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## A Study of the Social Adjustment Problems of the First Graders in Fayette County, Texas and the Implication of These Problems to Learning

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A STUDY OF THE SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS OF THE  
FIRST GRADERS IN FAYETTE COUNTY, TEXAS AND THE  
IMPLICATION OF THESE PROBLEMS TO LEARNING



COLLINS

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A STUDY OF THE SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS  
OF THE FIRST GRADERS IN FAYETTE COUNTY, TEXAS  
AND THE IMPLICATION OF THESE PROBLEMS TO LEARNING

by

Olera Mason Collins

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Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of  
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION  
of the  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
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Prairie View Agricultural and Mechanical College  
Prairie View, Texas

1952

A STUDY OF THE SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS  
OF THE FIRST GRADERS IN FAYETTE COUNTY, TEXAS,  
AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF THESE PROBLEMS TO LEARNING

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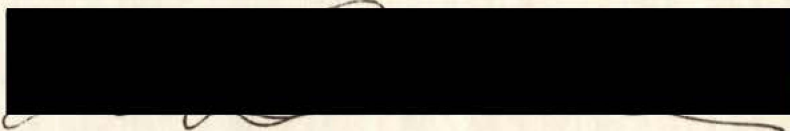
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This Thesis for the M. S. degree by

Olera Mason Collins

has been approved for the  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

by



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Date *May 16, 1957*



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## DEDICATIONS

To  
the devoted love of  
my darling little son,  
Otis Mason Collins;  
and to  
my baby brother,  
L. U. Mason,  
whose constant encouragement  
has been my inspiration.

-0-



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This study is the result of a conviction that environmental circumstances surrounding wholesome family relations, social and economic status of the family, educational background, physical, emotional and social factors, in addition to language usage and cultural experiences, affect the mental maturity of children. Mental maturity affects social adjustment, and social adjustment affects social behavior--all of which affect learning.

It is further believed that if elementary teachers would study more closely the social behavior of first grade pupils and help them to become socially adjusted, as far as possible, it would greatly enhance their ability to learn. Representative of the thinking and supporting the foregoing beliefs, Adams <sup>1</sup> points out that the problem of adjustment is a problem for all. No individual is ever completely adjusted. Most normal individuals are maladjusted a part of the time. Adjustment is a relative matter, which ranges from complete personality disintegration, requiring institutional care, to relatively complete integration and effective and satisfying participation in activities appropriate

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1. Fay Adams, Educating America's Children, p. 160.

to the maturity and environment of the individual. Maladjustment may result from a variety of causes, usually designed as hereditary, structural, psychological, or a combination of them.

The child may be intelligent, he may have acquired the skill of learning, he may have desirable interests, and he may be healthy; yet, he may be maladjusted because he cannot bring these resources to bear successfully in meeting his problems and satisfying his needs.

It has been observed that some first grade children literally refuse to play when they discover that they are excelled by their peers in motor control. The alert teacher should quickly sense the pupils' need of her help, for it comes as a great blow when one realizes he is inferior to some other persons in some characteristics.

Whether in early or late childhood, the lack of competence in the activities normally engaged in by his group is likely to affect his social adjustments.<sup>1</sup>

No one individual is superior in all traits, although he may excel in some. The balance between excellence and imperfection usually keeps one in an adequately humble attitude, and yet gives him enough self-esteem to enable him to compete with his fellows. Children understand this balance pretty well, for if one of their number seems to excel in any one thing, the rest are very likely to pick some flaw in his make-up and hold it up to him in order to humble him.<sup>2</sup>

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1. A. T. Jersild, Child Psychology, p. 204.

2. J. B. Morgan, The Psychology of the Unadjusted School Child, p. 136.



It is believed that there are first grade children in Fayette County who, from all observations excel in nothing, but <sup>1</sup> if helped to become adjusted may excel in many things. Davis states that seventy of every one hundred of our elementary school children come from the lower socio-economic groups, and due to the lack of understanding of the different cultures of the teachers and pupils, most of the pupils' abilities are misdirected or wasted; hence, the lack of adjustment on the part of the first grade pupils to the teachers.

In many instances, the maladjustment may be due to family relationships as is pointed out by Kellogg, <sup>2</sup> who says that disturbed family relationships are a more important factor in the child's emotional life, and they play havoc in the young child's emotional life, regardless of his economic status. Death, divorce, or temporary absence of the parents; mental, social, or emotional instability; unemployment or insufficient income; relation with siblings and in-laws; and social and religious problems are but some of the factors which exert a profound influence upon the child of today.

Lack of ability and opportunity to earn enough to support his family, and the refusal to do so, reflect pitifully on a man's little children, unless he has some other proper grounds for self-esteem. The mother's inability to earn

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1. C. F. Davis, Mid-Century White House Conference Report, 1950.

2. Rhoda Kellogg, Nursery School Guide, pp. 93-94.



enough for herself and her children will also have a bad influence, depending mostly upon such factors as how acutely the family needs food, medical care, and other necessities, or what struggles are necessary to maintain a certain standard of living.

By giving support or denial to the young child's desires or demands, the in-laws, living with the family, may contribute unfavorable influences to the child's social adjustment problems. The teachers should know, not only those responses which represent acceptable behavior, but must also understand the inner dynamics of the emotional life which produces unacceptable behavior. When the child fails in any matter, the teacher must know what to do to make the environment more favorable for him, so that his behavior will become what is desired.

In these times of rapid social change and breakdown of established cultural patterns, such things as learning to obey elders, to get along with other people, and to accept the social implications of one's sex are no longer as simple as they once were. They have become complicated and hazardous lessons, harder for the young child to learn, just as they have become more difficult for parents and schools to teach.

#### Purpose of Study

With reference to Morgan's<sup>1</sup> statement: "It comes as a

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1. J. B. Morgan, op. cit., p. 2.



great blow when one realizes he is inferior to some other person in some characteristic." What a blow it must be to the first grade child when and if he realizes that he seems inferior in all characteristics to his more fortunate peers! Such feelings of inferiority are believed due to the social adjustment problems of the pupils. Hence, the purpose of this study is first to attempt to find the most potent influences upon the social adjustment of the children; second, determine the extent of the social adjustment problems of pupils in the first grade in Fayette County; third, find the extent to which social adjustment affects learning; fourth, determine the point of attack in aiding the children in their social adjustment problems; fifth, show the relationship between social adjustment and learning; and sixth, determine the extent to which the elementary teacher might help children to become better adjusted socially.

#### Statement of Problem

This study was made to determine whether or not the first grade children of Fayette County are adequately adjusted for learning in the first grade. It is believed that social adjustment is an important factor in the learning process. On the basis of this assumption, the following subordinate questions have been considered for solution:

1. What is the relationship between social adjustment and learning?

2. To what extent does social adjustment affect learning among children?

3. How may the elementary teacher help children to become better adjusted socially?

4. What is the extent of the social adjustment problems of the first grade pupils of Fayette County?

5. What are the most potent influences upon social adjustment of the children of Fayette County?

### Scope and Delimitation

In the December, 1950, Mid-Century White House Conference <sup>1</sup> it was recommended that there be an expansion of research on development and adjustment of children and youth, and that such research include longitudinal studies of relations and factors that affect behavior and adjustment. In this way, there will be a continuing understanding of infants, children, and youth, and a sound basis for practice.

We may train the muscles of children by drill alone, but we cannot train the minds of children by drill alone. Training must begin at the mental age level of the pupils. Teaching pupils to "parrot" <sup>2</sup> facts is not education. Learning and the function to which that learning is put must be closely related. Most educators agree that the environment, family background, and social experiences affect social ad-

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1. C. F. Davis, op. cit.,

2. Maurice I. Thomas, Report on White House Conference, Newsletter, (December, 1950).



justment and social adjustment affects learning.<sup>1</sup> Consequently this study has taken into consideration:

1. The environment, family background, social experiences, nature of social adjustment problems, and degree of social adjustment patterns found among one hundred and fifty first grade children in three consolidated, accredited schools in Fayette County, and the implications of the social behavior patterns for learning.

2. Data compiled on first grade children and their social adjustment problems in the three consolidated accredited schools in Fayette County, Texas, to wit: J. A. Greene High school, Schulenburg; Randolph High School, LaGrange; and Flatonia High School, Flatonia, for the year 1951-1952.

#### Source of Data

The data for this study were collected by means of personal data forms, personal survey, observation, and personal interviews. A study of books and periodicals on child growth and development and child psychology serve as a basis for this study.

The pupils studied represent a status study of the first grade children of Fayette County. (All schools contacted were very liberal in providing the information desired.)

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1. A. T. Jersild, op. cit., p. 204

### Method of Procedure

Interviews with principals, teachers, parents and pupils, personal survey and information secured from teachers' permanent records, were compiled and tabulated. This data included such information on students as family background, social status, community environment, physical condition, social development, cultural experiences, and economic and educational status of the family. Items and their frequencies were recorded and totaled in order to make tabulation easier. The data received were tabulated and treated scientifically. A detailed personal data sheet, after having been studied and revised, was filled out for each student studied.<sup>1</sup> Charts, tables, and sociograms were drawn up, in order to give clearer pictures of types of social problems found among one hundred and fifty first grade children in Fayette County.

It was hoped that the findings derived from this study would lead to conclusions and recommendations for further study.

### Definition of Terms

The "sociogram" of a group is a charting of the dynamic interrelationships expressed by the members of a group at a given time.<sup>2</sup>

- 
1. See Appendix A.
  2. H.H. Jennings, "Sociometry in Action," The Survey, February 1948, p. 41



In this study "siblings" are referred to as sisters and brothers, living in one household and having one or both parents in common.

"Adjustment" has been limited to a satisfactory relation of an organism to its environment.

"Environment" consists of all surrounding influences or forces which may influence an organism in its efforts toward maintenance. The environment may be studies that are extended in length or over a long period of time.

"Status study" refers to single testings on a large number of cases.<sup>1</sup>

"Physical environment" consists of all outer physical and natural surroundings, both inanimate and animate, which have to be manipulated in order to provide food, clothing, shelter, and so forth, and to be avoided in order to escape danger. The society of like individuals, and the institutions, customs, and laws by which individuals regulate their relations to one another constitute the social and cultural environment.

"Social adjustment" of pupils has reference to the act of favorably growing in a group or mass; the act of living in society, or an aggregate body; the ability to hold friendly intercourse with others, to be companionable; or any favorable form of life in groups.

"Problem" is used to designate any condition which is so

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1. C. V. Millard, Child Growth and Development, p. 31.



defined by the subject, and to which the pupils consciously have difficulty in adjusting their behavior.

"Dynamics" has reference to any mechanical force not in the child's equilibrium.

"Behavior," as used in this study, has reference to the manner of conducting oneself, whether good or bad, in the external relation of life, or the course of action to or toward others in society.<sup>1</sup>

### Previous Related Subjects

Myriad problems of adjustment face the first grade pupil as he emerges from the home to the school room. He finds himself in a social atmosphere quite different from the home surroundings. Instead of one or two playmates, he has many. He finds himself, in many cases, accepting orders, rather than initiating them. In short, the first grade pupil, just as any other human being, must cope with social situations and adjustments that are persistent. It is believed that a satisfactory rate of learning is dependent largely upon satisfactory social adjustment; that the fullest satisfactory development of individual personality (or the whole child) should be a permanent goal of society, which is one of the goals of education. It is further believed that an early satisfactory social adjustment of pupils is one means of reaching this goal; that the family is a social institu-

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1. Definitions and terms taken from Educational Dictionary.

tion, and the child receives his initial social adjustment experiences in the family.

To substantiate the foregoing beliefs, reference has been made to study by Macoraig<sup>1</sup> in which he mentions three ideals for promotion of better social adjustment; first, to promote better social life; second, to cultivate ideas of loyal citizenship; and third, to acquaint young people with the problems of community life. In his conclusion, he recommended that the curriculum include such subjects as: The Family and Home, The Rural and Urban Community, Population, Emigration, Citizenship, Leadership, Education, Health, Religion, Delinquency, Crime, Poverty, and Charity.

Cuber<sup>2</sup> made a study on the adjustment of college men to military life, in which he analyzed adjustment problems of one hundred college men to military life and found that the cases were few. The informants were almost all college men; the period of army service had not been long (they might have become better adjusted or less adjusted as the time went on); none of the information gave problems of adjustment under actual conditions of warfare. Certainly, the cause and effect relationship implied were to be regarded as hypothetical and based on hunches, and not as verified statistical facts. On the other hand, there were many college

- 
1. Serafin E. Macoraig, Sociology and Social Research, Vol. 14  
Nov. 1930
  2. John F. Cuber, Sociology and Social Research, Vol. 27, p.  
267, Aug. 1934



men in the army, the sample of which was roughly typical of those who had been in service over a year and may have become adjusted.

