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The Social Position of Exceptional Children in the Intermediate Grades as a Function of Regular or Integrated Class Placement

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THE SOCIAL POSITION OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN IN THE
INTERMEDIATE GRADES AS A FUNCTION OF REGULAR
OR INTEGRATED CLASS PLACEMENT

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School
St. Cloud State College

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

by

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Accepted by Thesis Committee:

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A. K. S.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

The ability to succeed in our complex society is partially determined by the individual's ability to successfully relate to the people around him. This is equally true when one considers the handicapped. For many of these individuals the skills for adequate social adjustment are acquired, in part, during the school years. If the exceptional child is accepted, ignored, or rejected because of his intelligence and/or behavior, then research must discover the factors of intelligence and/or behavior that make one acceptable to a group.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The purpose of this study was to investigate the social position of certain categories of exceptional children who were enrolled in the regular classroom. The investigator measured the social position of all the children and analyzed the responses made by both normal and exceptional children.

Importance of the study. A definite social structure exists in the classroom setting. Educators have observed this social structure and are concerned with its implications

for children. As a result, some children are fully accepted by the class, some are tolerated, while others are entirely rejected by the class.

Research concerning the social position of exceptional children has involved the mentally retarded child in the regular grades in an attempt to justify special education classes. This is not the present investigator's purpose.

The results of this study should be of value in determining the effect of separating exceptional children for special education services. The results should also raise questions as to whether exceptional children are rejected as a result of intelligence, unacceptable social behavior, or separation out of the classroom for remedial or therapeutic help, or a combination of these variables.

It is also hoped that questions raised by this study will lend themselves to further research, which this paper will not attempt to answer.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Sociometric Terms

The sociometric terms used in this study are common to sociometric techniques used in similar studies. These terms are dependent upon statistical methods for their interpretation and will be described in Chapter IV.

Classifications of Exceptional Children

For the purpose of this study, the children were classified into one of several groups. The following are the groups of exceptional children and their definitions.

Educable mentally retarded. This term refers to those students who are eligible for special class placement as determined by the administrators of the special education programs of the St. Cloud Public Schools in conjunction with state requirements. Children who score between 50 and 80 I. Q. on an individual psychometric examination qualify for special class placement, although more information about the children is desirable.¹

Hearing impaired. This term refers to those students whose sense of hearing, although defective, is functional with or without a hearing aid but who can benefit from the services provided by a special education teacher, and as defined by the State of Minnesota directives relating to hearing impaired children.

Visually impaired. The term "visually impaired" refers to those students ". . . who in the opinion of eye

¹A Resource Guide for Teachers of Educable Mentally Retarded Children in Minnesota Public Schools, Curriculum Bulletin No. 28 (St. Paul: State of Minnesota, Department of Education, 1966), p. 17.

specialists can benefit from either temporary or permanent use of appropriate special educational facilities,"² and as defined by the State of Minnesota directives relating to visually impaired children.

Speech impaired. This term refers to those whose "speech is defective when it deviates so far from the speech of other people that it calls attention to itself, interferes with communication, or causes its possessor to be maladjusted."³

Special learning disability. This term refers to those students who were identified through psychological and educational diagnoses as needing educational services which cannot be provided in a regular educational program.⁴

(1) Reading. This sub-category refers to those students who were identified as having reading deficiencies which cannot be provided for in the regular classroom.

²Winifred Hathaway, Education and Health of the Partially Seeing Child (fourth edition; New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), p. 13.

³Charles Van Riper, Speech Correction: Principles and Methods (fourth edition; Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1954), p. 24.

⁴Carolyn Elliott, Information Regarding State-aided Special Education Programs for Children with Special Learning Disabilities (SLD) (St. Paul: State of Minnesota, State Department of Education, Special Education Section, 1968), pp. 2-3.

(2) General tutorial. This sub-category refers to those students who were identified as needing educational services in all areas of the curriculum which cannot be provided for in the regular classroom.

Normal Children

For the purpose of this study, any child who has not been identified as being exceptional was classified as being normal.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Many studies which pertain to the social position of exceptional children have been reported in the literature. A summary of the various studies on the social position of exceptional children has been reviewed here, with the exception of children diagnosed as having special learning disabilities. To the knowledge of this writer, literature directly relating to this type of exceptionality was non-existent during the time of this study.

I. RESEARCH ON THE SOCIAL POSITION OF EDUCABLE MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN

One of the first studies pertaining to the social position of educable mentally retarded children was done by Johnson. He conducted a study in two communities that did not have facilities for the mentally retarded children, which would separate them from the normal classroom contact of their peers. Johnson divided his school population into three categories: the mentally handicapped, the borderline, and the typical groups. These groups were compared as to age, sex, achievement, intelligence, and social maturity. The acceptance and rejection for each individual was

determined by administering a sociometric questionnaire. He found that mentally handicapped children were significantly more rejected than typical children, not because of low academic ability but for unacceptable social behavior. The results of this study also indicated that as the mean intelligence quotient increased from group to group, rejection scores decreased.⁵

In a similar study, Johnson and Kirk investigated mentally handicapped children in regular classrooms which were classified as "progressive" classrooms. They concluded that mentally handicapped children although physically present were segregated socially.⁶

Miller, in attempting to assess the social status and socioempathic differences among mentally superior, mentally typical and mentally retarded children, reported that mentally retarded children are the least of the groups wanted as friends. It is to be noted, however, that no group was overtly rejected.⁷

⁵G. Orville Johnson, "A Study of the Social Position of Mentally Handicapped Children in the Regular Grades," American Journal of Mental Deficiency, 55:60-89, July, 1950.

