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A STUDY OF THE VOCATIONAL PREPARATION OF MENTALLY
RETARDED CHILDREN

by 613-8301-

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B.S., Grambling College, 1967

A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1973

Approved by:


Major Professor

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Problem

The preparation of the mentally retarded for employment in a complex modern society is one of the basic goals of vocational training programs. Within recent years, this goal has received increased emphasis by the federal government through assistance to state divisions of vocational rehabilitation and the corresponding expansion of work experience or work study programs. Many times mentally retarded children grow up to become welfare recipients. This cycle can be broken by effective vocational programs which train the students to be self-supporting rather than being totally economically dependent upon public subsistence projects. With all the present demands on the state and federal funds, there is a definite need for special education personnel to be utilized more effectively to train mentally retarded students in vocational skills to enhance their employability.

Statement of the Problem

To determine if mentally retarded children can be trained for semi-skilled occupations.

To determine if vocational training programs enhanced the employability rate of mentally retarded children.

To identify the methods of vocational training and the types of occupations for which retarded students at the Grambling Evaluation and Training Center in Grambling, Louisiana were being prepared.

Definition of Terms Used

Educable Mentally Retarded -- Those capable of some achievement in traditional academic subjects such as reading and arithmetic; those who may be expected to maintain themselves independently as adults; and those with IQ scores between 50 and 80 (Wrightstone, 1959).

Trainable Mentally Retarded -- Those who are ineligible for classes for the educable mentally retarded, but who possess potentialities for training in self care, social adjustment in home or school, and economic usefulness in the home or in a sheltered environment and those in IQ range of 30-50 (Robinson, 1965).

Vocational Preparation -- Education designed to develop skills, abilities, understandings, attitudes, work habits and appreciations encompassing knowledge and information needed by workers to enter and make progress in employment on a useful and productive basis. It is an integral part of the vocational training program and contributes toward the development of good citizens by developing their physical, social, civic, cultural and economic competencies.

Procedures

A survey of research materials, abstracts, studies, and professional literature related to methods employed by various training programs for the preparation of mentally retarded children was made.

At Grambling Evaluation and Training Center in Grambling, Louisiana, an investigation was made of methods of vocational training employed by interviewing the personnel and observing the training program.

Findings of professional literature and the methods employed by the training program at Grambling Evaluation and Training Center for vocational preparedness were summarized.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Literature on Objectives and Pre-Vocational Competencies

The ability of a retarded person to get and hold a job is one measure of a successful training program. In order to achieve the training objective, the training program and its personnel must help the student acquire skills that are common to a variety of vocational areas. It can also increase the student's knowledge and techniques of getting and holding jobs which are open to him. A training program's objectives must be flexible enough to serve all needs of the clients. This element of flexibility is shown in the eleven objectives of a training program as devised by the Worcester Area Occupational Training Center. Hastbacka (1966:61) listed the objectives as:

1. To determine work ability.
2. To develop work tolerance.
3. To teach work processes and skills.
4. To give vocational training with a practical application.
5. To effect adjustment to work.
6. To enable retarded individuals to work.
7. To provide guided opportunities for prevocational exploration and try outs in a simulated work situation.
8. To develop employability.

9. To place retarded individuals in a selected job.
10. To provide follow-up services.
11. To provide employment in a realistic work setting permitting individualized work programs.

The importance of early vocational training cannot be taken lightly. Many students with retarded mental development are not equipped with the necessary skills or personal qualifications needed for participation in a training program. The development of any sequential training program should have as its basis early teacher or trainer/pupil contact. It is at this stage that positive patterns of behavior can be most firmly established. The formation of these patterns is of greater consequence when the child is mentally retarded. With his learning difficulties it is vital that he forms positive habits at the earliest age possible. It is at this early age that he will develop his initial concepts of human relationships, responsibilities, attitudes, and associated skills which will help him become self-sufficient. Walden (1970:8) stated: "Not only does the retarded child have greater difficulty learning, he also has greater difficulty unlearning." Thus, poor patterns of behavior, once established, become more difficult to modify. To keep within the guidelines of a training program, Walden (1970:8) presented a list of prevocational competencies that should be achieved by all students. This list also serves as a basis for determining vocational readiness. The list include such skills as:

1. Can communicate personal data.
2. Is aware of his ability to contribute to training or home activities.
3. Is aware of personal limitations.
4. Can take care of personal sanitation: bathroom, etc.
5. Uses speech to make personal needs known.
6. Knows the names of common household objects used in training.
7. Dresses self and keeps reasonably neat.
8. Takes care of his own belongings.
9. Takes care of others' belongings.
10. Knows difference between his and others' belongings.
11. Takes care of training materials and equipment.
12. Shares and takes turns.
13. Follows directions.
14. Participates in group activities.
15. Obeys training and center rules.
16. Practices common courtesies as everyday habits.
17. Is responsible for simple tasks.
18. Has pride in good workmanship.
19. Realizes the importance of work and why people work.