<sup>1</sup>  
Jersild found that one of the strongest motives in a child's life is the desire to be accepted, to belong, and to achieve some measure of recognition and prestige in his relation with his fellowmen. If this desire is not met, the child's bid for attention takes the form of humility or perversity, or merely follows a middle road. The result is maladjustment socially, and retarded learning.

<sup>2</sup>  
Breckenridge concluded from his study of one hundred thirty children from professional and non-professional homes that whatever happens to children as they grow physically and psychologically is reflected in their social behavior and learning.

<sup>3</sup>  
Millard found in his study that the improvement in mental hygiene is an important factor related to good learning. The teacher should be a counselor, rather than a person who sets tasks and maintains order. Education, based on a continuing reconstruction of the total social and individual experiences through purposeful activity, cannot ignore the kind of learning that is most helpful in developing the child in something other than academic matters. The nature and

- 
1. A. T. Jersild, Child Psychology, p. 185.
  2. M. E. Breckenridge and E. L. Vincent. Child Development, p. 22.
  3. C. V. Millard, op. cit., p. 285.



sequence of learning activities are those which best adapt the individual to meet the needs of his socio-cultural environment.

Adams,<sup>1</sup> Wofford,<sup>2</sup> and Olson,<sup>3</sup> all found in their studies that the problem of social adjustment is a continuous and imperative problem for all.

Evidence shows that the adjustment of human behavior should begin as soon as possible after birth. Escalona<sup>4</sup> made a study of the behavior of one hundred twenty-eight babies, ranging in age from four to thirty-two weeks old. It was found that quite definite conclusions have been drawn out concerning specific psychological needs of infants, and the things that are harmful to their behavior. A concrete and detailed study of behavior patterns and problems of adjustment are essential and imperative in understanding the infant's behavior. A thorough understanding of infant behavior will inevitably terminate in a thorough understanding of the behavior and adjustment problems of children. For one of the most important milestones in the life of any six-year-old is the first day in the first grade,<sup>5</sup> and it

- 
1. Fay Adams, Educating America's Children, p. 160.
  2. Kate V. Wofford, Teaching in Small Schools, Ch. 3.
  3. Millard C. Olson, Child Development, p. 9.
  4. Sybille Escalona, Excerpts from Mid-Century White House House Conference Report, December, 1950.
  5. A. T. Jersild, Child Development and the Curriculum, p. 101.



is the teacher's problem to aid the pupil in becoming properly adjusted socially. Even after a child is six or seven years of age, he is likely to come frequently to the parent or the teacher (who substitutes for the parent), for the kind of attention or assurance that only an older person can provide. However, if he has a chance, he becomes more and more involved in the society of his peers<sup>1</sup>. The teacher must substitute for the parent of the first grade children until they have completed this most important milestone of life--becoming socially adjusted to their peers.

When the first grade child comes to school, he faces new and formidable problems. Security, which comes from a sense of feeling of belonging or social adjustment, is his basic need. This is particularly true if the child has not had any nursery school or kindergarten experiences<sup>2</sup>. Not any of the first grade children of Fayette County had the experience of attending school at the kindergarten level, and none are veterans of nursery school. Even where close relations between home and school prevail, the child's life at school represents something quite distinct from his life at home. The six year old child is still socially dependent on his elders, just as he is very much dependent on them physically<sup>3</sup>; hence, the urgent need of the elementary teacher's help in becoming adequately adjusted.

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1. A. T. Jersild, Child Psychology, p. 132.

2. Cecil V. Millard, op. cit., p. 232.

3. Jersild, op. cit., p. 60.



The first grade is usually composed of a heterogeneous group of children in which one can sometimes observe several cliques, varying in prestige. The child's desire to be accepted by other children will not always be satisfied simply if he is well received by random members of his group. He may seek to be accepted by certain individual children in the group, who represent a select clique which all the less fortunate children would like to join, but failing in this, some children seek companions at another level, so that the cronies with whom they regularly associate represent second or third choices, with whom they share a moderately happy companionship. The average child may learn to find his place among his peers, and contentedly take whatever place he can win, but there are some children who are more deeply affected if they do not succeed in joining the "right" company, and become very much frustrated. Such mental conditions affect learning.

There are factors related to a child's family economic status, religion, manners, customs, language, socio-economic status, and social position that affect a child's valuation of himself, and his assurance or lack of assurance as to whether his peers are likely to receive him well. Such a situation prevents the child's proper adjustment socially. The teacher may greatly help the pupil become adjusted by promoting cooperation and camaraderie among the children.

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1. Ibid., pp. 192-194.

## CHAPTER II

### SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS AMONG FIRST GRADE CHILDREN

#### Environment

Very little is given to the child by heredity; almost all of the child's adjustment problems are environmental. The whole psychology of the child is built by habit formation and the conditional reflex. It is society's responsibility to make every child's environment as near ideal as possible, even if it means removing the child from the home.<sup>1</sup>

Most psychologists agree that the most vital and significant part of their field is that which deals with the common individual and social adjustment problem of normal people. Everyone has to live and to adjust himself. There are many types of adjustment, whether the end is satisfying or not; whether the behavior shown is social or anti-social. There are two factors that account for all types of behavior: nurture and nature, or a combination of the two factors.<sup>2</sup>

Two problems were selected in advance as those likely to be of great difficulty to the sample group. These problems pertain to the siblings in the home, their peers and teachers, as well as those of the "only child."

#### Home

Most well known behaviorists agree that most homes are

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1. Rhoda Kellogg, Nursery School Guide, pp. 13-14.
  2. L. F. Shaffer, The Psychology of Adjustment, p. 91.



inadequate, and the inadequacies of the home will be steadily reduced by a direct approach through adult education, and specific guidance. Such guidance might be effected through the nursery school, as a guidance center, supplemented by periodic examinations of the child under a system of developmental supervision.

Better housing means better homes--but only when parents are guided and educated into proper methods of child care. There are countless homes in America in which fathers, mothers, and other elders in the household use harsh modes of punishment, even toward young children. Primitive, undemocratic methods of discipline have no place in the culture of today.

In crowded and shiftless homes, children develop anxieties and perplexities. They see sights and experience shocks from which more fortunate children are, in decency, spared. Most of the crime has its roots in disordered homes.

Language, customs, traditions, occupations, religion, manners, and morals, likewise, have an impact on the child's social adjustment. The child carries his family with him to school, not only through inherited characteristics, but in details of behavior which may affect his social adjustment.<sup>1</sup>

### The Only Child

Traditional authors dealing with the "only child" are almost unanimous in expressing the belief that the behavior of these children contrasted unfavorably with that of other children.

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1. Arnold Gesell, Infant and Child in the Culture of Today, pp. 356-363.



More recent evidence has been presented which indicates that the behavior of children in this position is, on the whole, superior to that of other children. Further research is required to determine which of these views is valid, as well as to ascertain on what particular traits the "only child" is inferior or excels.<sup>1</sup>

The traditional view is dependent, in part, upon a study made by Bohannon.<sup>2</sup> On the basis of a study of forty-six "only children," he reached the conclusion that "only children" are unmistakably below the average in health and vitality, and that nervous disorders seem to be unusually common in such families. Moreover, he found that these children appear to enter school later than other children, are less regular in attendance, and their success in school work is below the average. A large number of the children were found not to have as good command of themselves socially as the average child. Selfishness was most frequently named among the worst traits, and affection among the good traits. As a rule, the home treatment had been that of unthinking indulgence. Precocity appeared to be the most prominent trait of the group.

The spoiling of the oldest child, the youngest child, and the "only child" has become commonplace with those who study neuroses.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Raymond F. Sletto, "Delinquency and the Only Child," Sociology and Social Research, Vol. 18 (August, 1934), p. 519.
  2. E. W. Bohannon, op. cit., p. 519.
  3. Cyril Burt, The Young Delinquent, p. 91.



Children with marked egocentric make-up come from families where they were the "only child."<sup>1</sup>

Fenton<sup>2</sup> gave a good resume of several other studies in which the "only child" was unfavorably presented. However, Healy and Bronner<sup>3</sup> introduced an element of doubt into the picture. They declare that oft-recurring statements that the "only child" is in an unfavorable situation that might lead to delinquency finds neither confirmation nor contradiction in their figures. However, the only comparison possible in their study was with families of one child, who did not become delinquent and about whom they had no statistics. They proved, however, that only ten per cent of three thousand cases of delinquency were instances of one child in a family, and that did not seem an unduly large proportion.

There has been a tendency for the oldest boy in the family to become a behavior problem with little conclusive evidence concerning a child who was the only one, or the youngest in the family.<sup>4</sup>

A view diametrically opposite to certain of those cited above is taken by Guilford and Worcester<sup>5</sup> in a comparative

- 
1. H. B. Carroll, Mental Hygiene, p. 92.
  2. Norman Fenton, "The Only Child in the Family," Pedagogical Seminary and Journal of Genetics, Vol. 35, 1928. June
  3. W. Healy and A. F. Bronner, Delinquents and Criminals, p. 103.
  4. Albert Owens, "The Behavior Problem Boy," Journal of Education, Vol. 20, (June, 1929).
  5. E. B. Guilford and E. L. Worcester, "A Comparative Study of the Only and Non-Only Child," Sociology and Social Research, Vol. 18 (August, 1951), p. 520.



study of the only and the non-only child. This was a study of 162 children of grade eight in a junior high school. The group was divided into two parts for purposes of comparison: a group of twenty "only children," and a second group of 141 "other children." Comparing the groups on fifteen measurements or characteristics, they conclude:

1. The average of the only child and the non-only child in grade eight was practically the same, twelve and eighty-six hundredths for the former, and twelve and ninety-nine hundredths for the latter.

2. The only child is definitely superior in marks received in his school, studies, health attitudes, and habits, according to the occupational status of the father; the chances being one thousand to one that this is true.

3. The only child is quite certain to be superior in personal orderliness and cleanliness, initiative, self-control, industry, truthfulness, dependability, and courtesy, the chances being nineteen to one in his favor.

4. The only child is higher in I.Q., cooperation, and conformity to law and order, the chances being nine to one that he is superior.

5. The only child is slightly superior to the non-only child in fairness, the chances being about three to one that this is the case.

6. The only child was either equal to or slightly inferior to the non-only child in voluntary participation in extra-curricular activities.

7. Even when we allow for superior I.Q. and higher occupational status of the only children, they were found to be equal to or superior to the non-only child in all but one or two traits.

### Community

The child at the first grade level is becoming very much a social being. From the time life begins, he plays the



passive role of one who receives much and gives little. He has a profound influence upon those about him even before birth.

He is never completely weaned from his dependence upon others; he never becomes so self-sufficient that he is immuned to the approval or disapproval of his fellows, or free from a desire for affection and security in his relations with his fellowmen.<sup>1</sup>

The story of social development is a story of the child's struggle to be an individual in his own right, and to assert and express himself as an independent creature. The child's social life revolves, at first, around persons older than himself. He takes notice of other young children, and soon becomes more and more involved in the society of his peers. However, at the age of six, when he first enters the public schools of Texas, his capacity for group formation is still quite limited.<sup>2</sup> Hence, the need of help in social adjustment. At the first grade level, the children who are leaders are likely to lead small groups, rather than the entire class. If a child happens not to be a member of this small group, he has a feeling of not belonging, which causes emotional distress and emotional disturbance, which in turn affect learning.<sup>3</sup>

Without a social environment, there could be no social behavior. The child shows many forms of contrasting behavior; he may be hostile or friendly; he may cooperate or compete;

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1. Jersild, op. cit., p. 136.

2. C. Buhler, The Social Behavior of Children, p.

3. Jersild, op. cit., p. 137.



he may be timid or brash; and shy or self-conscious. Such forms of social behavior may spring from environmental or hereditary influences.<sup>1</sup> It should be the elementary teacher's job to find the cause and help whenever it is possible.