⁶G. Orville Johnson and Samuel A. Kirk, "Are Mentally Handicapped Children Segregated in the Regular Grades?" Journal of Exceptional Children, 17:65-68, December, 1960.

⁷Robert V. Miller, "Social Status and Socioempathic Differences Among Mentally Superior, Mentally Typical, and Mentally Retarded Children," Journal of Exceptional Children, 23:114-19, December, 1956.

Baldwin found that although mentally retarded children in the regular classroom were less objectionable to their classmates than mentally retarded children in a self-contained classroom, they were still socially segregated.⁸

The majority of reported research recognizes the influence teachers have on the social acceptance of children in their classes. Kern and Pfaeffle conducted a study to determine objectively the social adjustment of mentally retarded children. They used the Social Adjustment section of the Elementary Form of the California Test of Personality. Three groups of retarded children were selected for this study: those in a special class, a special school, and a regular class waiting to be admitted to a special class. The results indicated mentally retarded children in a special class or a special school were better adjusted socially than mentally retarded children in regular classes.⁹ Kern and Pfaeffle concluded that mentally retarded children in the regular classroom were less socially adjusted because they

⁸Willie Kate Baldwin, "The Social Position of Educable Mentally Retarded Children in the Regular Grades in the Public Schools," Journal of Exceptional Children, 25:106-108, 112, November, 1958.

⁹William H. Kern and Heinze Pfaeffle, "A Comparison of Social Adjustment of Mentally Retarded Children in Various Educational Settings," American Journal of Mental Deficiency, 67:407-13, 1963.

were ". . . forced to compete with non-retarded children in regular classes."¹⁰

Cassidy and Stanton, in comparing academic achievement and personal-social adjustment of mentally retarded children in special and regular classes, found mentally retarded children in regular classes showed a higher level of academic achievement than retarded children in special classes. However, special class children showed greater personal and social adjustment as indicated by the California Test of Personality and teachers' ratings.¹¹

In reviewing some of the studies, Johnson stated that "the only area in which the special class has demonstrated superiority of any significance is in peer acceptance."¹²

Clark investigated regular class children's perception of a special class for educable mentally retarded children in their school. Responses of regular class children describing special class children were analyzed and placed into one of four categories. Responses of "mental,"

¹⁰Ibid., p. 413.

¹¹Viola M. Cassidy and Jeannette E. Stanton, "An Investigation of Factors Involved in the Educational Placement of Mentally Retarded Children: A Study of Differences Between Children in Special and Regular Classes in Ohio," U. S. Office of Education Cooperative Research Program, Project No. 043 (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1959).

¹²G. Orville Johnson, "Special Education for the Mentally Handicapped--A Paradox," Journal of Exceptional Children, 29:66, October, 1962.

"not good," "crazy," and "retard" were placed in the category of Derogations. Responses of "teacher's name," "special class," "retarded class," "locus," and "arts and crafts class" were placed in the category of Designations.

Responses that were categorized as Descriptions made reference to function, size, equipment, reason for placement, and academic programs of special classes. Responses of "different" and "not different" were categorized as Comparisons With Own Class. The results indicated that 10.9 per cent of the responses were derogations, 56.5 per cent were designations, 28.5 per cent were descriptions, and 4.2 per cent were comparisons with own class.¹³ Clark stated, "While derogations of the special class . . . were relatively infrequent, no subject expressed a desire to be in the special class."¹⁴

Meyerowitz reported a detailed study involving the development of a neighborhood sociometric technique. He felt this was necessary to determine the educable mentally handicapped child's peer relationships outside the classroom, which could be an even more important factor in his social

¹³Edward T. Clark, "Children's Perception of a Special Class for Educable Mentally Retarded Children," Journal of Exceptional Children, 31:289-95, March, 1964.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 295.

development than school.¹⁵ The results of this study indicated that:

The EMH child is an isolate in his neighborhood, regardless of whether he is in a regular classroom or a special classroom. This may be attributed not to active rejection by his peers, but simply to disregard. Special classroom placement seems to discourage the child's initiating contacts; regular classroom placement seems to make the EMH child's peers more relevant to him than he is to them. Both effects seem negative for the child.¹⁶

The research prior to this study seemed to indicate an agreement that mentally retarded children, for the most part, are either isolated or rejected regardless of regular or special class placement. Research in this area has not been an effective avenue for educational practices for these children.