The four most important prevocational competencies for determining vocational readiness were considered by Walden to be self awareness; relationships with other people; acceptance of responsibility; and development of positive behavior patterns. Further reference to these prevocational

competencies or objectives of special education will be made under the literature on "Programming for Mentally Retarded."

Literature on a More Realistic Classification of Mentally Retarded Children

Nearly all research materials reviewed related to the efficacy of special classes for the mentally retarded during the past decade have raised serious questions as to the desirability of continuing classes for the retarded in their present form. Two ideas were presented which attempted to take advantage of two of the more likely possibilities for change:

1. to allow the more seriously retarded to be together in a special class since programs have been more effective at this lower level.
2. to place the emphasis for grouping in school on its applicability to the future through work study programs leading to a vocation.

A classification of an individual often becomes a label which may become harmful, serving as a stigma or even an emotional barrier to learning. However, there seems to be no workable system, other than complete individualization, that allows special instruction without some kind of groupings that might be expected to be more logical and effective than others. According to Wrightstone (1959) the present I.Q. range 50-79 has so long been accepted for classes called "educable mentally retarded" that few people seem to seriously question it. It is time that careful scrutiny be given to the school classification standards, attempting to

reflect what may be expected to happen to a person later in the world of work. The students whose intelligence quotients are in the 70's are likely the best prospects for employment, with those who have intelligence quotients in the upper 60's close behind. At this point (mid 60's) in IQ an area of diminishing returns seems reached and it often becomes obvious, almost from the beginning, that many retarded persons below this point have limited potentials which should be planned for as realistically as the others. This group, (below the mid 60's) not without exception, but in large numbers, could be expected to find satisfaction and productive activity mostly in sheltered environments.

Porter (1965) expressed the idea that an IQ range of 65-80 for the better group and below 65 for the lower group would appear to be a great improvement. Most of the more capable students will become literate at a practical level. Most can adapt to and profit from work study programs. A core curriculum as well as appropriate social skills and motivational goals can be achieved. A classification involving labeling should be avoided wherever possible; however, because of the enormous size of the problem, grouping often is essential. To be more effective and realistic in handling the mentally retarded, more emphasis should be placed on future programming and the world of work.

Literature on The Efficacy of Special Class Placement for
The Mentally Retarded in Proper Perspective

Whether educable mentally retarded children should receive their basic education in regular classroom settings or in special classes designed to meet their needs has been a long contested question. A review was made of related studies, issues, and considerations concerning the most effective placement of educable mentally retarded children. One of the largest controversies in special education has concerned the most effective school placement of educable mentally retarded children. Since the early days of Itard's efforts to teach Victor, the "Wild Boy of Aveyron", physicians, psychologists, and educators alike have been concerned about the prevention, management, and education of those labeled mentally retarded. Although there is general agreement on the long-range objectives for the retarded, many divergent opinions appear when specific procedures, techniques, and particular administrative organizations are advocated.

As generally conceptualized by Mackie (1965), one primary issue centered around whether the retarded are better placed in a regular class to compete with normal peers or whether they should be segregated in special classes, schools, or some other nonintegrative arrangement. The arguments both pro and con lined up rather quickly with some evidence conceded to both viewpoints. This issue and subsequent attempts at resolving the problem not only served an academic interest but pragmatic and economic

ones as well. The increased numbers of children being referred to special education, the mushrooming teacher training programs, and the influx of federal and state monies made the comparison of regular and special classes an important issue. Additionally, the determination of the most advantageous placement, organization, and learning situations is necessary for the benefit of the children themselves. The controversy is at present more or less dormant. For the educable child, at least, the issue seemed to focus on either special classes in the public schools or placement in regular classes. To some extent, this issue has been partly settled with the influx of federal monies for special classes during the 1960's and the concomitant push of parent groups for additional classes and programs. Should future research show a consistent need for other types of administrative arrangements, this trend may be all but impossible to reverse. For example, Mackie (1965) reported that the past decade has seen most states double and in some cases triple the number of teachers and related personnel in special education. Mackie (1965:7) further stated that "approximately 4,000 local school systems initiated special education programs during the period 1948-1963, making a total of 5,600 special programs." Although classes for the mentally retarded made the greatest gains of all the exceptionalities, still only about one-third of the nation's six million retardates were being reached by special schools and programs.