Fighting may spring from many motives, including underlying maladjustments, but it is also a part of a child's experimentation in social living; too, it is a means whereby he tests his powers and explores his status within a group. Teasing and opprobrious nicknames are much used in children's efforts to discipline one another.<sup>2</sup>

Osborne<sup>3</sup> gives an interesting account of a boy who was the butt of much teasing and bullying, when first introduced into a camp. As he continued in the camp, he mended his babyish ways, but during the transition (during the process of becoming adjusted to the group), he went through a stage when he in turn teased and bullied other children. As time went on and as the child's poise and adjustment in the group improved, he abandoned teasing and bullying. It has been observed that teasing may be an expression of insecurity. And sometimes a pupil may be friendless by reason of characteristics, which other children find unpleasant; for example, a child that cries easily. Such a child is branded as a "cry baby."

The alert teacher soon discovers friendless pupils and aids them to become socially adjusted. Among the various

1. Jersild, op. cit., p. 142.

2. Buhler, op. cit., p. 144.

3. A. F. Osborne, Child Psychology, p. 3.



methods that can be used to study children's acceptance of one another are a number of so-called "sociometric techniques."<sup>1</sup>

It has been observed that one of the strongest motives in a child's life is to become accepted, to belong and to achieve recognition and prestige in his relations with his peers. A child may resort to any form of technique to accomplish this goal, and it is the teacher's duty to help him. He may seek to be accepted by certain individual children in the group who represent cliques. Whatever his problems may be, the teacher should put forth every effort to help him make an adjustment.<sup>2</sup> It may be assumed that the child who is rejected by his peers is unhappy and does not learn as readily.

### The Teacher

Children's first desire for security is in their relations with their parents. They desire the approval and affection of their parents. When they enter school, a similar desire goes with them. Jersild<sup>3</sup> says:

In his relationships with adults outside the home, the child has a similar need for an emotional anchorage. Adults who are in a position of authority, such as the teacher at school or his playground director, are, to a large degree, reacted to as substitute or temporary parents. However, much of the child's behavior sometimes may not show it, he still greatly desires the approval and affection of these substitute parents. For this reason, the attitude of the

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1. H. H. Jennings, "Sociometry in Action," The Survey, February, 1948, p. 41.

2. Arthur J. Jersild, Child Psychology, p. 63

3. Ibid., p. 66



teacher toward the child may be profoundly important to the child even though he may try not to reveal it. It is likely that even the most incorrigible child, who may seem to be endowed by the devil himself, usually would like very much to be liked by his teacher. If he is a spoiled child from the start, his poor techniques, that rub the teacher the wrong way and produce a negative response, he may, from the very beginning, get the impression that the teacher is against him. His answer may be further, obstinacy, rebelliousness, and all manner of behavior that plagues the teacher. Frequently, the child who gets a bad start when he begins school develops habits and acquires a reputation that follows him from class to class and from teacher to teacher. The behavior of such a child may be very irritating and discomforting to the teacher, but the child himself is likely to be even more miserable. To break through the crust of hostile habits and attitudes, which a child in his plight has acquired, is one of the most difficult tasks that confronts a teacher.

The factors related to social and economic conditions of the young child affect his evaluation of himself and his confidence in himself. The lack of self-confidence affects the child's learning. There is no such thing as a slow learner if the school's curriculum is adapted to the individual needs of the pupils under competent teachers. Every normal healthy-minded child has some special aptitude and can be helped to become adjusted socially by discovering his special aptitudes, which may be any one or all four forms of intelligence; namely, aesthetic, mechanical, social, or abstract. Certain teaching techniques may be used to discover the pupil's aptitude for any one or all forms of intelligence. According to Thurstone, intelligence is



complex and consists of a variety of abilities. Although factor analysis is indicated, several aspects of intelligence can be identified through intercorrelations. It is felt by some that experience, training, and conditioning are important in order to arrive at definite conclusions in the study of factors which influence intelligence.<sup>1</sup>

### Teaching Techniques

Before the teacher can learn how to handle specific behavior situations, and discover the best there is in the pupils, a certain general teaching technique must be acquired. A friendly morning greeting to each child is one of the techniques a teacher should use to start the day off right. Whether or not she actually feels glad to see every pupil every morning, a professional teacher automatically speaks a friendly greeting. Another good technique are methods used to control gesture, speech, tones of voice, and facial expressions in order to have an effect on the pupils. Techniques are founded on good feelings, and they are used to express it, as well as to cover up bad feelings. If the deed and not the doer is to be condemned, then ways must be found for making this clear to the first grade children.

The first thing a teacher should do is to learn to control her appearance and her expressions. A good teacher's posture should always be attractive. It should show good muscle tone, attentiveness, sense of responsibility, feeling

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1. C. V. Millard, Child Growth, p. 122.



of inner assurance, and an air appropriate to the occasion.

The gestures or movements of the good teacher are deliberate, but not too slow; spontaneous but not uncontrolled; precise but not pedantic; dignified but not self-conscious; and they should convey affection and approval, rather than annoyance and disapproval. Words of disapproval alone should not be used.

The good teacher uses her facial expression as one of her most valuable techniques. She looks pleasant, smiles, and seems assured that all is well. The children take their cue from her facial expression as to whether they feel that the school situation is under control. The smiles of teachers and the twinkles in their eyes go far toward relieving children's anxieties. Without a basis of good feeling for children, no amount of smiling has any value. Children are intuitive and see through most pretenses. Teachers who do not like children do not make good teachers, for back of any technique must be a basic love for children. A good teacher should be judged, not by what she knows but by what responses she elicits from the children. The tone of voice should be low, clear and friendly. A whine, rasp, or a squeak in the voice is a great handicap. A teacher whose natural voice is not suitable should cultivate a proper voice.

Children appreciate pretty clothes, a neat hair-do, and an air of well-being in a teacher. A good teacher is always attractively dressed and groomed, and she avoids monotony of dress.



The object of teaching is to uphold the child's behavior, to modify his behavior, to enrich his experiences, and to get children to respond to the physical environment in certain definite ways. To modify a child's behavior on a sound basis, we must change his feelings. We may change his feelings by aiding him to become adjusted socially, thus increasing his rate of learning. This technique is indispensable in the first grades, when the child's foundation is being built.

### Heredity

Shaffer<sup>1</sup> gives acquisitiveness, gregariousness, and cleanliness as unlearned behavior. He states that the child also inherits his physical appearance, and intellectual potentialities. Jersild<sup>2</sup> agrees that the child inherits his size, his physical appearance, his intellectual potentialities, and the strength and ruggedness of his constitution. The child's temperament and personality are influenced by the physical properties of his body, and the physical properties are influenced by heredity. Since learning is a modification of the pattern of the organism, in response to specific stimuli present in the external environment, and if the child inherits a strong healthy body and sound mind, he also inherits potentialities to learn; and, if socially well adjusted, he will learn.<sup>3</sup>

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1. L. F. Shaffer, The Psychology of Adjustment, p. 482.
  2. A. T. Jersild, Child Development and the Curriculum, p. 36.
  3. Educational Dictionary, p.



## Health

Of all the blessings of mankind, there can be no doubt that health is one of the most prized. Those of us who possess it in abundance rarely pause to consider the sad estate of those less fortunate, who either have lost it or have never enjoyed it. It is well, therefore, to mention something concerning the significance of health and its supreme importance in the psychological growth of the child, as well as the physiological growth of the child. Averill<sup>1</sup> defines health as that condition of body and mind in which sufficient energy is available for the performance of a full day's work and a full day's play--and that, abundantly, without friction, and without depletion. With this standard of health as his emblem, and with the strength of character and purpose that properly and fittingly go with it, any child should be adequately equipped to build a life and a work that will endure as long as the best, for he is building upon a rock. However, the external factors related to the health of the child must be considered. The actual construction of the house for comfort and safety is only one small part of the vast relationship between the individual and the numerous forces that work both for and against his well being. In this study, the home was given most consideration, and such questions as, "Is the home well built?" "Does it have properly installed plumbing?" "Are provisions made for good illumination?" "What do members of the family do during leisure hours?" and the like.

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1. Lawrence Averill, Educational Hygiene, p. 1.



The community may also be one of the chief factors in the building of good psychological and physical health of the child. Respectability of neighbors is desirable, whether the home is in the city or in the rural area. It is well worthwhile to investigate community offerings before purchasing properties. The families who live nearby are generally in a similar income range, for the emotional strain involved is great when a man with a two thousand dollar annual income attempts to support a home among persons of four or five thousand dollar incomes. The emotional strain is reflected pitifully in his young children.

Sanitation of the environment is a health necessity. It is better if the home is located as far as possible from industries. Quietness of the home surroundings help to lessen conditions of fatigue. Opportunities for wholesome recreation, room for play, in addition to natural beauty of surroundings, are essential to emotional stability and social adjustment. The yard should be looked upon as a part of the home, where cleanliness and orderliness of the entire surroundings promote healthful living conditions.<sup>1</sup>

Through the mother, the child can be taught to feel that the doctor is a friend and not an enemy. When the child is to enter school in the fall, a thorough physical examination is imperative in the spring or early summer. If the examination

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1. R. L. Todd, Health Care of the Family, pp. 1-4.



is delayed until just before school starts, the interviewing time may not be sufficient for the correction of defects.<sup>1</sup>

If the examination is neglected by the parents altogether, in order to promote the psychological growth of the child, as well as the physiological growth of the child, a pre-ad-health examination may be given to the first grade child. Children found with any minor physical defects should be given medical care immediately, either by a private or county doctor. Special provisions should be made for children who suffer from blindness, serious auditory or visual defects, epilepsy, diabetes, certain heart conditions, severe allergies, some gross physical defect, or feeblemindedness. They should not be admitted to a regular public school. These children need so many special attentions that a specially trained staff, in addition to special facilities, are essential for their fullest development.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Ibid., p. 287.

2. Rhoda Kellogg, The Nursery School Guide, p. 292.



## CHAPTER III

### ANALYSIS OF DATA AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

As was mentioned in Chapter I, the initial contention was that the family background, educational background, economic status of the family, and the background of training for the young child affect his adjustment socially, and, in turn, affect his learning in the first grade.

In this chapter, a study and analysis has been made of the collected data which shows that the hypothesis has been partially proved. Data were collected on one hundred and fifty first grade children from three consolidated high schools; namely, Randolph High School, La Grange, Texas; J. A. Greene High School, Schulenburg, Texas; Flatonia High School, Flatonia, Texas; Fayetteville Elementary, Fayetteville, Texas; Radhost and Buff Hostyne Elementary, Fayette County, Texas. An analysis of Table I shows the distribution of the one hundred and fifty first grade pupils enrolled in the school of Fayette County, according to school, sex, and age. It will be seen that the largest enrollment of first grade pupils is in the larger towns of Fayette County, with ages ranging from six to twelve years of age throughout the county.

#### Location of County and Schools

Fayette County, Texas, with reference to amusement and



cultural centers, is two hundred and forty-five miles south of Dallas and Waco, forty-two miles southeast of Austin, eighty miles west of Houston, and eighty miles east of San Antonio, with two United States highways intersecting at a point about mid-way of the county.<sup>1</sup> However, it was found that 95 per cent of the one hundred fifty first grade pupils of the county had never visited any of these cultural centers. Authorities differ somewhat on their theory of learning, but they all agree that learning takes place through experiences and contact. Such experiences and contacts may be enriched by travel. Pupils inherit potentialities for adaptation, but the kind of adjustment mechanism that they adapt is dependent upon the nature of the experiences which they have. Such experiences as those acquired by educational travel and contact.

La Grange is the county seat of Fayette County, Texas, with a population of over three thousand. Schulenburg is located eighteen miles south of La Grange, with a population of nineteen hundred. Flatonia is located eleven miles west of Schulenburg, with a population of twelve hundred. Twelve miles southeast of La Grange is Fayetteville, with a population of eight hundred. The two rural elementary schools are located nine and twelve miles, respectively, from La Grange.<sup>2</sup>

#### Family Background

As was revealed from an analysis of the collected data,

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1. Records from the County Court House.
  2. Ibid.



eighty of the ninety parents were living together. There were eight "only children." Forty-three of the first graders had older sisters and brothers, none had sisters or brothers who were college graduates. Ninety-nine of the first grade pupils had sisters and brothers who were younger. One hundred thirty-eight of the one hundred and fifty first grade pupils were living with their mothers and fathers. Six pupils were living with their grandparents, four were living with their mothers, and two with their fathers. Eight of the first grade pupils' parents were divorced, and four had parents who were deceased. Of the ninety-two families studied, seventy-six were Baptist, eight Methodist, and two were followers of the Church of God in Christ. Six of the families belonged to no church at all. According to Kellogg,<sup>1</sup> many instances of maladjustment of children may be due to improper family relationships. The family background is a most important factor in the child's emotional life. The pupil's emotional life affects his mental maturity, which in turn affects his readiness for learning in the first grade.

