	31
	Writing about more than three problems	9	15
2.	Would you like to spend more time in school in trying to do something about some of your problems?		
	Yes	25	34
	No	52	42
	Maybe	1	1
3.	Would you like to talk to someone about some of your problems?		
	Yes	43	63
	No	29	11
	Maybe	4	2

TABLE 9

Questionnaire Accompanying the Mooney Problem Check List

Item No.	The Problem	Persons Checking Problem Boys	Problem Girls
1.	Is your mother employed full time Outside the home?		
	Yes	29	31
	No	53	47
2.	Are you living with step-parents or foster parents?		
	Yes	8	8
	No	74	71
3.	Does your home lack an adult male in it? (eighteen years or over)		
	Yes	6	5
	No	74	74
4.	How often is your school counselor helpful to you? (Indicate one).		
	Nearly always	10	8
	Sometimes	27	31
	Usually	6	14
	Seldom	13	8
	Almost Never	27	19
5.	Which person in your school do you feel you can talk to about almost anything? (Indicate one).		
	Guidance Counselor	15	15
	Principal	10	3
	Teacher	6	4
	Student	44	52
	Other	1	2
	No Person	6	2
6.	Do you feel that you understand what guidance and counseling services are for and how they can help you?		
	Yes	77	71
	No	5	9

TABLE 10
 Ranking of the Seven Areas of the
 Mooney Problem Check List

Boys' Ranking	Persons Checking Problem
School	859
Self-centered Concerns	587
Relations to People in General	490
Money, Work, the Future	448
Home and Family	393
Boy and Girl Relations	389
Health and Physical Development	332
	<hr/>
Total Problems Checked	3,498

Girls' Ranking	Persons Checking Problem
School	813
Self-centered Concerns	779
Relations to People in General	766
Home and Family	604
Boy and Girl Relations	568
Money, Work, the Future	449
Health and Physical Development	432
	<hr/>
Total Problems Checked	4,411

TABLE 11

Illustrations of Problems Checked Most Frequently
and Least Frequently by Seventh Grade Girls

Item No.	Section of Check List	The Problem	Per Cent Checking the problem
Most Frequently			
181.	S	Dull classes	60.00
42.	S	Trouble with arithmetic	58.85
184.	S	Not interested in certain subjects	56.25
194.	MWF	Wondering if I'll ever get married	55.00
168.	PG	Losing my temper	55.00
202.	PG	Disliking someone	55.00
134.	PG	Missing someone very much	53.75
113.	S	So often feel restless in classes	52.50
115.	S	Teachers not practicing what they preach	52.50
174.	PG	Thinking about heaven and hell	50.00
105.	PG	Sometimes wishing I'd never been born	50.00
153.	HF	Not telling parents everything	50.00
111.	S	Don't like school	50.00
Least Frequently			
180.	HPD	Bothered by a physical handicap	1.25
20.	MWF	Having no car in the family	2.50
87.	MWF	Not knowing how to look for a job	2.50
193.	MWF	Concerned about military service	2.50
11.	HF	Being an only child	3.75
48.	HF	Mother or father not living	3.75
56.	BG	Girls don't like me	3.75
157.	MWF	Needing to know my vocational abilities	3.75
159.	MWF	Needing to know more about occupations	3.75

TABLE 12

Illustrations of Problems Checked Most Frequently
and Least Frequently by Seventh Grade Boys

Item No.	Section of Check List	The Problem	Per Cent Checking the Problem
Most Frequently			
42.	S	Trouble with arithmetic	67.07
52.	MWF	Wanting to earn some of my own money	54.88
111.	S	Don't like school	51.22
76.	S	Not spending enough time in study	50.00
181.	S	Dull classes	50.00
113.	S	So often feel restless in classes	47.56
9.	S	Don't like to study	45.12
182.	S	Too little freedom in classes	43.90
184.	S	Not interested in certain subjects	43.90
6.	S	Getting low grades in school	42.68
31.	SC	Being nervous	42.68
Least Frequently			
20.	MWF	Having no car in the family	0.00
37.	HPD	Too tall for my age	1.22
95.	BG	Wanting to know more about boys	2.44
127.	BG	Ill at ease at social affairs	2.44
129.	BG	Not sure of my social etiquette	2.44
11.	HF	Being an only child	2.44
48.	HF	Mother or father not living	2.44
180.	HPD	Bothered by a physical handicap	3.66

CHAPTER 6

Discussion

This study showed, as has been shown in previous studies, that girls will reveal more personal problems than boys. The eighty girls underlined 4,411 problems; whereas the eighty-two boys underlined 3,498. Six of the top ten in number of total underlined problems were girls. Seven of the ten who underlined the fewest problems were boys.