The critical question still remained, however, "where should the educable mentally retarded child be placed in order that he might receive the most effective education and training?" Writers in recent years still bring up many of the old arguments and point to the consistent lack of evidence needed for decision making. Dunn (1963:80) stated that the retarded are "socially segregated even when they are physically integrated into the regular class." Kirk (1962:126) offered a concurring view when he stated that "the sociometric studies of the retarded children in the regular grades have shown quite definitely that these children are isolated and rejected by their peer group." Goldstein (1962) advanced a similar idea by pointing out that rarely is the retarded child in the regular class a popular figure and that he "can be present physically but absent socially and psychologically." Writing with the administrator in mind, Brabner (1964:109) stated.

In other words, the administrator could not conclude that the mere physical juxtaposition of special classes and regular classes, or of retarded children and normal children in the cafeteria, the gymnasium, or on the playground would eventuate, through some curious osmotic process, in a merging of the special class program with the general programs.

Some educators maintained that labeling a child retarded is tantamount to membership in an ascribed minority. The specialness surrounding a particular class seemed to give it an aura of academic and behavioral backwardness. In discussing the problem of behavioral backwardness, Blackman

and Goldberg (1965:30) concluded that, "True integration must be more than a physical arrangement; more importantly, it should be an attitude or 'state of mind' shared by both the 'integrator' and 'integratee'." Too often programs for the retarded have been placed in a back room or basement resulting in stigma and negative connotations. As a result, the authors laid much of the responsibility for acceptance in the regular school upon teachers and administrators who could do much to foster positive attitudes. Brabner (1964) stated that integration should be viewed from a three-fold perspective as a belief, a policy, and a process.

A number of writers made thorough reviews of educational research with the mentally retarded. The efficacy of special class placement was given cursory recognition by one or more of the above mentioned authors. However, few have exhausted their effort to explore the depth of the question of special class placement in its total context.

Historically, administrators and special education personnel have contended that the special class has a definite advantage over the regular class in that it provided a less frustrating environment and a chance to compete with intellectually comparable peers. Some of the most widely quoted studies (Johnson, 1950; and Johnson and Kirk, 1950) indicated that rejection and isolation of the retarded child in regular classes was the rule rather than the exception.

Stanton and Cassidy (1964:12) expressed the following idea:

It may eventuate that the reasons for various types of placement of the mentally retarded must be based on other than educative arguments and that the ends to be served are only incidentally of educational import. It may be that if education is to be an important goal, the best type of setting for these children is yet to be imagined and realized in our culture.

Kennedy (1972:3b) in the July 23, 1972, Wichita Eagle and the Beacon, wrote an editorial feature on "Guidance and Vocational Counselors Vie for Money" by J. R. Holdridge which stated that,

Many school counselors do not seem to have ever heard of the high percentage of college dropouts--caused partly by the myth that a college degree is the best and surest route to occupational success.

The point of the article was that school counselors are all too involved with the idea that a college education is the primary basis for occupational success. Therefore, many students who are not academically prepared for such a venture, do not have success as college students. Also, because of the failure of the school counselor to place stress on vocational choices, many students are caught in a web of confusion. If vocational education was stressed with the same import as a college degree, many students would experience occupational success by attaining it on an academic level which would best fit their potentials and abilities.

Literature on Programming for Educable Mentally Retarded

Children

An approach was outlined to improve programming for educable mentally retarded children. Taylor (1970) presented several goals which were formulated by the Education Policies Commission for all children. These goals appeared to be applicable for the educable mentally retarded as well. To meet these goals administrators should have certain guidelines in mind as they plan for retarded children. Guidelines appear to be one approach to enable educable retarded children to reach their optimum growth.

There is some confusion in distinguishing between the trainable and educable mentally retarded, particularly at the upper end of the IQ range. The trainable mentally retarded are those who are ineligible for classes for the educable mentally retarded, but who possess potentialities for training in self-care, social adjustment in home or school, and economic usefulness in the home or in a sheltered environment. On an individual psychometric examination Robinson (1965) observed that such children usually fall in a 30 to 50 IQ range. This research literature did not include this group of mentally retarded children, but was concerned primarily with educable mentally retarded children.

Taylor (1965) expressed the idea that programming for the educable mentally retarded involved several critical components. The first being to develop special provisions

for them since they could not benefit sufficiently from the instruction provided in the regular class. Another equally important component was the development or stating of realistic goals and aims.

According to Taylor (1970) the aims of the Education Policies Commission was accepted as the goals for special education. These goals as listed by Taylor (1970:184) were:

1. Self-realization or self awareness.
2. Human relationships or relationships with other people.
3. Economic efficiency or acceptance of responsibility.
4. Civic responsibility or development of positive behavior patterns.

Under self-realization goals were such objectives as health habits, skills of everyday living, i.e. dressing, feeding, personal cleanliness, language development, perceptual training, safety, independent travel and simple number concepts. Under goals of human relationships were communication skills, manners, and group activities. Economic efficiency included simple tasks of following directions through performing simple chores and prevocational participation to working in a sheltered workshop or in the community.