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1. Rhoda Kellogg, Nursery School Guide, pp. 8-10.



TABLE I

DISTRIBUTION OF 150 FIRST GRADE PUPILS ACCORDING TO SCHOOL, SEX, AND AGE

School	No. of Pupils	Age 6		Total	Age 7		Total	Age 8		Total	Age 9		Total	Age 10		Total	Age 11		Total	Age 12		Total	Grand Total	
		B.	G.		B.	G.		B.	G.		B.	G.		B.	G.		B.	G.		B.	G.		Boys	Girls
Randolph High La Grange	73	16	16	32	16	6	22	2	4	6	6	3	9	4	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	44	29
J. A. Greene H. Schulenburg	36	11	5	16	4	4	8	6	2	8	1	0	1	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	14
Flatonia High Flatonia	15	0	3	3	1	0	1	1	1	2	3	0	3	2	2	4	0	2	2	0	0	0	7	8
Radhost Elem. Fayette Co.	9	1	3	4	0	0	0	1	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	7
Buff Hostyn. Elementary Fayette Co.	4	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Fayetteville Elementary Fayetteville	13	1	3	4	5	1	6	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	8	5
Total	150	30	30	60	26	12	38	11	11	22	11	3	14	7	5	12	0	2	2	0	2	2	85	65

Explanation of abbreviations: B. - Boys  
G. - Girls



TABLE II

## EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF PARENTS IN FAYETTE COUNTY

Community	Elementary Grade	High School Grade	College Grade	Total
Randolph	17	9	0	26
J. A. Greene	14	5	1	20
Flatonia	12	2	0	14
Radhost	3	0	0	3
Buff Hostyn	2	0	0	2
Fayetteville	10	3	0	13
Totals	58	19	1	78

Table II, above, shows the results of the educational background of the parents of pupils in Fayette County. One parent was a college graduate in the J. A. Greene community, while no parents were college graduates in any of the other five communities. Thus, this study shows the educational training of parents to include one college graduate; nineteen high school graduates; fifty-eight elementary school graduates; and fourteen parents were found to be without an elementary school education. It may be assumed from the results of these findings that the child's opportunity for excellent initial grammar usage is meager. Language usage, economic status, customs, traditions, manners, and morals, likewise, have an impact on the child's social adjustment.

The child carries his family with him to school, not only through inherited characteristics, but in details of behavior, which may affect his social adjustment. Most well-known behaviorists agree that most homes are inadequate, and the inadequacies of the home will be reduced only by a direct approach through adult education, and by specific guidance; hence, the need of nursery schools in Fayette County that may also be used as centers for adult education, supplemented by periodic mental and physical examinations of the child, under a system of developmental supervision.

#### Economic Status

These data show that eighty-one of the ninety-two families of Fayette County, Texas, were renters, and eleven of the families were home owners. Only one family had indoor toilet facilities. Ninety-one families had outdoor toilets. Eighty-two homes of the ninety-two families were electrically illuminated, forty-four of the homes had running water, fifty-eight of the homes had radios, and seventy-two owned automobiles. Again, there is definite need for adult education that will aid the families economically, and thereby help the children to become better adjusted socially, and, in turn, enhance their readiness for learning in the first grade.

Table III, shows the annual average range of income among ninety-two families in Fayette County. The average family in Fayette County has an average annual income of nine hundred dollars.



TABLE III

ANNUAL AVERAGE RANGE OF INCOME AMONG NINETY-TWO  
FAMILIES IN FAYETTE COUNTY

Annual Income	Number of Families	Number of Children in Family
\$ 600 - \$ 800	18	6
850 - 1,000	43	4
1,000 - 1,200	17	4
1,500 - 2,000	13	3
2,000 - 3,500	0	0
3,500 - 4,000	0	0
4,000 - 4,800	1	1
Total	92	18

It was further revealed that the larger the family, the lower is the income. The families in the lowest income bracket, which was between six and eight hundred dollars annually, had an average of six children.

According to the teacher's data sheet, forty-six of the fathers were day laborers, forty-five of the mothers followed domestic service as an occupation, fifteen of the fathers were truck drivers, and ten of the bread earners followed railroad work as an occupation, two were disabled veterans, and one mother was a school teacher. Of the nineteen who gave no



occupation at all, the teacher's data sheets gave rural addresses for parents of these pupils. So it may be presumed these are engaged in some type of farm work.

### Background of Training of the Children

Data collected from the teachers' personal data forms revealed that the average appearance of the homes of the one hundred fifty first grade pupils of Fayette County was fair, and the general appearance of the children was fair.

By questioning, it was disclosed that the teachers had reference to the outward appearance of the homes as being poor, fair or good. The unpainted homes and unkept yards were rated as poor. The homes that had well-kept yards and a painted house was rated by the teachers as fair. The homes well-built and painted with exceptionally well-kept yards, were rated as good.

According to the teachers' data sheet, the pupils showed little evidence of any training in good manners.

### Physical Condition of the Children

Eighteen of the one hundred fifty children were found to have defective hearing, and twenty-three had verbal defects. Eight pupils had visual defects, but none of the cases were serious. Nine of the pupils had poor motor control, due to malformation of the bones of the feet and legs.

### Social Status of Pupils

Figure 1, in the Appendix shows the sociogram of the seventy-three first grade pupils of the Randolph High School



in La Grange, Texas. An analysis of Figure disclosed that there were three cliques. Three pupils tried to enter the cliques. No mutual friends were found. One pupil did not care to play with any one. There were eight isolates: five girls and three boys. Among this group of seventy-three pupils, only three leaders were found. According to Breckenridge,<sup>1</sup> children of six to eight years of age are likely to lead small groups composed of five or six children their own age. With wide range in ages among the normal group of seventy-three first grade pupils, thirteen or fourteen leaders would be found. Children have a tendency to group according to their mental, as well as their chronological age.

Figure 2 in the Appendix is the sociogram of the thirty-six first grade pupils of the J. A. Greene High School, Schulenburg, Texas. An analysis of this sociogram reveals three isolates; two boys and one girl. One clique, and four leaders were found among the group.

An analysis of the sociogram of the fifteen first grade pupils of the Flatonia High School, Figure 3 in the Appendix discloses that there were no cliques. Three mutual friendships were found. There was only one leader and no isolate. The first grade pupils of the Flatonia High School seemed better adjusted socially than the first grade pupils of any of the other six schools studied.

Figure 4 in the Appendix shows the sociogram of the nine

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1. M. E. Breckenridge, Child Development, p. 136.



first grade pupils of the Radhost Elementary School of Fayette County, Texas. An analysis of this sociogram reveals that there was one isolate, a girl twelve years of age, which proves conclusively that age and grade placement are factors in social adjustment. There were six mutual friends and two leaders. A study of this sociogram shows that the isolate tried to enter the group but was rejected. There were no cliques.

The sociogram of the first grade pupils of the Buff Hosten Elementary school of Fayette County, Texas, is Figure 5 in the Appendix. An analysis of Figure 5 discloses that three of the four students formed a clique of which an eight year old boy was a part, and an eight year old girl sought entrance but was rejected. Her rejection was probably due to her untidy appearance, age, and low economic status.

Figure 6 in the Appendix shows the sociogram of the thirteen first grade pupils of the Fayetteville Elementary School of Fayette County, Texas. An analysis of this sociogram revealed that there was one clique which no outside pupil tried to enter. There was one isolate, a girl who did not wish to play with any of the other first grade girls. Upon questioning, it was found that the twelve year old girl chose her friends among other twelve year old girls in the sixth grade. There were four leaders in the group. A ten year old boy who had a mental age of eight, chose a younger boy as his first choice.

According to Breckenridge,<sup>1</sup> children group according to

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1. Breckenridge, Ibid., p, 137.



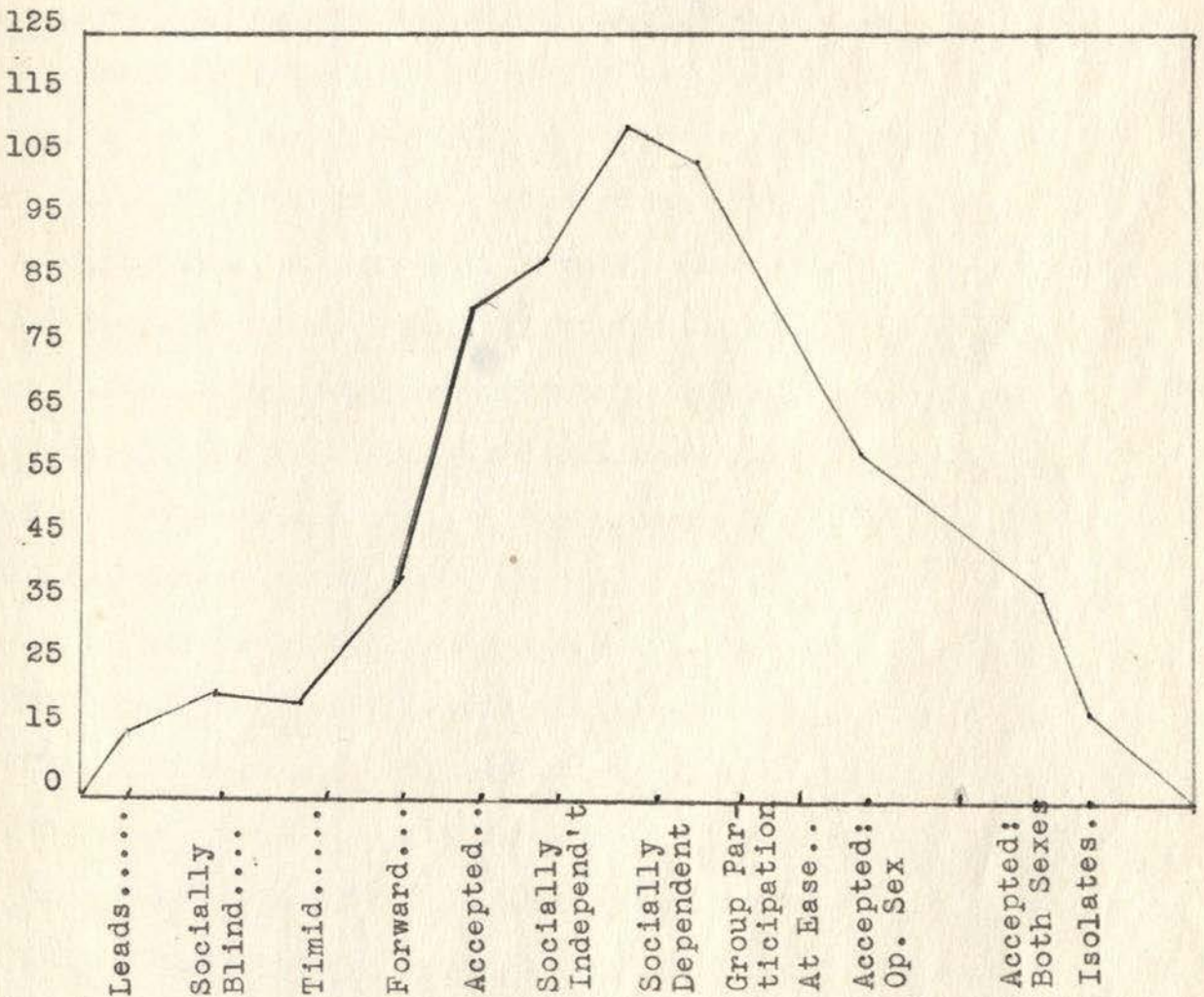
their mental age, as well as their chronological age. This, again, proves that age and grade placement are factors in social adjustment.

Psychologists agree that whenever social adjustment, height, intelligence, emotional stability, mental maturity, or any such trait or ability is objectively measured, the score, if obtained on a large unselected group, will be distributed over a surface which closely approximates the normal probability curve. The scores pile up around a central point, and, at the same time, spread away in either direction in steadily decreasing numbers. A distribution of scores rarely follows the normal probability curve exactly, but, if the number of cases is large, it will closely approximate it. A similar situation exists with respect to social adjustment problems of the first grade pupils of Fayette County, Texas, as can be seen from Figure 7, which shows the distribution of the pupils with reference to their social adjustment. At the extreme left of the distribution, we have those who are exceptionally well adjusted socially. This small group includes those few individuals who lead. Between the center group and the group at the extreme left may be found children who are accepted by both sexes. In the center is the large average group, to which the majority belongs--those who are fairly well adjusted socially. To the right of the average group are those who are maladjusted socially, the isolates, who suggested self-consciousness, probably due to over age. The results of the Stanford-Binet test given to one hundred fifty first grade



children in Fayette County, Texas, revealed that the isolates scored lower in M.A. and I.Q. than did those who lead and those who seemed fairly well adjusted socially.