II. RESEARCH ON SOCIAL STATUS OF HEARING

IMPAIRED CHILDREN

Justman and others investigated ten fourth-grade deaf children integrated into a hearing classroom in Public School 40 of Manhattan, New York. They determined by observational and sociometric techniques that "the deaf improved in self-confidence, independence, and lipreading, but there

¹⁵Joseph H. Meyerowitz, "Peer Groups and Special Classes," Mental Retardation, 5:23-26, October, 1967.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 25.

were inadequacies in social adjustment between the two groups."¹⁷

In a follow-up of the Justman and others study, Justman and Moskowitz by using sociometric data determined that deaf children were not accepted by the hearing children; however, teacher observations did not substantiate this finding.¹⁸

Elser conducted an investigation to determine the social position of hearing impaired children. The children studied were compared with normal hearing students enrolled in the same class by using a sociometric technique. He found, as a result of the total responses, that hearing impaired children were not accepted as well as normal hearing children.¹⁹ In the opinion of Elser, hearing impaired children with a mild hearing loss were the group least accepted. He stated:

¹⁷J. Justman and others, The Integration of Deaf Children in a Hearing Class, Bureau of Educational Research Publication No. 36 (New York: New York City Board of Education, 1956).

¹⁸J. Justman and Sue Moskowitz, The Integration of Deaf Children in a Hearing Class: The Second Year, Bureau of Educational Research Publication No. 38 (New York: New York City Board of Education, 1957).

¹⁹Roger P. Elser, "The Social Position of Hearing Handicapped Children in the Regular Grades," Journal of Exceptional Children, 25:305-309, March, 1959.

A partial answer to this might be that these are the children who are trying to get by and the general public does not really understand their problem. When people understand that a child is handicapped by a hearing loss, there is more understanding and better acceptance on the part of others.²⁰

A study at the California School for the Deaf in Riverside, California, was conducted by Brill. He investigated three groups of deaf children who were matched on sex, age, and intelligence. One group was composed of children whose parents did not have a hearing impairment but where other children in the family were deaf. The second group was composed of the single deaf child whose parents did not have a hearing impairment. The third group consisted of deaf children whose parents were also deaf. Brill found no significant differences in social adjustment between the three groups, although some indication was evident that on a distribution curve a skewed distribution would result.²¹

O'Connor and Connor reported on an integration of deaf children in regular classrooms. The results indicated that about one-half of the deaf children were unable to be successfully integrated. Their results also reinforced the

²⁰Ibid., p. 308.

²¹Richard G. Brill, "A Study in Adjustment of Three Groups of Deaf Children," Journal of Exceptional Children, 26:464-66, 470, May, 1960.

views of the Lexington School for the Deaf, which were stated as:

1. That, with very few exceptions, children who begin life with an average speech range hearing loss . . . cannot successfully or comfortably integrate educationally with hearing children at the age of four, five or six. They need a specialized program for the deaf for a number of years, at least, in order to acquire facility in the use of language and speech.

2. That the percentage of deaf pupils in a special school or class for the deaf who are logical candidates for ultimate educational integration in classes for the hearing is small. The majority will need the benefit of specialized programs for the deaf throughout their entire educational careers.

3. That a deaf pupil should not be transferred to regular classes until he has developed communication ability that will make it possible for him to meet the severe competitive conditions he will experience therein. This means that, in general, he will not be ready for such transfer before the age of eight or nine.

4. That a careful assessment of the following factors be made for each pupil for whom a transfer to regular classes is being considered: (a) his age, (b) his communication ability, (c) his intelligence, (d) his personality makeup, (e) his parents, (f) his scholastic achievement, (g) the program to which he will be transferred.²²

III. RESEARCH RELATING TO SOCIAL POSITION OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED CHILDREN

Force conducted a study to compare physically handicapped and normal children in integrated classes at the

²²Clarence D. O'Connor and Leo E. Connor, "A Study of the Integration of Deaf Children in Regular Classrooms," Journal of Exceptional Children, 27:483-86, May, 1961.

elementary grades to determine their social position among classmates. By using near-sociometric techniques, he determined that children with physical handicaps were not as accepted as normal children in an integrated setting. More specifically, Force indicated that visually handicapped children ranked next to the lowest of the categories in peer acceptance.²³

In a report that focused on the interactions of exceptional children in a variety of interpersonal situations, Jones and others determined that of the thirteen categories of children studied, the blind children ranked ninth in peer acceptance.²⁴

IV. RESEARCH RELATING TO SOCIAL POSITION OF SPEECH IMPAIRED CHILDREN

One of the first investigations concerning the social position of the speech impaired child was conducted by Perrin. The social status of individuals in the group studied was determined by using a sociometric questionnaire.

²³Dewey G. Force, "Social Status of Physically Handicapped Children," Journal of Exceptional Children, 23:104-107, 132-33, December, 1956.

²⁴Reginald L. Jones and others, "The Social Distance of the Exceptional: A Study at the High School Level," Journal of Exceptional Children, 32:551-56, April, 1966.

The results of the questionnaire indicated that speech defective children were ignored one-third more than normal speaking children. It was concluded that speech defective children were not as readily accepted into a regular classroom.²⁵

In a study by Freeman and Sonnega, results indicated that children with speech impairments were not rejected by their peers except when speaking was used as the basis for selection.²⁶

Brissey and Trotter concluded in a report of speech handicapped children's acceptance that the severity of the handicap was not related to social popularity.²⁷ In their opinion, ". . . common interests, similar ages and similar backgrounds were the significant factors."²⁸

Woods and Carrow studied the social acceptance of speech defective children. They found that the speech defective child tends to be less acceptable to his classmates

²⁵Elinor H. Perrin, "Social Position of the Speech-deficient Child," Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders, 19:250-52, 1954.