The boys and the girls listed their first three problem areas of most concern as School; Self-centered Concerns; and Relations to People in General. The girls listed next Home and Family; Boy and Girl Relations; Money, Work, the Future; and Health and Physical Development. The boys continued by listing next Money, Work, the Future; Home and Family; Boy and Girl Relations; and Health and Physical Development.

By examining Table 10 one can see that the boys' and the girls' problems of most concern are of a similar nature. They also concurred in indicating that they were least concerned about their health and physical development problems.

The girls were more concerned about home and family problems and their relationship to other boys and girls. The boys indicated that plans about their future, work, and money bothered them more, and then problems relating to the home and family came next for fifth place.

This author feels that study and group discussion with the boys and girls about their most crucial problems in these areas would be

beneficial. Perhaps this could be carried out through group guidance classes, special discussion groups set up for this purpose, home economics classes, agriculture classes, health, or physical education classes.

This author also feels that distributing copies of Tables 1 through 7, if possible, but especially the tables illustrating the areas of most concern to these students (Tables 2, 6, and 7) to people who work or deal with youngsters such as ministers, workers in the mental health field, scout leaders, teachers in the different schools of seventh and eighth grade levels, guidance counselors, church or day camp leaders, the juvenile officers, and the Juvenile Judge would be beneficial.

There are many conscientious parents who could profit from the results of this survey also, especially Table 3 which is dealing with home and family problems. It might provide the way for happier boys and girls at school and at home if the school authorities and the parents could work together at trying to solve some of these problems.

The parents of students at the seventh and eighth grade levels might be informed about the survey through a memorandum, and those who are interested in the results could request a copy at their expense.

In this study the girls' problems outnumbered the boys' in all areas except the area of School, and in that area the boys checked approximately six per cent more problems than the girls checked (see Table 2).

The most significant difference between the boys and the girls was in the Relations to People in General (see Table 6) and Home and

Family (see Table 3). The least significant difference was in the Money, Work, the Future area (see Table 4).

In the Health and Physical Development area (see Table 1) the girls were significantly more concerned than the boys with problems of having a bad complexion, of not being good looking, and of becoming tired easily. The fact that they did not get enough sleep was the problem that bothered the boys most, and the girls' feeling that they were not good looking concerned them most.

School was the highest area of all for the number of problems checked. As pointed out in the previously cited work of Pflieger (1947), this could be because the survey was made in a school setting, or this could be the opportunity they had been waiting for to get out their gripes, or it could be that school actually is the place where the youngsters have the most problems.

Another factor that may have some bearing on this particular study is the fact that the seventh graders at Montgomery Central are in with the high school students. This may create some of the problems for the youngsters.

The area of School contributed fifteen out of twenty-four of the items checked most frequently by the boys and the girls combined (see Tables 11 and 12).

The boys showed that they had more trouble than the girls in writing reports, being interested in books and understanding them, reading too slowly, being a grade behind in school, and doing poorly in arithmetic.

The girls indicated that although they were not interested in certain subjects, they had to take them. This was a problem of special

concern for them. They also indicated to a high degree that they had too little freedom in classes, that they found the classes to be dull, and that they felt that teachers did not practice what they preached.

Approximatley fifty per cent of both the boys and the girls checked that they did not like school.

Tables 11 and 12 point out that more than forty-two per cent of the boys and the girls indicated that they were having trouble with arithmetic, found the classes to be dull, were not interested in certain subjects, and were often restless in class.

Leidy and Starry (1967) reported an increase in time spent on home work during the period of 1948 to 1967. In this national sample, seven per cent reported spending two or more hours doing homework in 1948, sixteen per cent in 1962, and twenty per cent in 1967. It is a disturbing fact that sixty-eight per cent of these students reported feeling a great deal of pressure to do well in school and that thirty-three per cent reported having dropped activities or hobbies because of school work.

It seems that there is some reasonable cause for concern. Some of our public school students are feeling too much pressure.