The graph which follows illustrates the social tendencies of one hundred fifty first grade pupils studied, composed of eighty-five boys and sixty-five girls.



GRAPH 1. DISTRIBUTION OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTY FIRST GRADE PUPILS WITH RESPECT TO SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

An analysis of the above graph reveals that among the group of one hundred fifty first grade pupils, there were



fourteen isolates. Five were boys and nine were girls. This indicates that boys of this particular group were better adjusted socially than girls. Evidence points out that the isolates came from families of the lower income bracket. Language usage of the isolates was poor as revealed by an analysis of the teacher's data sheets. The maladjusted pupil feels miserable much more of the time than does the normal person. Such a mental condition is not conducive to learning. From the preceding graph, we can see that there were eleven leaders among the group of one hundred fifty first grade pupils of Fayette County, Texas, twenty pupils socially blind, eighteen timid, thirty-six forward, seventy-six accepted, forty-four socially independent, fifty-five socially dependent, and one hundred five, who participated in group activities successfully. Fifty of the students were found to be at ease, forty-five were accepted by the opposite sex, thirty-six accepted by both sexes, and fourteen were isolates.

It was found that only one of the one hundred fifty first grade pupils of Fayette County, Texas, had had any nursery school experience, and none were veterans of the kindergarten. The one pupil that had had the nursery school experience was the first choice of twenty-three pupils among a group of thirty-six. According to Kellogg,<sup>1</sup> nursery school and kindergarten training aid pupils in becoming adjusted socially.

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1. Kellogg, op. cit., pp. 8 - 10.



### Cultural Experiences for Social Development of Children

it was found that only one of the one hundred fifty first grade pupils of Fayette County had done any traveling by train. Five per cent had visited the city of Houston by train and automobile. None had traveled by plane, and only one by bus. As has already been mentioned in this chapter, through educational travel, the child acquires cultural experiences that will greatly enhance his social development.

### Amusements for Children

It was found that 10 per cent of the pupils attended the movies once a week; three visited the circus once a year; and one pupil visited museums, parks, zoos, and fairs regularly. Thirty pupils read stories, and thirty-five read comics.



TABLE IV

CHRONOLOGICAL AND MENTAL AGE INTERVALS OF  
THE FIRST GRADE PUPILS OF FAYETTE COUNTY, TEXAS

Chronological Age:				Number of Cases	Mental Age	Total
Year - Month	to Year - Month					
6	0	6	5	35	5 years	35
6	6	6	11	18	6 years	18
				7	5 years	<u>7</u>
<u>Total number of six-year-olds</u>						60
7	0	7	5	21	6 years	21
7	6	7	11	17	7 years	<u>17</u>
<u>Total number of seven-year-olds</u>						38
8	0	8	5	9	7 years	9
8	6	8	11	13	8 years	<u>13</u>
<u>Total number of eight-year-olds</u>						22
9	0	9	5	6	8 years	6
9	6	9	11	8	9 years	<u>8</u>
<u>Total number of nine-year-olds</u>						14
10	0	10	5	8	8 years	8
10	6	10	11	4	9 years	<u>4</u>
<u>Total of ten-year-olds</u>						12
11	0	11	5	1	10 years	1
11	6	11	11	1	10 years	<u>1</u>
<u>Total number of eleven-year-olds</u>						2
12	0	12	5	2	11 years	2
12	6	12	11	0	0 years	<u>0</u>
<u>Total number of twelve-year-olds</u>						2
<u>Grand Total</u>				150		150

An analysis of Table IV, page 45, shows that there were no gifted children which, according to Carroll,<sup>1</sup> is fortunate. The gifted child often experiences considerable difficulty in adjusting to the typical school situation as well as to his peers. These data also show that the chronological age of the first grade pupils of Fayette County exceeds the mental age of the pupils. Only one student has the same mental and chronological age. This particular student was a seven year old boy from the J. A. Greene community. None of the children were found to be feebleminded. The social adjustment problems of the group seemed to have been hidden in the economic status of the pupils' families. Failure to learn in the first grade, from all indications, pointed to lack of social adjustment due to educational background and the economic factors as they relate to family life.

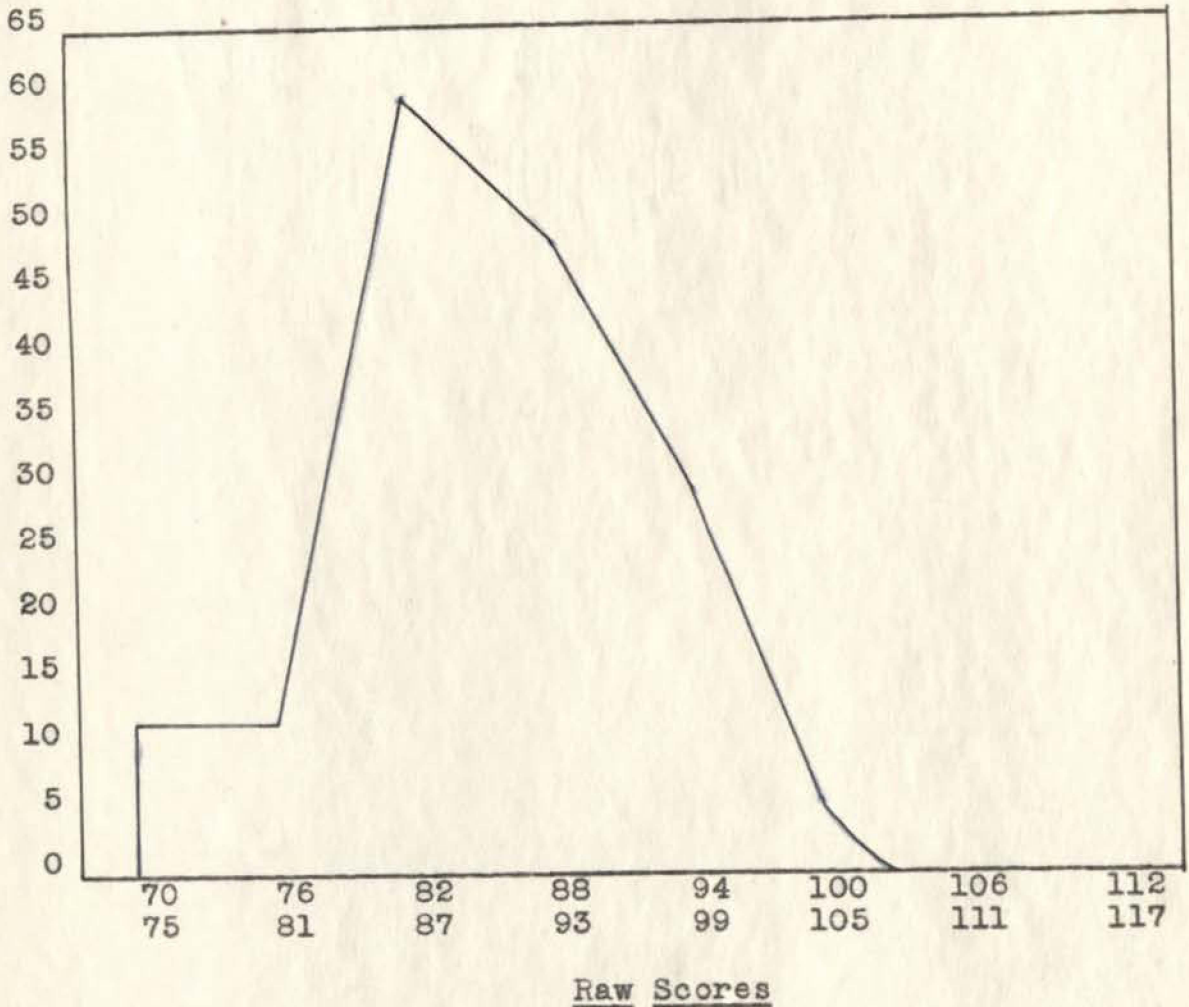
The following graph represents a distribution of the I.Q. raw score of one hundred fifty first grade pupils of Fayette County, Texas, to which the Stanford-Binet test was administered.

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1. H. B. Carroll, Mental Hygiene, p. 62.



No. of  
Cases:

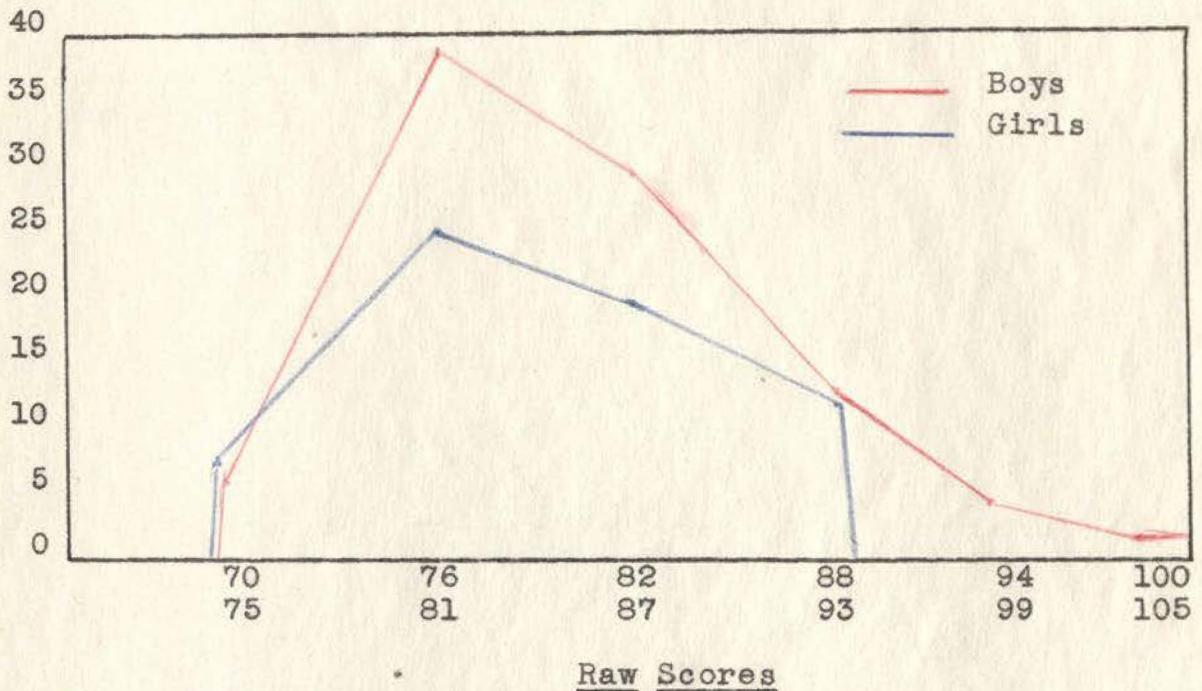


GRAPH 2. RESULTS OF THE STANFORD-BINET TEST, 1937 REVISION,  
ADMINISTERED TO 150 FIRST GRADE PUPILS IN FAYETTE COUNTY,  
TEXAS

In this graph, as in Graph 1 there is a piling up of scores around a central point and a gradual tapering off from that central point to the right and to the left. Average intelligence is represented by an intelligence quotient of one hundred. The standard deviation is sixteen, which indicates that roughly two-thirds of an unselected group will fall between I.Q.'s of eighty-four and one hundred sixteen. Examination of Graph 2

reveals that two-thirds of this particular group fall between I.Q. eighty and eighty-seven. This proves that the group is a little below average intelligence. However, none were feebleminded, and none were geniuses.

No. of  
Cases:



GRAPH 3. THE RAW SCORE DISTRIBUTION OF THE I.Q. FOR GIRLS AND BOYS ENROLLED IN THE FIRST GRADE IN THE SCHOOLS OF FAYETTE COUNTY, TEXAS

According to the above graph, the I.Q. of the first grade boys enrolled in the first grades in the schools of Fayette County, Texas, is slightly higher than the I.Q. of the girls. This fact also points to the hypotheses mentioned in Chapter I, that the social adjustment problems of pupils affect their readiness for learning in the first grade. As has been



previously stated, the boys of the group were better adjusted socially than were the girls of the group.