²⁶G. C. Freeman and J. A. Sonnega, "Peer Evaluation of Children in Speech Correction Class," Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders, 21:179-82, 1956.

²⁷Forrest L. Brissey and William D. Trotter, "Social Relationships Among Speech Defective Children," Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders, 20:271-83, September, 1966.

²⁸Ibid., p. 283.

than children who do not have a speech defect. The results also indicated that children with articulation defects were less accepted than stutterers.²⁹

Marge did a study similar to Perrin's of the social position of speech handicapped children. The results of this study substantiated earlier research which indicated that children with speech defects are socially unacceptable to their peers.³⁰

The chapter was organized into five sections: Description of Population, Description of Questionnaires, Administration of Questionnaires, Hearing of questionnaires, and Analysis of Data.

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE POPULATION

This study was conducted in a public elementary school located in St. Cloud, Minnesota. The subjects selected for this study consisted of 1,341 students who had been enrolled in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades from the beginning of the school year. Of this population, 209 were identified as being exceptional by the school district.

²⁹Frances J. Woods and Mary A. Carrow, "The Choice-Rejection Status of Speech-defective Children," Journal of Exceptional Children, 25:279-83, February, 1959.

³⁰Dorothy K. Marge, "The Social Status of Speech Handicapped Children," Journal of Speech and Hearing Research, 9:165-77, June, 1966.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methods and procedures employed in the present study to determine the social position of exceptional children in the intermediate grades as a function of regular or integrated class placement when measured by a sociometric scale and a pupil rating scale. The chapter was organized into five sections: Description of Population, Description of Questionnaires, Administration of Questionnaires, Scoring of Questionnaires, and Analysis of Data.

I. DESCRIPTION OF THE POPULATION

This study was conducted in nine public elementary schools located in St. Cloud, Minnesota. The subjects selected for this study consisted of 1,561 students who had been enrolled in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades from the beginning of the school term. Of this population, 208 were considered to be exceptional by the school district and the researcher. Those students considered exceptional were classified according to their exceptionality. Sixteen were educable mentally retarded, two were hearing impaired, one was visually impaired, one hundred one were speech

impaired, and ninety-one had special learning disabilities. The exceptional children in this study were enrolled in the "normal" classroom for various lengths of time. The length of time spent in the normal classroom per week for the exceptional children ranged from 17-1/2 hours to 27-3/4 hours. The median time exceptional children spent in the normal classroom is shown in Table I. Because of the small numbers, the visually handicapped and hearing handicapped children were not included in the study as separate groups.

TABLE I

LENGTH OF TIME IN NORMAL AND SPECIAL CLASSROOMS
ACCORDING TO EXCEPTIONALITY

| | Median number of hours per week receiving special educa- tion services | Median number of hours per week in normal classroom |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Speech handicapped | 1 | 27-3/4 |
| Educable mentally retarded | 11-1/2 | 17-1/4 |
| Visually impaired | 5 | 23-3/4 |
| Hearing impaired | 5 | 23-3/4 |
| Special learning dis- ability: | | |
| Reading | 6 | 22-3/4 |
| General tutorial | 10-1/4 | 17-1/2 |

II. DESCRIPTION OF QUESTIONNAIRES

For the purpose of this study, a sociometric scale and a pupil rating scale were employed to identify children with adjustment problems. This screening device was adapted and condensed from one prepared by Bower and Lambert.¹ It consists of a ten-item sociometric "Who Are They?" and an eight-item "Pupil Behavior Rating Scale" which was filled out by the classroom teacher. In the ten-item sociometric scale "Who Are They" five questions were designed to determine those children who have socially acceptable adjustment characteristics. Those questions were:

1. Who is the one that is liked by almost everybody in the class?
2. Who is the one that you would like for your best friend?
3. Who is the jolly one who doesn't cause any trouble?
4. Who is the very fair one who takes turns and plays games fairly?
5. Who is the one who is good at being a team captain and is liked by everyone?²

The remaining five questions of the ten-item sociometric scale "Who Are They?" were designed to determine

¹Eli M. Bower and Nadine M. Lambert, School Adjustment-Screening Kit (Princeton, N. J.: Educational Testing Service, 1962).

²Ibid.

which children do not possess socially acceptable adjustment characteristics. Those questions were:

1. Who is the one that always seems to be complaining? Nothing makes him (her) happy. He (she) always wants to have his (her) own way.
2. Who is the one that is mean and cruel to other students?
3. Who is the one that breaks rules--rules of the school and rules of the games?
4. Who is the one who doesn't make friends or is hard to get to know?
5. Who is the one who is often afraid and acts like a real little boy or girl?³

Before each question, a blank space was provided for the children to write in the name of his choice, as shown in Appendix A.

The "Pupil Behavior Rating Scale" which was filled out on each child in this study by the classroom teacher consisted of eight items. Each item pertained to behavioral characteristics manifested by the children as observed by the teacher. Those items were:

1. This pupil gets into fights or quarrels with other pupils.
2. This pupil has to be coaxed or forced to play or work with others.
3. This pupil has difficulty learning.
4. This pupil makes unusual or inappropriate responses.