Civic responsibility included the rights, duties, and privileges enjoyed as a member of the community.

In Taylor (1970:185) six guidelines were listed that should be followed in attempting to realize the goals

set by the Education Policies Commission that administrators might find beneficial in planning programs for this group.

1. The mentally retarded should be identified as early as possible by qualified experts.
2. The educable mentally retarded child should be assigned to special classes in accordance with his needs.
3. The curriculum for the educable retarded should be based upon their needs, interest and capacities, and should as much as possible promote their personal and social growth.
4. Facilities, equipment and supplies should permit and foster the development of a functional curriculum for the mentally retarded.
5. Teachers of the educable mentally retarded should have special training and have qualifications related to the education of these children.
6. There should be a well defined guidance program for the mentally retarded child.

These guidelines were not exhaustive and should be considered only as one approach in providing quality education for retarded children.

Other ideas were advanced by several authors that gave support to the guidelines presented by Taylor. The mentally retarded should be identified as early as possible by qualified experts. Many retarded children are not identified until after they have entered school. Provision should be made for locating these children through referrals by parents, pediatricians, health organizations, and social agencies. A working relationship with psychological clinics

should be established for diagnostic purposes. According to Dunn (1965) provisions should be made for a complete examination which would involve a variety of specialists including psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, physicians, and nurses. The complete screening process should include a medical, intellectual, social-emotional and educational evaluation. The importance of conducting a complete evaluation of the child cannot be over-emphasized. Unless extreme caution and thoroughness are used there exists the danger of misplacing the child and thereby diluting an effective, organized program for the mentally retarded. Finally, provisions should be made for periodic re-evaluation of the children placed in the special education program (Erdman, 1961).

The educable mentally retarded child should be assigned to special classes in accordance with his needs. Knowledge of each child's strengths and weaknesses is needed in order to develop a meaningful program. Care must be taken not to assign children to special classes based on physical handicaps, emotional disturbances, behavior problems, and the like. It is very important that only those children for whom the special classes are organized be admitted. Definite standards of eligibility should be established such as chronological age, social maturity, IQ mental age, and educational achievement. Willey (1964) stated that the parent's cooperation should be obtained preceding an assignment to a special class. The parents'

acceptance and understanding of their child's need for special facilities can determine in large measure the success of the program.

A large number of mentally retarded children in a single school usually require the organization of more than one special class. When this occurs, it is advisable to group pre-adolescents together and place adolescents in a separate group. If further subdivisions are necessary mental age may be used as a criterion.

Placing the children in special classes, according to Kern (1962) again called for teamwork: the teacher, the psychologist, responsible for assessing the child's potentialities, the social-worker, representing the liaison between the home and the school, the vocational counselor - responsible for helping the teacher organized and planned his curriculum and located material and the physician responsible for providing information about the child's health.

The curriculum for the educable retarded should be based upon their needs, interests and capacities, and should as much as possible promote their personal and social growth.

The curriculum should be extremely practical. A generous amount of time should be devoted to teaching hygiene, physical training, health care and habits, nutrition, and safety. Adequate physical training is also desirable. Some activities for training small muscles are crayon coloring within boundaries, cutting along prescribed lines, poster painting, clay work, et cetera. Physical exercise

is very, very important. These may include games and folk dancing. According to Wallin (1955) many of these exercises may be introduced by films and pictures. The educable mentally retarded can be taught simple reading and figuring. This requires considerably more drill and practice than is required by normal children.

Facilities, equipment, and supplies should permit and foster the development of a functional curriculum for the mentally retarded. Kirk (1951) stated that the teacher of the mentally retarded must of necessity improvise, adopt, and adjust books and materials to the rate of learning of the mentally retarded child. A classroom to be used for general non-manual and quieter manual activities require suitable equipment, individual movable silenced desks and shelf space for the materials and objects used in the classroom. The size of the classroom for the mentally retarded should be at least one and one half times as large as the regular classroom. This will allow for the many manual activities required. The size of the class should under no circumstances exceed fifteen children. The location of the classroom, according to McCormick (1959) should be in an area not isolated or remote from the rest of the school. Finally, visual aid equipment should be available.

Teachers of the educable mentally retarded should receive special training and have qualifications related to the education of these children. Special class teachers in general should have instructional skills not normally required

of teachers in the regular grades. Special courses in methods and materials are needed to enable the teacher to cope with the problems of the mentally retarded child. Colleges and universities across the country are rapidly developing programs of teacher preparation in the area of education of the mentally retarded. Cain (1953) suggested that the preparation of the teacher should cover certain minimum essentials including (a) orientation and psychology courses dealing with characteristics and needs of mentally retarded children, (b) teaching and curriculum courses with materials and methods realistically related to the education of the mentally retarded, and (c) actual observation, participation, and practice teaching with the mentally retarded. Beyond this, minimum, adequate professional preparation in education, psychology, and mental hygiene is needed. Emphasis should be given to the use of audio-visual aids teaching mentally retarded children; consequently teachers should be trained in using such materials.