## CHAPTER IV

### SOME POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEM

#### Kindergarten and Nursery Schools

According to Kellogg,<sup>1</sup> there is no home so perfect that the child would not benefit by being away from home in a good nursery school for at least ten hours a week. Even when the home is ideal, the child needs to adjust to a larger, different world, and this step should not be postponed beyond the age of two years. In the period from eighteen months to six years, the child's dealings with other children assume increasing importance. In the social sphere, in the age-span from six to twelve, the child gains the ability to enter into complex forms of teamwork, and he becomes increasingly under the sway of the customs, manners, opinions, and values of his own age group. If given a chance, the child makes marked progress in a line of social development which will continue until he is mature; such as, the building up of relationships with people outside the home. These relationships become increasingly important to him as he grows older. They represent a part of the process whereby he moves from complete absorption in matters in his own home, toward the establishment of a life of his own outside his own home. While this feature of development has its

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1. Kellogg, op. cit., pp. 8 - 10.



inception during the pre-school years, it is not as pre-eminent in the child's life as it will be during the middle and late elementary school years. However, the child should receive as much contact with children outside of the home as possible; hence, the need for nursery school and kindergarten experiences for the young child. The average child with nursery school and kindergarten experiences by the age of six has become quite skilful in many forms of cooperation, and, during his first year in public school, he gains in his capacity for cooperation and teamwork. In order that the child may realize his potentialities, he must have a chance to practice teamwork and cooperation, for cooperation involves the learning of certain techniques and skills, and these can best be learned, of course, in group situations. One of the most pressing needs in elementary education is experimentation with projects which can motivate and provide an opportunity for the acquisition of such skills. By developing skills in cooperation and teamwork, the pupil may be better able to adjust himself socially.<sup>1</sup> Many of the most important skills, including the skill of teamwork, language, and motor skills have already been fundamentally developed or achieved by the time a child enters the first grade of school. The child is educated in a social group, and his reactions to it are of great importance. To guide the social behavior of the child is one

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1. A. T. Jersild, Child Development and the Curriculum, pp. 64-108.



of the major objectives of the modern school. It is essential, therefore, for the teacher to develop skill in observing the social development of children, to recognize signs of maladjustments, and to plan a preventative or remedial program. Such a program is most effective if started early in the young child's life, as early as the second year.

### The Elementary Teacher

The attitude of an adult leader can shape and color the social interactions between children, producing either higher states of tension and greater hostility between members of the group, or serenity and cooperation. If the teacher is to be successful in guiding children to better adjustment, she must herself have a well-adjusted personality. Through study, observation, testing, and analysis, the teacher should learn to identify the specific fears, desires, frustrations, and secret unsatisfied longings of specific children. Teachers are not responsible for the human physical and mental weaknesses and difficulties of their pupils, but they should have a knowledge of their origins, manifestations, and cures. Teachers may guide children so skilfully that they learn to work harmoniously with others in achieving social goals.

According to String,<sup>3</sup> when a child enters school, the teacher's first task should be to find out what kind of child

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1. Kate V. Wofford, Teaching in Small Schools, p. 26.
  2. Fay Adams, Educating America's Children, pp. 6-44.
  3. Ruth String, Child Development and Guidance in Rural Schools, p. 108.



she has to teach. Before she can either teach or guide him, she should understand him. This is imperative, in order that she may build upon his present strength and develop his latent potentialities. There are many simple techniques of "learning" children. A teacher comes to understand her pupils in much the same way that she becomes acquainted with friends of her own age. She listens to what they say, observes what they do, notes their interests and skills, and pays attention to attitudes of other children toward them. However, the teacher's study of her children should be more systematic and comprehensive than her attempt to understand her friends. The teacher's study of her pupils should cover every important phase of child development. Unless she does so, she may miss the key to a child's behavior until too late to prevent retardation, or unhappiness, or both. By systematic study, the teacher may discover the child's need and meet it successfully, if possible, for she is in a strategic position to study a child's growth and development. She has opportunity to observe when her pupil's work has fallen off, when he is nervous, inattentive, or no longer accepted by the group; or, that he has never been accepted by the group. Such pupils may be maladjusted socially. The first grade teacher may be able to tell most about a child's behavior away from home, what his interests are, how he gets along with other children and adults, and how he reacts to failure and success.

#### Mental Test

1  
According to Dickerson through mental tests, teachers



may discover capacities in a pupil that may not be revealed in weeks or even months of classroom work. The mental test also furnishes an objective basis as a starting point for further observation, a basis independent of the personal opinion of the teacher, parent or any others. This impersonal basis in no way prevents the formation of personal judgments, but serves as a check upon their accuracy. The test may reveal a brightness that is concealed by a cloak of timidity. Talkativeness and a forward manner do not always signify real thinking power. Mental tests lead to the discovery of children with good mental ability, but whose class behavior shows little or no evidence of its use. The test will reveal some children so immature in mentality and others so mature, that they constitute misfits when confronting the task designed for average ability. Analysis of collected data from the first grade Negro pupils of Fayette County, Texas, revealed pupils of from five-year mental level to ten-year mental level working together for a whole year in the same class.

One teacher was asked to select the brightest child in her class. The child tested below normal, many others tested higher. The teacher decided that she had chosen the child most free to talk, unafraid and natural, with apparently good manners and refinement, and willing to do or try to do whatever she asked. Of course a follow-up over a period of years would be essential to prove or disprove the teacher's revised judgment.

Because pupils differ in mental ability as well as phy-



sical characteristics, and both affect their adjustment socially, and their adjustment socially affects the pupils' readiness for learning in the first grade, schools for pupils with physical defects, or exceptional children, with well-qualified teachers to guide them have been established.

### Adult Education

Evidence shows that children have suffered as the results of little or no formal training on the part of their parents. Of the parents represented in this study, 14 per cent have not completed work on the elementary level, and 63 per cent have completed work on the elementary level. Authorities agree that many homes in America are inadequate. Through an effective program of adult education, the child's home experiences may be enriched. Through adult education, the home will serve as a much better environment for the child's development. Through adult education, the parents can be lead to realize that children's needs and interests are definitely individualistic. Children should be educated for life itself, and not for preparation for the future. The small child will profit more if what he is taught is found within the environment in which he lives. Adult education could make good use of the nursery school as a laboratory.

Classes in adult education might be established for parents, whose children are also enrolled in nursery schools, and the parents could participate in various activities of the nursery school program. The program should be set up under adult education supervision, and could be known as a nursery



school parent education program. Mothers could watch their own children as closely as possible, and make daily records of every thing they say and do. Later, the mother and the instructor provided for the mother, may go over records together, and the instructor helps to explain the child's behavior.

Churches, lodges, and private enterprises sometimes arrange for group care of little children for a few hours a day, and call these gatherings nursery schools. Such a misnomer should be discouraged. The children are attending a supervised play group, and the intelligent parent realizes<sup>1</sup> this.

The learning process is exceedingly complex and is conditioned by many factors. Some of these factors are resident in the pupils, some in the teachers who attempt to help pupils, some in the curriculum, some in the materials of instruction, and some in the socio-physical environment for learning. The teacher should study means to improve the complex processes of learning. However, the most important factor in the personal social development of the child is his family, and, if the child is to learn at a normal rate, he must be happily adjusted socially.

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1. Kellogg, op. cit., pp. 311-328.



## SUMMARY

Data in this study were collected from one hundred fifty first grade pupils from the three consolidated school systems of Fayette County, Texas: La Grange, Schulenburg, Flatonina, and the Fayetteville, Radhost, and Buff Hostyn elementary schools. The largest enrollments, of course, were in the larger towns of La Grange and Schulenburg.

Although Fayette County is located comparatively close to several of the metropolitan areas of Texas, 95 per cent of the pupils studied had never visited any of the large cities of Texas.

The study shows that the vast majority of the students were living with their parents. Although forty-three had older sisters and brothers, none had brothers or sisters attending college.

The study also revealed that practically all of the maladjustments among first grade pupils could be attributed to low economic and educational status of parents and families. Only one parent was a college graduate, nineteen were high school graduates, fifty-eight were elementary school graduates, while fourteen parents had not finished elementary school. The majority of the pupils, therefore, have a meager opportunity for excellent initial grammar usage.

Only eleven of the ninety-two families studied were home owners, one home had indoor toilet facilities, eighty-two homes had electricity, forty-four homes had running water,



fifty-eight had radios, and seventy-two owned automobiles.

The study shows that the average income of families reduces with the increase in size of the family.

Students in the study came from homes rated from poor to good. The background of the pupils is reflected in their behavior traits at school.

The study revealed the following breakdown of the pupils, according to their mental condition or attitude: eleven were leaders; twenty were socially blind; eighteen timid; thirty-six forward; seventy-six accepted; forty-four socially independent; fifty-five socially dependent; and one hundred five participated in group activities successfully.

Only one of the pupils studied had traveled by train. Ten per cent of the pupils attended movies once per week. Three visited the circus once per year. One pupil had visited museums, parks, zoos, and fairs. There were no gifted children in the study.



## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

It is pointed out that the reader to note the opinions of some representative writers in the field of elementary education presented in this study. The foregoing writers' opinions appear to indicate somewhat the transition through which it was felt that the adjustment socially of first grade pupils affect their readiness for learning in the first grade. Many authorities in the field of elementary education agree that changes are needed in the methods and techniques used in preparing the young child for learning in the first grade, and in the methods and techniques used for teaching the first grade pupil.

According to the evidence received from the one hundred fifty first grade Negro pupils of Fayette County, Texas, the nature of their social adjustment problems lay in the economic status of their families. The extent of their social adjustment problems is that the adjustment socially of the first grade pupils of Fayette County, Texas, affected their readiness for learning in the first grade.

This study revealed that those pupils better accepted socially showed more evidence of readiness for learning in the first grade.

Evidence revealed that first grade teachers must under-



stand the nature, needs, and interests of the apparently maladjusted pupils, and know their latent potentialities. For every individual is constantly adjusting, and every adjustment made constitutes a modification of the patterns of learned behavior.

We may recapitulate by saying the learning process is exceedingly complex and is conditioned by many factors. Some of these factors are resident in the pupils, some in the teachers who attempt to help.

### Conclusion

This study furnishes evidence to show the relationship of the social adjustment problems of the first grade Negro pupils of Fayette County, Texas, to learning. The data collected supported the assumption. On the basis of the data presented in this study, it appeared reasonable to conclude that:

1. Social adjustment affects readiness for learning in the first grade.
2. Some important implications cited in this study indicate social adjustment problems of the first grade pupils of Fayette County Texas, may be traced generally to the economic and education status of their families.
3. The adult education kindergarten and nursery school programs under the supervision of the state, and county are essential for parental and pre-school training.
4. In-service training program for teachers in the study of pupil growth and development should be emphasized in the schools program.

Throughout the period of a child's development, two factors are at work; growth and learning. In order that the child



learns at a normal rate, he must be adequately adjusted socially. Certainly some children, regardless of their merits, may face rejection by reason of belonging to a religion, economic status of family, or mental immaturity, which can not be changed by the teacher; but, the teacher can help by being a friend, a buffer, or by assisting the child to become happily adjusted socially.

Parents are also tremendously influential in orienting the child to the manners and general behavior pattern of the social group to which they belong. The child is likely to become better adjusted socially, if he feels security and affection in the home.

#### Recommendations

From the findings of the present study, it is recommended:

1. That kindergartens be established within Fayette County, Texas.
2. That nursery schools be established within Fayette County, Texas, under the supervision of the state that may also serve as centers for adult education.
3. That a standard mental maturity test be administered to pupils upon entrance to the first grade of the public schools of Fayette County, Texas.
4. Elementary teachers become better acquainted with the social adjustment problems of individual pupils through a study of pupil growth and development.
5. The program of the curriculum of the schools be enriched to meet the needs, abilities and interest of the pupils.