³Ibid.

5. This pupil behaves in ways which are dangerous to self or others.
6. This pupil is unhappy or depressed.
7. This pupil becomes sick when faced with a difficult school problem or situation.
8. This pupil is very shy and withdrawn.⁴

Each of the above-mentioned behavioral characteristics was scored on a one-to-five scale consisting of the following ratings and numerical equivalence:

1. seldom or never
2. not very often
3. not observed
4. quite often
5. most of the time

The eight-item "Pupil Behavior Rating Scale" is shown in Appendix B.

III. ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES

The sociometric questionnaire was administered to both normal and exceptional children in the normal classroom by the teacher. It was administered during the fourth month of the school term to insure all children an ample opportunity to be assimilated into the social structure of the classroom.

⁴Ibid.

The teachers were given instructions for administering the sociometric questionnaire along with the purpose of the study. It was emphasized that the final group results would be available to them and to teachers in following years, but not individual questionnaires. Instructions for administering the sociometric "Who Are They?" followed the procedure set forth by Bower and Lambert. The instructions are as follows:

The sociometric "Who Are They?" is administered to these children as a group test. The procedure is as follows:

1. Distribute a copy of the Answer Sheet to each child.
2. Read the instructions printed on the top of the Answer Sheet out loud and ask the children to read along silently with you.
3. Emphasize that only one full name is to be put on each line and that they are not to sign or use their own name.
4. When all students have finished (about 5-10 minutes) collect the Answer Sheets.⁵

The children were informed that no one in the classroom, or in the school, would see the questionnaires after they were completed.

The teachers were instructed to complete the "Pupil Behavior Rating Scale" on each child during the same week

⁵Ibid.

the sociometric "Who Are They?" was administered. It was emphasized to the teachers that a more accurate rating could be obtained if they would score the same item for each child in the class before proceeding to the next item. The teachers were also instructed to complete all of the ratings at one sitting.

IV. SCORING OF QUESTIONNAIRES

The names of the children in each class were arranged in alphabetical order on the "Score Sheet for the Sociometric and Pupil Behavior Rating Scale." Each time a child's name appeared in answer to sociometric questions one, three, five, seven or nine, indicating inadequate social adjustment characteristics, corresponding tallies were made on a tally sheet. Each time the child's name appeared in answer to sociometric questions two, four, six, eight, and ten, indicating adequate social adjustment characteristics, corresponding tallies were made on a tally sheet. For each child the tallies in each column were computed. These constituted his final scores which were used in the final analysis of this study.

The scoring of the "Pupil Behavior Rating Scale" was computed according to the analysis described by Bower and Lambert.⁶

⁶Ibid.

V. HYPOTHESES

It was hypothesized in this study that:

1. There will be no significant difference in the social position between exceptional children and normal children as they relate to their peers, as measured by visual and valence questions on a sociometric scale.

2. There will be no significant difference in the social adjustment characteristics between exceptional children and normal children, as measured by teacher observation on a teacher rating scale.

3. There will be no significant difference in the social position between the groups of exceptional children, as measured by visual and valence questions on a sociometric scale.

VI. ANALYSIS OF DATA

The use of nonparametric statistics was decided upon due to the ordinal nature of the obtained data. To arrive at any pertinent conclusions and to compute statistical data, the median test was employed to determine the combined median of the two populations. The combined median score was then used to determine the number of students in each population above and below the combined median. The chi-square test was used to determine the probability of occurrence. For

the purpose of this study, the .05 level of confidence was used to accept or reject the null hypotheses.

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This chapter presents the data which were analyzed according to the procedures stated in Chapter III. Results of the analysis are as follows.

Normal Children vs. Exceptional Children
Challenged on the "Who Am I?" Scale

Hypothesis 1 pertained to the social position between exceptional children and normal children as they relate to their peers. This was measured by visual and verbal questions on the sociometric scale "Who Am I?". The median test was employed to analyze the data. Tables II and III show the number of scores above the combined median and the number of scores below the combined median for the normal and exceptional groups. The results of the median test show there were significant differences in the social position of the challenged low scorers and the challenged high scorers. It was concluded that the social adjustment of exceptional children was less adequate than normal children.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This chapter presents the data which were analyzed according to the procedures stated in Chapter III. Results of the analysis are as follows.

Normal Children vs. Exceptional Children on Sociometric Scale

Hypothesis 1 pertained to the social position between exceptional children and normal children as they relate to their peers. This was measured by visual and valence questions on the sociometric scale "Who Are They?" The median test was employed to analyze the data. Tables II and III show the number of scores above the combined median and the number of scores below the combined median for the normal and exceptional groups. The results of the median test show there were significant differences in the median social positions of the normal and exceptional children; therefore, hypothesis 1 was rejected. It was concluded that the social adjustment of exceptional children was less adequate than normal children.