There should be a well defined guidance program for the mentally retarded child. Slaughter (1964) indicated that guidance, to be most effective, was a continuous process that begins the moment the child entered the school and was available for as long a period of time as necessary. Special services should be an integral part of the total school program for the educable mentally retarded.

A special class teacher is likely to find many handicaps and maladjustments among a group of mentally retarded children. Speech disorders, defective hearing, poor reading ability, weak eye sight, and behavioral maladjustments are a few. Hagge (1954) observed that many of these problems are too complex for the teacher or the school to solve alone. The services of many specialists will be needed. Assistance of a speech correctionist, physical therapist, occupational therapist, or experts in subject matter fields of guidance, testing, health, and hearing may all be needed. An affiliation and/or contact with organizations that can secure the services of these various specialists is extremely important.

It is felt by utilizing the approach outlined in this research literature, mentally retarded children will be inspired to reach their optimum growth, which is the aim of education for all children in a democratic society.

Literature on the Study of Training Programs

Viscardi and Gentile (1967) stated that the beginning of vocational training programs usually is traced to Cincinnati, Ohio, which established a work-study class in 1908.

Doll (1967:72) reported that:

By 1916 the English had worked out the Birmingham Plan for part-time training on the job under school supervision. Having surveyed the community for suitable firms, educational authorities gave a good grounding in the work before sending the children out. On

the job they were visited at least once monthly by a teacher, to check progress and review the situation. Some returned to the school part-time for continuing training in the school or to benefit from its influence.

Bigelow (1921) reported on a program which began March 29, 1920, and, because of the business depression, ended December 1, 1920. Twenty-three girls were enrolled in a special class, and received training doing factory work in a separate workroom. Bigelow reported that those girls having mental ages of five to seven earned eight to ten dollars per week at factory piece work rates on simple, routine jobs. Girls with mental ages of eight to eleven usually acquired two-thirds the speed of standard daily production rates. Only two of the girls were discharged as failures.

Matthews (1922) reported a follow-up study of 100 male patients at the Massachusetts School for the Feeble-minded, Waverly, Massachusetts. At Waverly these patients were trained in work habits, personal hygiene, and the use of money. The school did not deal directly with employers, except in the cases of four orphaned boys; in the other cases, the boys and their families obtained the positions. Of the 100 boys, who had been in the community for periods of time ranging from 10 months to 5 years, 78 were working and self-supporting; 5 were attending public school at home; 4 were unemployed and at home; 3 were in the service; 3 returned to the institution; 2 did farm work at home; 2 were in reform schools; 1 was receiving governmental vocational training,

l helped at home; and l was hemiplegic who helped some at home.

The New York City schools began a trade extension class in 1922 for mentally retarded girls. By 1930, the program included 9 teachers and 167 girls, ages 14 to 18. Arithmetic, English, and personal hygiene classes were conducted; the girls received trade training during the remainder of the time. Davies (1930) reported that most of the girls were successful in finding steady employment at fairly good wages.

Wardell (1946) reported that the first placement of a mentally retarded patient from the Sonoma State Hospital as a worker of a county hospital was made in 1930. During the years 1930 to 1945, 26 males of chronological ages 17 to 45 were placed on work assignments in this county hospital. The jobs included orderlies and ward attendants, janitors, mattress makers, plumbers' helpers, storekeeper assistants, laundry workers, kitchen helpers, and farm and dairy workers. These mentally retarded employees of the county hospital lived on the grounds, as did many of the regular employees; they received board and room and ten to thirty dollars per month. Twenty adjusted satisfactorily and remained on the job, while six were returned to Sonoma State Hospital as unsatisfactory.

Bobroff (1956) described secondary level programs for the mentally retarded in the Detroit, Michigan Public Schools. He reported special vocational and academic training for

students in the Detroit Public Schools as early as 1941. In a follow-up study, Bobroff included information on 52 males and 11 females who had terminated their education in 1941; these persons had received vocational training with other students in vocational courses while attending special courses for academic subjects. The mean intelligence quotient of the group was 72. The group had received academic and vocational training for an average of 3.5 years. Bobroff reported 47 of the 52 males were employed, and all 11 females were employed or homemakers. The average wage for the group was \$2.08 per hour.