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A P P E N D I X  
ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIALS

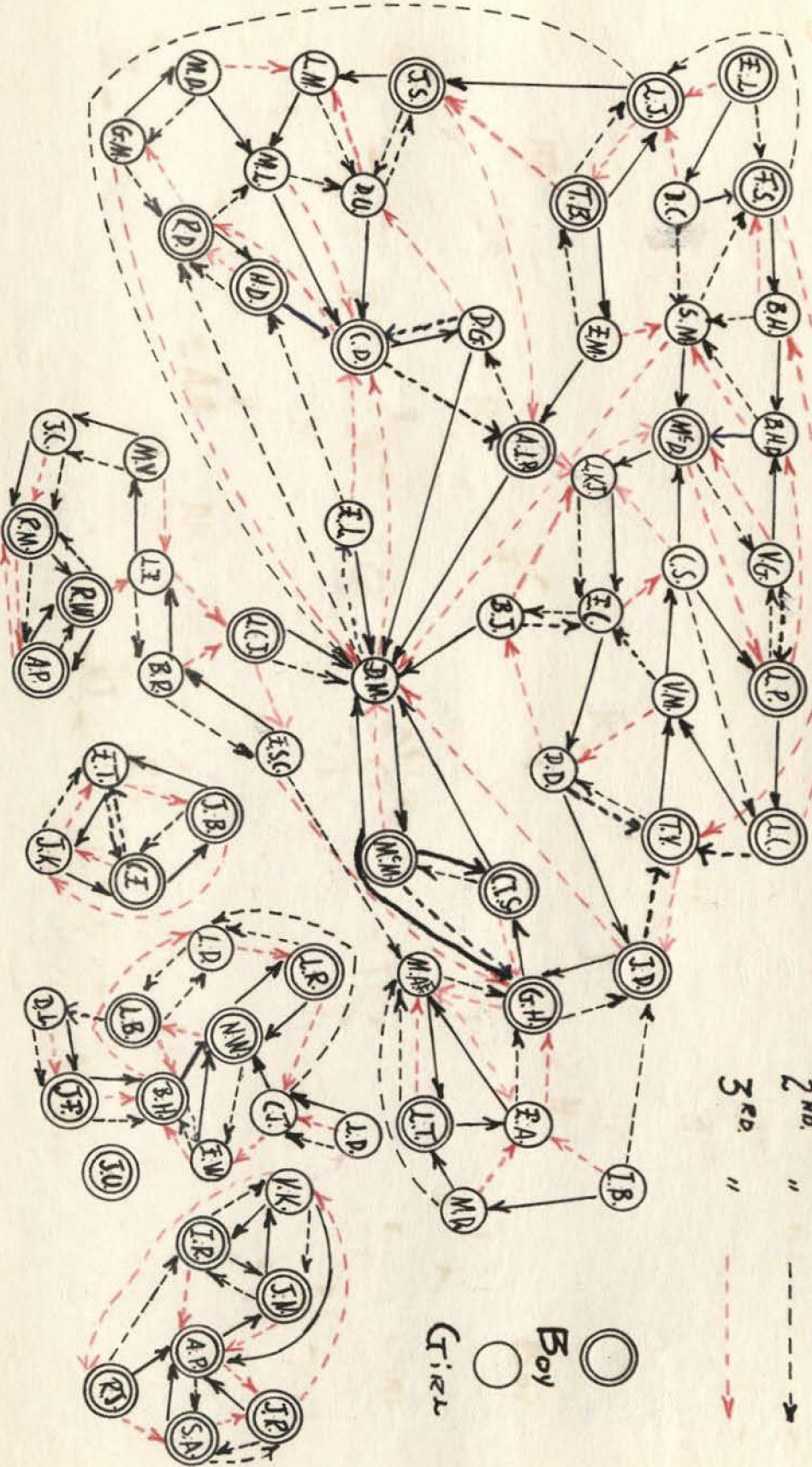


SOCIOGRAM OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE PUPILS OF RANDOLPH HIGH SCHOOL  
LA GRANGE, TEXAS

FIGURE No. 1

1<sup>ST</sup> CHOICE ———→  
 2<sup>ND</sup> "        - - - - -→  
 3<sup>RD</sup> "        - - - - -→  
               - - - - -→

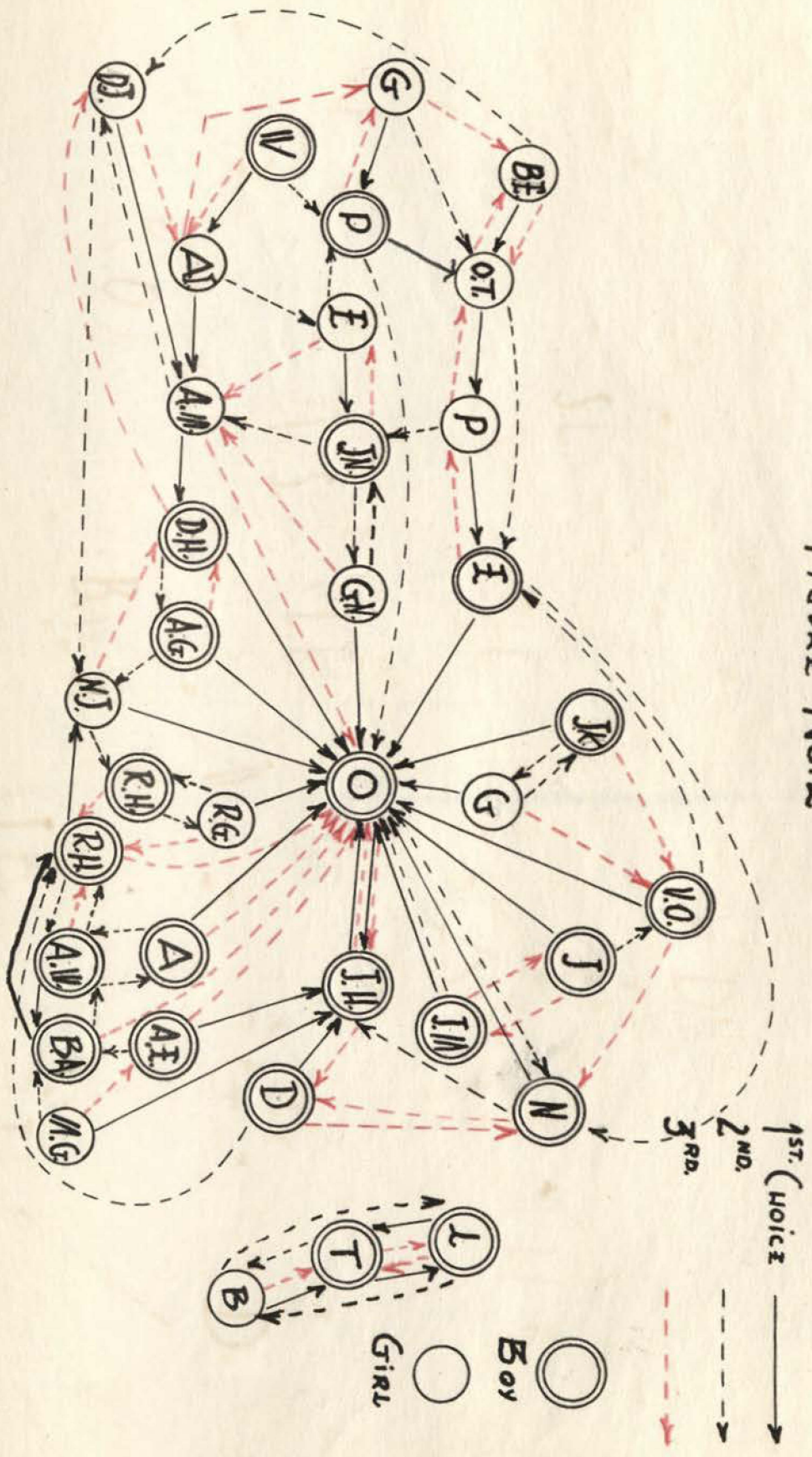
○ Boy  
 ○ Girl





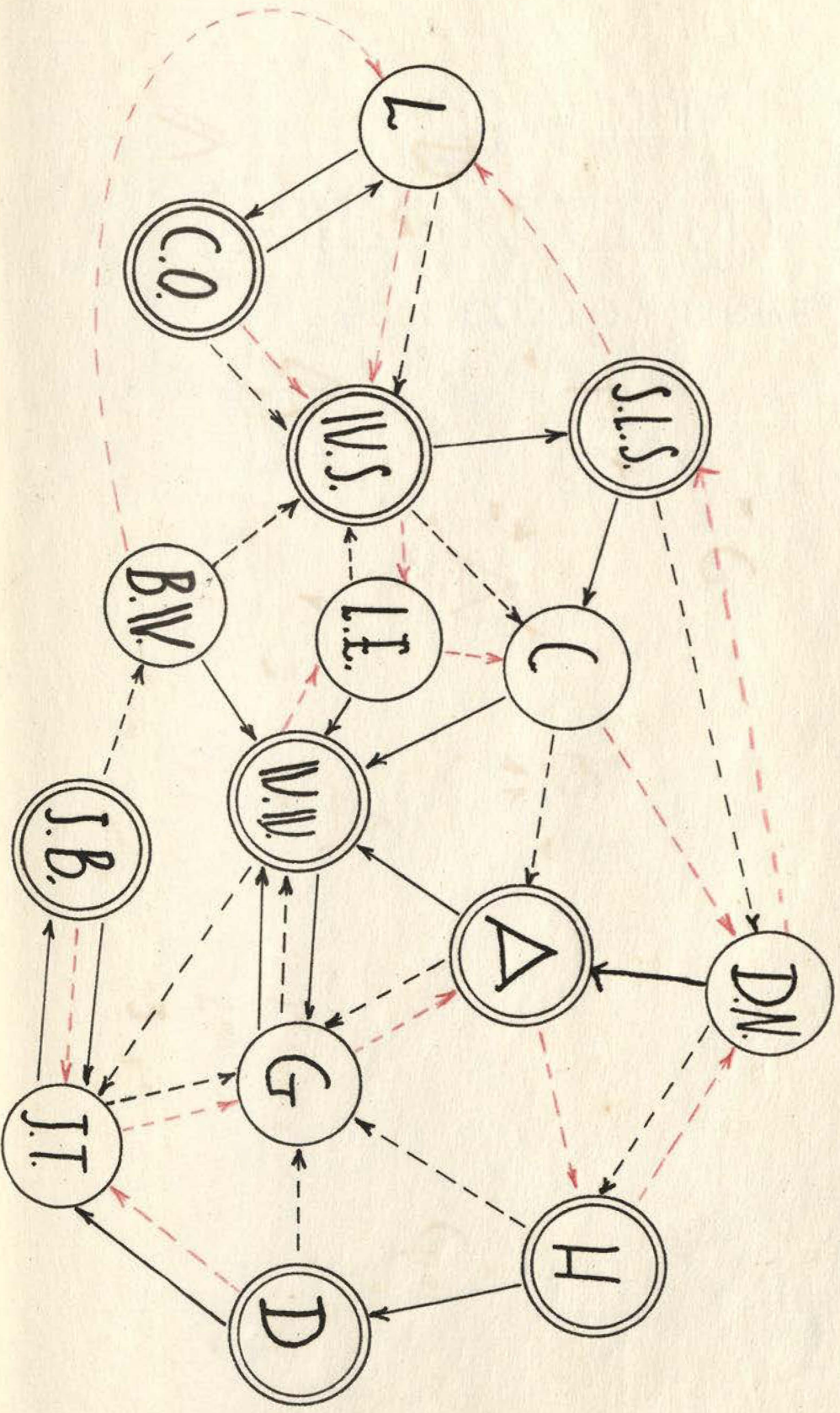
SOCIODIAGRAM OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE OF THE G.A. GREENI High School  
 SCHULENBURG, TEXAS

FIGURE No. 2





SOCIOGRAM OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE PUPILS OF FLATONIA HIGH SCHOOL  
 FLATONIA, TEXAS  
 FIGURE No. 3