TABLE II

COMPARISON OF SCORES INDICATING INADEQUATE SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT
OF NORMAL CHILDREN AND EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

| | Normal children | Exceptional children |
|---|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Number of scores above combined median | 591 | 133 |
| Number of scores below combined median | 762 | 75 |
| Total | 1353 | 208 |

$x^2 = 4.28$

d.f. = 1

$p > .05$

TABLE III

COMPARISON OF SCORES INDICATING ADEQUATE SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT
OF NORMAL CHILDREN AND EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

| | Normal children | Exceptional children |
|---|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Number of scores above combined median | 697 | 67 |
| Number of scores below combined median | 656 | 141 |
| Total | 1353 | 208 |

$x^2 = 26.88$

d.f. = 1

$p > .001$

Normal Children vs. Exceptional Children
on Pupil Behavior Rating Scale

The second hypothesis concerned the social position between exceptional children and normal children as measured by their teachers on the "Pupil Behavior Rating Scale." Results of the median test are presented in Table IV. There were significant differences in the median scores between the normal and exceptional children; thus the null hypothesis was rejected. These results also support the position that exceptional children are not as socially adept as their normal peers.

TABLE IV

COMPARISON OF SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT BETWEEN NORMAL AND EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN AS MEASURED BY THE "PUPIL BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE"

| | Normal children | Exceptional children |
|--|-----------------|----------------------|
| Number of scores above combined median | 652 | 55 |
| Number of scores below combined median | 668 | 152 |
| Total | 1320 | 207 |

$$x^2 = 37.49$$

$$d.f. = 1$$

$$p > .001$$

Exceptional Children vs. Exceptional Children on Sociometric Scale

The third hypothesis sought to determine differences in the social position between groups of exceptional children as they relate to their peers. The groups of exceptional children analyzed were classified as educable mentally retarded, speech handicapped, and special learning disability. Table V shows the results of the comparison between children classified as special learning disability and educable mentally retarded.

TABLE V

COMPARISON OF SCORES INDICATING INADEQUATE SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT OF SPECIAL LEARNING DISABILITY AND EDUCABLE MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN

| | Special learning disability | Educable mentally retarded |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Number of scores above combined median | 40 | 7 |
| Number of scores below combined median | 51 | 9 |
| Total | 91 | 16 |

$$X^2 = .0002$$

$$d.f. = 1$$

$$p < .98$$

Differences between groups of special learning disability and educable mentally retarded children in terms of

exhibiting inadequate social adjustment were not significant; therefore the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table VI presents the number of scores above and below the combined median to indicate adequate social adjustment between special learning disability children and educable mentally retarded children. The results of the chi-square test revealed no significant difference between the groups. The null hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, it was concluded that there were no differences between educable mentally retarded children and special learning disability children.

TABLE VI

COMPARISON OF SCORES INDICATING ADEQUATE SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT
OF SPECIAL LEARNING DISABILITY AND EDUCABLE MENTALLY
RETARDED CHILDREN

| | Special learning disability | Educable mentally retarded |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Number of scores above combined median | 41 | 5 |
| Number of scores below combined median | 50 | 11 |
| Total | 91 | 16 |
| $\chi^2 = 1.05$ | d.f. = 1 | $p < .30$ |

Table VII shows the number of scores above and below the combined median to indicate inadequate social adjustment between special learning disability children and speech handicapped children. The results of the chi-square test show there are significant differences at the .05 level of significance; therefore the null hypothesis was rejected.

TABLE VII

COMPARISON OF SCORES INDICATING INADEQUATE SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT OF SPECIAL LEARNING DISABILITY AND SPEECH HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

| | Special learning disability | Speech handicapped |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Number of scores above combined median | 36 | 56 |
| Number of scores below combined median | 55 | 45 |
| Total | 91 | 101 |
| $\chi^2 = 4.84$ d.f. = 1 $p > .05$ | | |

Table VIII shows the number of scores above and below the combined median to indicate adequate social adjustment between special learning disability children and speech handicapped children. The chi-square test results show there are significant differences. The null hypothesis was rejected. Special learning disability children seem to have more difficulty socially than do the speech handicapped.

TABLE VIII

COMPARISON OF SCORES INDICATING ADEQUATE SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT
OF SPECIAL LEARNING DISABILITY AND SPEECH
HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

| | Special learning disability | Speech handicapped |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Number of scores above combined median | 22 | 42 |
| Number of scores below combined median | 69 | 59 |
| Total | 91 | 101 |

$$x^2 = 6.52$$

$$d.f. = 1$$

$$p > .02$$

Table IX presents the number of scores above and below the combined median to indicate inadequate social adjustment between speech handicapped children and educable mentally retarded children. The results of the chi-square analysis revealed no significant difference, so the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table X shows the number of scores above and below the combined median to indicate adequate social adjustment between speech handicapped children and educable mentally retarded children. The results of the chi-square test show no significant difference at the .05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was accepted. When considered along with the data in Table IX, it appears that no sociometric

differences exist between speech handicapped children and educable mentally retarded children.