Haskell and Strauss (1943) described data on 100 mentally retarded males who had been patients at the Wayne County Training School, Northville, Michigan. The average achievement level was fourth grade or below. Of the 100 former patients, 40 percent had enlisted for military service. Of data on 84 of the 100, 51 percent were in the army, 19 percent in the Navy or Merchant Marines, 7 percent in the Air Corps; and 7 percent in the Medical Corps. Four received dishonorable discharges or were convicted. One was deceased. Eighty-eight percent continued successfully in the service for periods of six months to several years. No data was available concerning the number of former patients who were rejected for military service.

Hegge (1944) conducted a study regarding the occupational status of 177 former patients at the Wayne County Training School, Northville, Michigan. Upon leaving the institution in 1941 and 1942, their mean chronological age was 17.2 years,

and their mean intelligence quotient was 71.8. Eighty-eight percent were employed.

Potts (1952) reported that one of the earliest job training programs for mental retardates was the Jackson Experiment at the Coldwater (Michigan) Home and Training School. This program began in 1944, as a cooperative plan of the Michigan Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Coldwater Home and Training School. Twenty-four mentally retarded patients, chronological ages 18 to 24, lived in the community and were placed in industrial and business establishments for job training. Twenty of these patients had intelligence quotients between 50 and 70. A counselor was available to these patients at all times. Classes in personal hygiene and citizenship were conducted. In 1947, after one and one-half years in the program, 21 of 22 patients were reported by the counselor as rehabilitated. In a 1950 follow-up, 13 were employed, and 3 had periodic employment.

Although not specifically described as a work-study program, Coakley (1945) reported the employment status of 37 mentally retarded wards of the state in Ramsey County, Minnesota, who were employed in war industries. The chronological age range was 20 to 47, and the mental age range was 40 to 75. The average wage was \$40.48 per week. The average period of employment was 17.4 months. Coakley emphasized that the manpower shortage was critical at the time. Information was not available on 29 of the retardates

regarding the method of securing employment. Fourteen had obtained their job through the United States Employment Service; 13 had made their own job applications; a friend referred 1 retardate; a social worker obtained a job for another.

McKeon (1946) reported a study of 210 boys who had left a special class center in a industrial city of New England near Boston, Massachusetts, between 1932 and 1942. Of the total of 1,055 students listed during this time period, 210 were randomly selected for inclusion in the study. The mean chronological age and intelligence quotients were not reported; however, the ages ranged from 16 to 27, and the intelligence quotients ranged from 52 to 83. These 210 boys had spent an average of 4 years, 9 months in special classes. At the time of the survey, 113 of the 210 boys were in active service; 76 worked in the city; 8 were institutionalized; 1 received a medical discharge from the service. One-fifth of the group had been employed 100 percent of the time and seventy-seven percent had been employed at least 50 percent of the time.

Hungerford (1952) described the program of the Mansfield (Connecticut) State Training School and Hospital in which 98 students received vocational training part-time and attended school part-time. The students first were evaluated on various institutional jobs. Actual job placement in the community and follow-up services were last steps in the training-placement program.

Loos and Tizard (1955) reported a workshop for institutionalized mental retardates at Manor Hospital, Epsom, Surrey, England. Of 40 patients, 6 were selected for training. The mean chronological age was 20.6, with a range of 18 to 29; the mean intelligence quotient was 32.8, with a range of 24 to 41. During training, these retardates were paid a specified weekly wage for folding and gluing small cardboard cake boxes. Training was conducted in an institutional setting. This training was rated as being successful although employment occurred in the institution's sheltered workshop rather than in a competitive situation.

Boly and Cassell (1956) reported an on-the-job training program at Mansfield (Connecticut) State Training School and Hospital. Eleven boys with intelligence quotients ranging from 55 to 81, chronological ages 14.8 to 19.5, mental ages 8-3 to 12-1, were placed on rotating jobs within the institution in the mornings for six months and attended school sessions in the afternoons. Boly and Cassell support a rationale for an institutional on-the-job training program, which emphasized the development of desirable methods of behavior rather than the mastery of specific vocational skills.

Phelps (1956) described a follow-up study of post-school adjustment on 105 males and 58 females who had been in state approved classes for the mentally retarded. The median intelligence quotient was 60.6, and the median chronological age was 21.7. These retardates had spent an

average of 3.4 years in special class. Eighty-nine percent were employed at the time of the follow-up earning an average of \$46.00 per week. Phelps concluded that, in spite of frequently being denied educational opportunities geared to their potentialities, mentally retarded persons make a good adjustment after leaving school.

Johnson, Slawson and Calvert (1957) presented information on an occupational training program for mentally retarded persons of Greater Kansas City. Eight weeks of initial evaluation was provided, followed by 18 weeks of personal and vocational adjustment with job training and counseling. All trainees received evaluation, including job samples; it was not specified if these job samples were conducted in a sheltered workshop or in competitive employment.