West and Wood (1970) state that they feel that it would be unwise to increase the pressures on students in any given school system, until an assessment was made of existing pressures on students.

In the area of Home and Family (see Table 3) the girls, significantly more than the boys, felt that their parents worked too hard, favored a brother or sister, and made too many decisions for them. The girls pointed out that they were not able to discuss some problems at home, and that they often thought about leaving home.

The girls definitely had more problems than the boys in this area as they ranked it fourth, and the boys ranked it fifth. This did not confirm the findings in Pflieger's (1947) work mentioned previously in this study. The Home and Family area in his work had a low score compared to his other areas. This may be because the students at Montgomery Central actually have more problems in this area, or it may be because they can admit their problems more readily.

In reference to the work by Zurich (1936) cited previously, parental attitudes toward child rearing and family life may be significantly related to problems of junior high school students.

In the Money, Work, the Future area the girls checked one more problem than the boys; however, it ranked fourth place for the boys and sixth for the girls.

A response to "Restless to get out of school and into a job" might indicate a potential drop-out problem. This problem was more significant for the boys than for the girls. It could be dealt with through the discussion groups, the guidance classes, or in classes made up primarily of boys. The importance of having short range and long range goals and delayed goal satisfaction should be stressed.

In the Boy and Girl Relations (see Table 5) the boys were concerned about their girl friends to a high degree, but the girls were more concerned about their boy friends. The girls were also concerned about knowing whether they were in love, knowing whether to go steady or not, wanting more information about sex matters, and being embarrassed by talk about sex.

The boys indicated that they wanted to know more about girls and how to make the girls like them.

These problems could also be subjects for group discussions.

The area of Relations to People in General (see Table 6) was ranked third by both the boys and the girls; however, the girls scored much higher. The boys and the girls had something else in common in that they both listed the inability to control their temper as their most significant problem.

In the Self-centered Concerns area (see Table 7) the girls scored significantly higher than the boys in feeling that they take things too seriously, that they do not have as much fun as other kids have, that they worry about heaven and hell, and that they will be punished by God.

The boys' most significant problem in this area was nervousness.

Table 8 shows that approximately ninety-seven per cent of the girls and eighty per cent of the boys wrote about problems that were troubling them, in answer to the question at the conclusion of the check list. These problems were of a wide variety, and no particular ones tended to predominate.

Approximately forty-two per cent of the girls and thirty per cent of the boys said that they would like to spend more time in school trying to do something about some of their problems. Seventy-eight per cent of the girls and fifty-two per cent of the boys said that they would like to talk to someone about some of their problems.

This information seems to point out that the majority of the students are aware of many of their problems, they would like to talk to someone about them, but they do not want to talk to anyone at school.

Perhaps this could be changed by giving the students more opportunities in classes to express themselves. This could also help to solve their problem of feeling insecure when giving oral reports. It could help them gain pose and assurance when expressing themselves to others. It just may be that they do not have anyone to listen to them at school all day. There should be more group discussion opportunities available, and the students should be encouraged to join one of the groups.

According to this study, and in agreement with the previously cited work of Rouman (1956), the working Mother was not a highly contributing factor to the problems. Over fifty per cent indicated that their mother did not work full time outside the home.

Neither step-parents, nor the lack of an adult male in the home appeared to be highly significant factors contributing to problems (see Table 9) since fewer than ten boys and ten girls were affected in each category.

In answering the question about the helpfulness of the school counselor, a rather high per cent checked seldom or never, but they indicated that they never did go to see the counselor rather than the case being that the counselor was inefficient or ineffective.

The boys and the girls both indicated that they preferred to talk to another student about any of their problems. The guidance counselor was next for the boys, then the principal. The girls preferred the guidance counselor after another student, and then a teacher was next.

Seventy-seven out of eighty-two boys and seventy-one out of eighty girls said that they understood what guidance and counseling

services are for, and how they can help; yet, only eighteen and one half per cent of the boys and the girls combined indicated that they could talk to the counselor about almost anything. Approximately sixty per cent of the students preferred to discuss their problems with one of their peers.

The findings in this part of the study are in close agreement with Van Riper's findings in his 1971 survey cited previously. He found that twenty-one per cent of his students preferred to talk to the counselor, whereas sixty-one per cent preferred to talk to another student.

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