TABLE IX

COMPARISON OF SCORES INDICATING INADEQUATE SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT
OF SPEECH HANDICAPPED AND EDUCABLE MENTALLY
RETARDED CHILDREN

| | Speech handicapped | Educable mentally retarded |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Number of scores above combined median | 44 | 4 |
| Number of scores below combined median | 57 | 12 |
| Total | 101 | 16 |
| $\chi^2 = 1.967$ d.f. = 1 p < .10 | | |

TABLE X

COMPARISON OF SCORES INDICATING ADEQUATE SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT
OF SPEECH HANDICAPPED AND EDUCABLE MENTALLY
RETARDED CHILDREN

| | Speech handicapped | Educable mentally retarded |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Number of scores above combined median | 42 | 3 |
| Number of scores below combined median | 59 | 13 |
| Total | 101 | 16 |
| $\chi^2 = 3.04$ d.f. = 1 p < .05 | | |

Table XI shows the number of scores above and below the combined median to indicate inadequate social adjustment of special learning disability children classified as reading disability or general tutorial. The results of the chi-square test show there were significant differences at the .05 level of confidence; therefore the null hypothesis was rejected.

TABLE XI

COMPARISON OF SCORES INDICATING INADEQUATE SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT BETWEEN GROUPS OF SPECIAL LEARNING DISABILITY CHILDREN

| | Special learning disability, reading | Special learning disability, general tutorial |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| Number of scores above combined median | 30 | 10 |
| Number of scores below combined median | 26 | 25 |
| Total | 56 | 35 |

$$X^2 = 4.064$$

$$d.f. = 1$$

$$p > .05$$

Table XII presents the number of scores above and below the combined median as determined by the median test to indicate adequate social adjustment of special learning disability children classified as reading disability or general tutorial. The chi-square test reveals significant

differences at the .05 level of confidence; therefore the null hypothesis was rejected.

TABLE XII

COMPARISON OF SCORES INDICATING ADEQUATE SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT
BETWEEN GROUPS OF SPECIAL LEARNING DISABILITY CHILDREN

| | Special learning disability, reading | Special learning disability, gen- eral tutorial |
|---|--|---|
| Number of scores above combined median | 30 | 11 |
| Number of scores below combined median | 26 | 24 |
| Total | 56 | 35 |
| $\chi^2 = 4.27$ | d.f. = 1 | $p > .05$ |

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, AND LIMITATIONS

I. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This investigation was experimental in nature. It was designed to determine whether or not there are differences in the social position between exceptional children and normal children and between groups of exceptional children when measured by a sociometric scale and a teacher rating scale.

Involved in the investigation were 1,561 children from the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades of the St. Cloud Public Schools. Of these children, 1,353 were classified as normals, 101 were classified as speech handicapped, 91 were classified as special learning disability, and 16 were classified as educable mentally retarded. The entire population was administered the sociometric scale "Who Are They?" and classroom teachers rated the children in their classrooms on the "Pupil Behavior Rating Scale." Assuming the existence of a high correlation between social position within a classroom, adequate social adjustment, and length of time separated from the classroom for special education services, it was hypothesized in the null form that there would be no

significant difference in the social position between exceptional children and normal children.

The first hypothesis was rejected, indicating exceptional children displayed more inadequate social adjustment than normal children.

The second hypothesis was also rejected, which indicates normal children have more appropriate social adjustment characteristics than exceptional children as observed by the classroom teacher.

Results of the analysis of the data pertaining to the third hypothesis revealed that there were no significant differences in the social position between special learning disability children and educable retarded children or between speech handicapped children and educable mentally retarded children. Therefore, that portion of the null hypothesis was accepted. That portion of the third hypothesis pertaining to the differences between speech handicapped children and special learning disability children in social position was rejected. This indicates special learning disability children display more inadequate social adjustment than speech handicapped children.

Further analysis of the data relating to special learning disability children revealed that those students classified as general tutorial were less socially adjusted than

those students classified as reading disability. The results also indicate that students classified as having a reading disability were more socially adjusted than those students classified as having a general tutorial disability.

II. DISCUSSION

Significant differences appeared between normal children and exceptional children in both categories of questions on the sociometric scale "Who Are They?" Exceptional children as a group were named more often as exhibiting characteristics associated with inadequate social adjustment than were the normal children. On the questions designed to determine children with socially acceptable adjustment characteristics, normal children were named more often than were exceptional children. The results of the sociometric scale agree with the majority of research examining the social position of exceptional children.

The results of the data obtained from the "Pupil Behavior Rating Scale" tend to indicate normal children as a group display better social adjustment characteristics, whereas exceptional children as a group indicate more inadequate social adjustment characteristics when rated by their classroom teacher. The results of the "Pupil Behavior Rating Scale" seem to indicate a relationship

between social position within a classroom and social adjustment characteristics.

Significant differences between groups of exceptional children revealed that speech handicapped children tend to be more socially acceptable than any other exceptional group in this investigation. In order of social acceptance, the speech handicapped children appear to hold a higher social position within a classroom, followed by educable mentally retarded children and special learning disability children. It also appears that within the special learning disability group, those classified as having reading deficiencies hold a higher social position within the classroom than those classified as general tutorial. Examination of the median length of time that each group is separated from the regular classroom tends to indicate the longer an exceptional group was separated from the normal classroom for special education services, the lower is their social position.

It was not the purpose of this study to hypothesize reasons as to whether exceptional children are rejected as a result of intelligence, unacceptable social behavior, or separation from the classroom for special education services. It does, however, raise questions for which there presently are no answers but which may lead to further research.

III. LIMITATIONS

This study was limited by the following factors:

1. The sample was selected from the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades of the St. Cloud Public Schools. Therefore, any generalizations pertaining to this study are limited to this population.