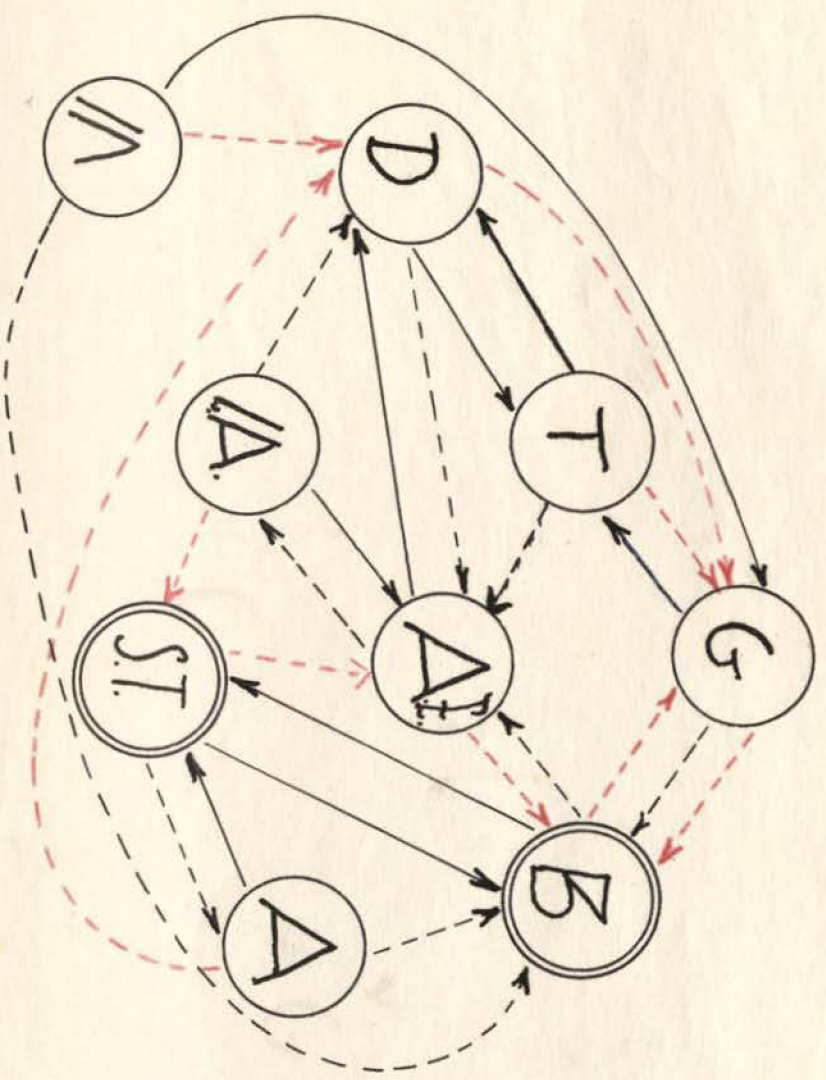


1<sup>ST</sup> CHOICE ———→  
 2<sup>ND</sup> "     --->  
 3<sup>RD</sup> "     - - ->

Boy

Girl

SOCIOGRAM OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE PUPILS OF RADHOST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
 FAYETTE COUNTY, TEXAS  
 FIGURE No. 4



Boy

Girl

1<sup>ST</sup> CHOICE ———→

2<sup>ND</sup> "     - - - - -→

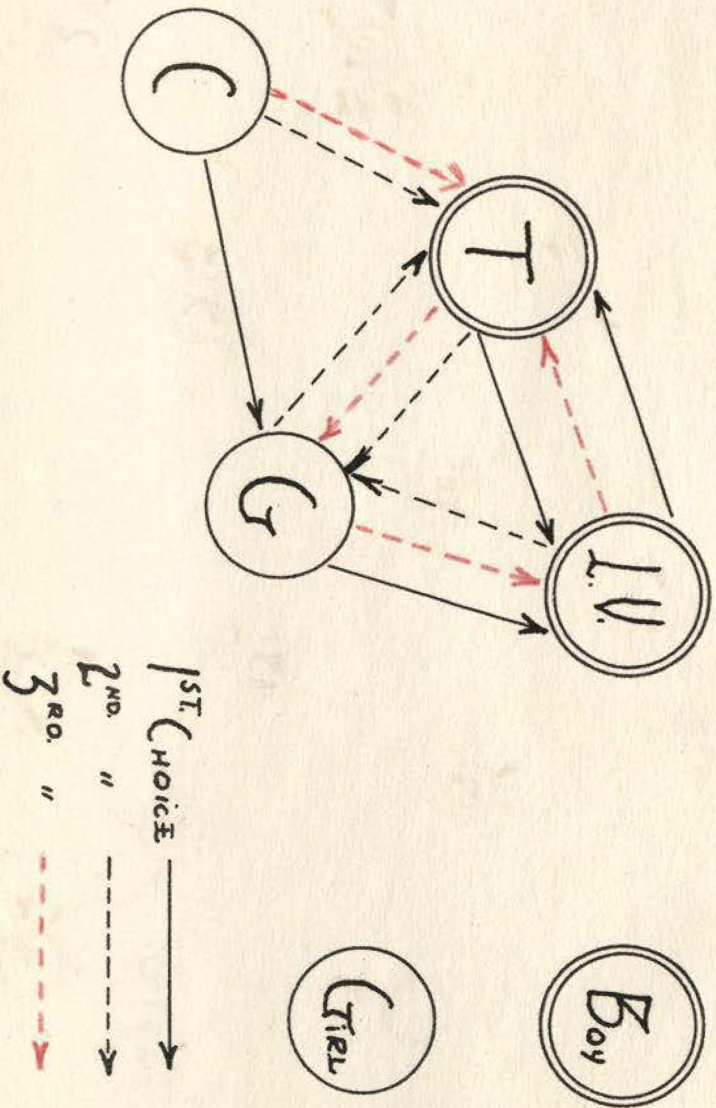
3     "     - - - - -→



SOCIOGRAM OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE PUPILS OF BUFF HOSLYN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

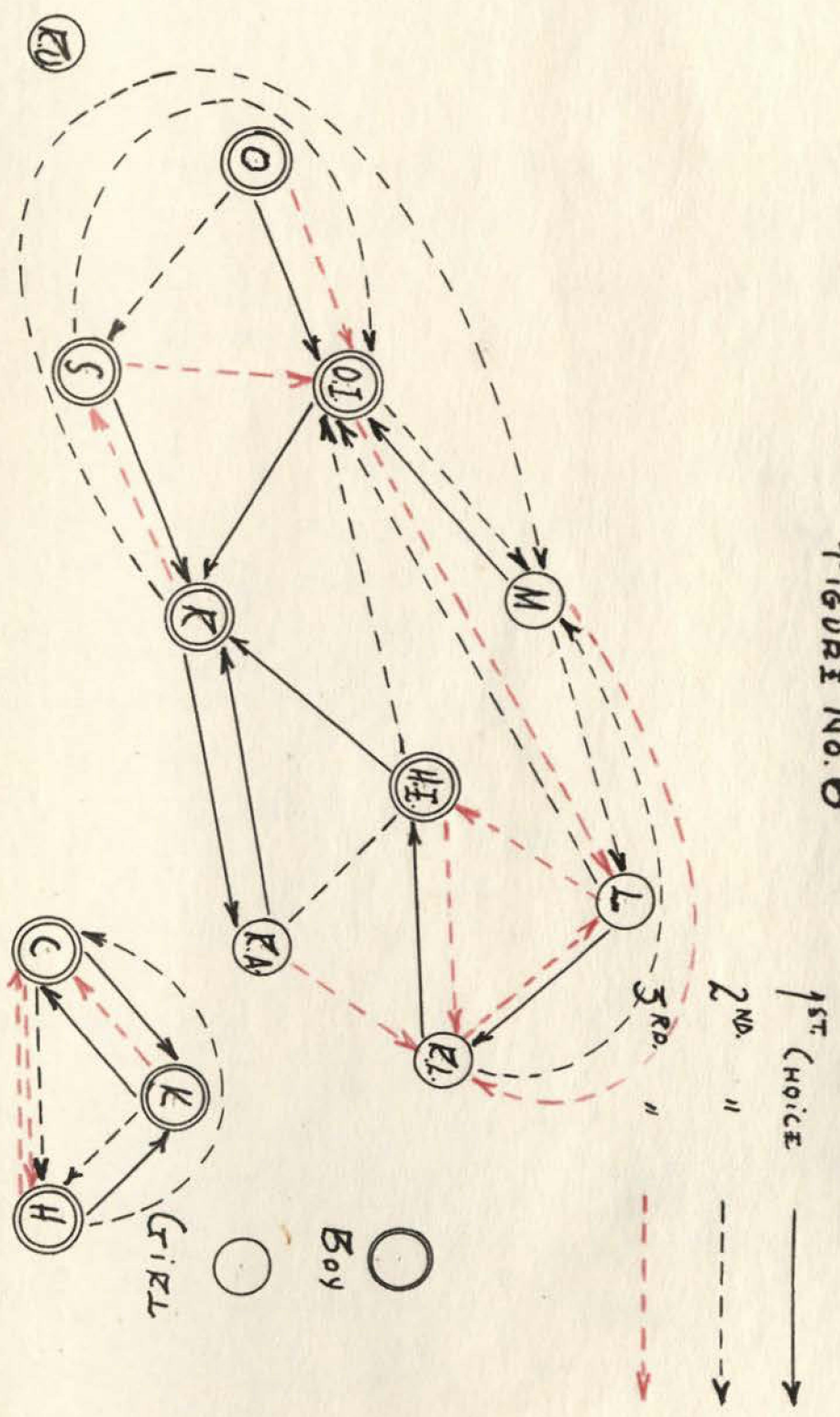
FAYETTE COUNTY, TEXAS

FIGURE No. 5



SOCIOGRAM OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE OF FAYETTEVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
 FAYETTEVILLE, TEXAS

FIGURE No. 6





PERSONAL DATA FORM

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

I. FAMILY BACKGROUND:

Number of brothers \_\_\_\_\_ Older \_\_\_\_\_ Younger \_\_\_\_\_

Number of sisters \_\_\_\_\_ Older \_\_\_\_\_ Younger \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent: Father \_\_\_\_\_ Living \_\_\_\_\_

Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Living \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Relation, if any \_\_\_\_\_

Not related \_\_\_\_\_ Legally Adopted \_\_\_\_\_

Religious faith of persons with whom child lives \_\_\_\_\_

Family status: Parents living together -- Separated \_\_\_\_\_

Deceased \_\_\_\_\_ Divorced \_\_\_\_\_

II. Educational Background:

Training Level: Father: Elem \_\_\_\_\_ High School \_\_\_\_\_ College \_\_\_\_\_

Mother: Elem \_\_\_\_\_ High School \_\_\_\_\_ College \_\_\_\_\_

Siblings: Elem \_\_\_\_\_ High school \_\_\_\_\_ College \_\_\_\_\_

Guardian: Elem \_\_\_\_\_ High School \_\_\_\_\_ College \_\_\_\_\_

Number of siblings in college \_\_\_\_\_ No. finished college \_\_\_\_\_

No. Working \_\_\_\_\_ Type of occupation \_\_\_\_\_

III. ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE FAMILY:

Conveniences in the home: Electricity: \_\_\_\_\_ Running Water \_\_\_\_\_

Radio \_\_\_\_\_ Automobile \_\_\_\_\_ Toilet, indoor \_\_\_\_\_ outdoor \_\_\_\_\_

Bath tub \_\_\_\_\_.



Family Income: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: Father \_\_\_\_\_ M Other \_\_\_\_\_ Sisters, if  
any \_\_\_\_\_ Brothers, if any \_\_\_\_\_

Others in home \_\_\_\_\_.

IV. BACKGROUND OF TRAINING FOR YOUNG CHILD:

General appearance of home, good \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Poor \_\_\_\_\_

General appearance of child, good \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Poor)))

Manners of child: Good \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Peer \_\_\_\_\_

V. Physical condition: Good \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Peer \_\_\_\_\_

VI. SOCIAL STATUS: Accepted by others \_\_\_\_\_ Leads \_\_\_\_\_

Socially blind \_\_\_\_\_ Socially dependent \_\_\_\_\_

Socially independent \_\_\_\_\_ at ease \_\_\_\_\_ timid \_\_\_\_\_

forward \_\_\_\_\_ Contribution to group activity \_\_\_\_\_

Sociogram Isolation \_\_\_\_\_ (Behavior under such conditions)

Group Participation

1. Always \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes when they can have their own  
way \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Never \_\_\_\_\_

Sex Groupings

1. Same sex \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Opposite sex \_\_\_\_\_  
3. Acceptance \_\_\_\_\_.

VII. LANGUAGE USAGE: Good \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Peer \_\_\_\_\_

VIII. Cultural Experience for Social Development: Travel \_\_\_\_\_ Car \_\_\_\_\_

Bus \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Train \_\_\_\_\_ Airplane \_\_\_\_\_

IX. AMUSEMENT: Movies \_\_\_\_\_ Museums \_\_\_\_\_ Parks \_\_\_\_\_ Zoos \_\_\_\_\_

Circus \_\_\_\_\_ Fairs \_\_\_\_\_ Others \_\_\_\_\_

Reading: Stories \_\_\_\_\_ Comics \_\_\_\_\_ Others \_\_\_\_\_

X. MENTAL MATURITY: Text \_\_\_\_\_ I. Q. \_\_\_\_\_