In 1957, according to Eskridge (1963) the Texas legislature appropriated vocational rehabilitation funds for the mentally retarded. A two-year pilot project showed that approximately 60 percent of the mentally retarded students were rehabilitated and made the transition from school to employment, through cooperative vocational rehabilitation and special education.

Shawn (1964) reported on the work-study program for the educable mentally retarded which began in the Albany, New York, schools in September, 1959. During the first four years of the work-study program, Shawn reported that

a total of 37 adolescents, ages 17 to 21, intelligence quotients 50 to 75, were assigned to the program. The students spent mornings on the job and afternoons in special education classes and counseling. After four years, 70 to 75 percent of the students had been retained by their employers.

Weimer, Morales, and Persia (1964) discussed a program which was begun in 1959 in San Antonio, Texas, financed by a three-year grant which was extended to five years. In the five years, the program served 250 clients. The clients ranged in chronological ages of 17 to 35, with intelligence quotients of 35 to 75. The trainees received evaluation, individual and group counseling, and participation in discussion groups. Of the 191 trainees placed on jobs, 100 (53 percent) were employed at the time of Weimer's report.

Reported by Patrick (1960) the occupational therapy department of the Hartford, Connecticut Rehabilitation Center provided a work-evaluation service for educable mental retardates, ages 16 to 35, with intelligence quotients of 50 to 75. Work evaluation, work-habit training, and liaison with other services were provided during a nine to twelve month training program for two hours daily. Fifty percent of the trainees were placed in outside employment, and twenty-five percent were placed in sheltered workshops; most of the other trainees were reported to have returned home.

In September, 1961, Harvey, McMillan, and Ebersole (1964) reported that the Research and Demonstration Project

Number 842 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration of the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare was begun in ten Alabama cities for students of ages 16 to 21, with intelligence quotients of 50 to 75. Special class training stressed personal competence, vocational competence, and social competence. The students were evaluated in workshops. On-the-job training, job placement, and a minimum of three months of follow-up evaluation were provided. During the project, September, 1961, through May, 1964, 209 clients were served. At the time of the follow-up in May, 1964, 85 former clients were employed or housewives, sixty-one were still in some type of training. Data was not available on the remainder of the former clients.

From March 1, 1962, to February 28, 1967 Viscardi and Gentile (1967) reported on Research and Demonstration grant Number 1036 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration of the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare that financed the Human Resources Center at Abilities, Incorporated, and the Human Resources School. Abilities, Incorporated is an electronics firm employing over 400 severely disabled persons. The project evaluated work performance, and conducted industrial and clerical work-study programs for retardates. Skill-oriented vocational training was emphasized. During the 1962-1963 school year, a pre-vocational program was conducted for six female and nine male educable mentally retarded students, ages 16 to 18, with intelligence quotients of 60 to 80. These

retardates spent three hours daily on the job at Abilities, Incorporated, and spent each afternoon in academic training. Five of the males were unable to adjust to this work training after three months in the program and were terminated. Of the 10 whose work performance was satisfactory, six females were employed full-time at Abilities, Incorporated upon graduation; one male began part-time work at the firm; and three males continued training. Neuhaus (1967) described 29 mentally retarded individuals, 18 males and 11 females, who were trained and employed at Abilities Incorporated. These individuals were of ages 17 to 30, with a median age of 22 years, and had intelligence quotients ranging from 60 to 80, with a median of 71. All 29 worked 40 hours per week and received wages comparable to those of regular employees. Each of these 29 retardates was trained in a variety of jobs. After three years of employment, 5 of the 29 were terminated because of personality problems.

Literature on Grambling Evaluation and Training Center

On July 1, 1967 the Grambling Evaluation Training Center was officially opened for service to mentally retarded clients. This center was set up within the same guidelines as all the other vocational rehabilitation centers across the state of Louisiana.

The over-all purposes of the Grambling Evaluation and Training Center were to give assistance in the vocational

rehabilitation of the mentally handicapped by functioning as a rehabilitation bridge between the inactivity and the last stages of strict vocational preparation for job placement.

The activities are broken down into four phases: admission staffing, evaluation, training, and placement and follow-up.

Evaluation lasts for a period of 8 weeks. In the process of evaluation, great emphasis is placed on techniques that will enable the client to travel alone, work alone, read and write, count and manage money. Emphasis is also placed on personal appearance, relationships with others, social graces, personal adjustment, manual skills, physical tolerance for work, quality and quantity of work as well as initiative and reliability, learning and reaction to work.

The male training or shop program is basically an exploratory one, but is also used to develop mental and physical coordination, motor control, and ability to use tools. It is not designed to develop specific skills. It samples cross sections of occupations with the intent to develop basic skills and job fundamentals that would provide the client job familiarity and facilitate better job adjustment. Emphasis is also placed on personal and social adjustment. The basic core program consists of:

1. Use of hand tools.
2. Use of power tools.

3. Woodworking and related skills.
4. Painting.
5. Grocery store work.
6. Service station work.
7. Janitorial work.
8. Repair and maintenance of small internal combustion engines.
9. Lawn care and yard work.
10. Garden work.
11. Simple electrical repair.

Female training is designed to give basic skills
in:

1. Food and nutrition.
2. Sewing, domestic and commercial.
3. Janitorial work (Home Management).
4. Packing and wrapping.
5. Cafeterial work.
6. Grooming.
7. Craft and art.
8. Laundry.

Emphasis is also placed on personal and social adjustment as well as "independent living" for the females, so that many as possible can and will take over family responsibilities.

Within a five year period 237 clients have been served by this facility. A total of 170 boys have entered evaluation with 121 of this total going on to boys' train-

ing. The dropout number between training and evaluation was 49. Approximately 60% of the boys completed training. Out of this total approximately 45% were placed on trial jobs with salable skills which led to their employment.

A total of 67 girls have entered evaluation. Of this total 45 have gone into training with approximately 60% of this total completing training. A total of 22 dropped out between evaluation and training. A total of 75% of the girls were placed on trial jobs and equipped with skills which enhanced their rate of employability.

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary

It was the purpose of this study: (1) to determine if mentally retarded children can be trained for semi-skilled occupations, (2) to determine if vocational training programs enhanced the employability of mentally retarded children, (3) to identify the methods of vocational training and the types of occupations for which retarded students at the Grambling Evaluation and Training Center were being prepared. It was found that several leading educators and many other professional persons felt that training is essential in the preparation of the mentally retarded for employment. It was also felt that training is essential in the preparation of the mentally retarded with pre-job training. Since job opportunities for the mentally retarded are limited, it becomes necessary to offer training to the retarded which provide basic skills, job fundamentals, job familiarity, and facilitate better job adjustment.

The past five years have shown that a training facility such as the Grambling Evaluation and Training Center is a necessary and integral part of a total approach toward training the mentally retarded. It is a unique type of facility that falls somewhere between the school program and employment. It offers the mentally retarded individual

the necessary stepping stone or intermediate step that bridges the gap between training and employment. It is a type of program necessary to every individual who is mentally retarded.

Conclusion

From the analysis of reviewed literature several conclusions can be drawn. First, vocational training programs do provide services and basic skills for mentally retarded. Training enhances the employability rate and provides children with certain skills that make them capable of securing employment. Secondly, training programs provide personal adjustment training, work habits, and other occupational competencies that the mentally retarded so often need in order to hold a job.

Grambling Evaluation and Training Center is a unique facility striving to provide mentally retarded children with a program dedicated to vocational and educational growth, self-realization, actualization and personal and social adjustment. Because of the various methods of training employed by Grambling Evaluation and Training Center mentally retarded children are more likely to be employed than they would have been if they had not entered a training facility such as Grambling Evaluation and Training Center.

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A STUDY OF THE VOCATIONAL PREPARATION OF MENTALLY
RETARDED CHILDREN

by

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B.S., Grambling College, 1967

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1973

A STUDY OF THE VOCATIONAL PREPARATION OF MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN

ABSTRACT

Purpose

It was the purpose of this study (1) to determine if mentally retarded children can be trained for semiskilled occupations; (2) to determine if vocational training programs enhanced the employability of mentally retarded children; (3) to identify the methods of vocational training and the types of occupations for which retarded students at the Grambling Evaluation and Training Center in Grambling, Louisiana were being prepared.

Procedure Used

A survey of research materials, abstracts, studies and professional literature related to methods employed by various training programs for the preparation of mentally retarded children was made. An investigation of methods employed in vocational training at the Grambling Evaluation and Training Center was obtained by interviewing the personnel of the center. A summary of the findings of the professional literature and the methods employed by the training program at Grambling Evaluation and Training Center was made.

Results

It was found that leaders in the field of education and many other professional persons felt that:

- (a) mentally retarded children can be trained for semiskilled occupations.
- (b) training is essential in the preparation of the mentally retarded for employment.
- (c) vocational programs to train the mentally retarded do enhance their chances for employment.
- (d) non-attendants of vocational training programs faced more problems in attaining employment than the attendants of vocational training programs.
- (e) methods undertaken at the Grambling Evaluation and Training Center to train the mentally retarded client have a great effect on the participants' employment adaptation.

Conclusion

Several conclusions can be drawn on the basis of materials surveyed:

- (a) vocational training programs do provide services and basic skills which enhance a mentally retarded child's chances for employment.
- (b) training programs provide personal adjustment, training, work habits, and occupational virtues that the mentally retarded need in order to hold a job.
- (c) Grambling Evaluation and Training Center does equip students with work habits, occupational virtues and basic skills to make them capable of eventual employment.