2. This investigation was limited by the population size of the exceptional children. The number of exceptional children involved depended on the number of children who were identified as exceptional and separated for special education services.

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WHO ARE THEY?

Here are some questions about different kinds of children. Read the questions carefully and ask yourself, "Who in our class is like that?" Think carefully about your classmates to find the one that fits each description. Write the name of the boy or girl who you think fits the description best beside each question. Do not write your own name beside any of the questions and do not sign your name at the top of the paper.

1. Who is the one that always seems to be complaining? Nothing makes him (her) happy? He (she) always wants to have his (her) own way?

2. Who is the one that is liked by almost everybody in the class?

3. Who is the one that is mean and cruel to other students?

APPENDIX A

SOCIOMETRIC SCALE "WHO ARE THEY?"

4. Who is the one that breaks rules - rules of the school and rules of the games?

5. Who is the jolly one who doesn't cause any trouble?

6. Who is the one who doesn't make friends or is hard to get to know?

7. Who is the very tall one who takes turns and plays games fairly?

8. Who is the one who is often absent and acts like a real little boy or girl?

9. Who is the one who is good at being a team captain and is liked by everybody?

WHO ARE THEY?

Here are some questions about different kinds of children. Read the questions carefully and ask yourself: "Who in our class is like this?" Think carefully about your classmates to find the one that fits each description. Write the name of the boy or girl who you think fits the description best beside each question. Do not write your own name beside any of the questions and do not sign your name at the top of the paper.

- _____ 1. Who is the one that always seems to be complaining? Nothing makes him (her) happy. He (she) always wants to have his (her) own way.
- _____ 2. Who is the one that is liked by almost everybody in the class?
- _____ 3. Who is the one that is mean and cruel to other students?
- _____ 4. Who is the one that you would like for your best friend?
- _____ 5. Who is the one that breaks rules – rules of the school and rules of the games?
- _____ 6. Who is the jolly one who doesn't cause any trouble?
- _____ 7. Who is the one who doesn't make friends or is hard to get to know?
- _____ 8. Who is the very fair one who takes turns and plays games fairly?
- _____ 9. Who is the one who is often afraid and acts like a real little boy or girl?
- _____ 10. Who is the one who is good at being a team captain and is liked by everyone?

PUPIL BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE

Date _____ Corrected Total _____

1. Dumber _____ 2. School _____ 3. Grade _____

4. Name of Pupil _____ 5. Sex _____

6. Name of Teacher _____ 7. Date _____

Place an X in pupil's behavior as you have observed and experienced it. Place the number 1-5 in the space into rating on the line to the right of each statement.

- 8. This pupil gets into fights or quarrels with other pupils.
 1. seldom or never 2. not very often 3. not observed
 4. quite often 5. most of the time
- 9. This pupil can be excited or forced to play or work with others.
 1. seldom or never 2. not very often 3. not observed
 4. quite often 5. most of the time
- 10. This pupil is noticeably learning.
 1. seldom or never 2. not very often 3. not observed
 4. quite often 5. most of the time
- 11. This pupil is indifferent or uninterested in school.
 1. seldom or never 2. not very often 3. not observed
 4. quite often 5. most of the time
- 12. This pupil is usually obedient.
 1. seldom or never 2. not very often 3. not observed
 4. quite often 5. most of the time
- 13. This pupil is usually or delighted.
 1. seldom or never 2. not very often 3. not observed
 4. quite often 5. most of the time
- 14. This pupil begins work when directed with a difficult subject.
 1. seldom or never 2. not very often 3. not observed
 4. quite often 5. most of the time
- 15. This pupil is very shy and withdrawn.
 1. seldom or never 2. not very often 3. not observed
 4. quite often 5. most of the time

APPENDIX B

TEACHER RATING "PUPIL BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE"

TOTAL = _____

CORRECTED TOTAL = _____

When you have rated the pupil on each item, place any check and place a cross the column below. Add the remaining numbers to get a total score. Multiply this total by the following factor to get corrected total.

1-100 = 1.00
 2-100 = 1.00
 3-100 = 1.00
 4-100 = 1.00
 5-100 = 1.00

If you have not given a 5 rating, total score and corrected total are the same.

PUPIL BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE

Total _____

Corrected Total _____

1. District _____ 2. School _____ 3. Grade _____
4. Name of Pupil _____ 5. Sex _____
6. Name of Teacher _____ 7. Date _____

Please rate the pupil's behavior as you have observed and experienced it. Place the code number of the appropriate rating on the line to the right of each statement.

8. This pupil gets into fights or quarrels with other pupils.
1. seldom or never 2. not very often 3. not observed
4. quite often 5. most of the time. _____

9. This pupil has to be coaxed or forced to play or work with others.
1. seldom or never 2. not very often 3. not observed
4. quite often 5. most of the time. _____

10. This pupil has difficulty learning.
1. seldom or never 2. not very often 3. not observed
4. quite often 5. most of the time. _____

11. This pupil makes unusual or inappropriate responses.
1. seldom or never 2. not very often 3. not observed
4. quite often 5. most of the time. _____

12. This pupil behaves in ways which are dangerous to self or others.
1. seldom or never 2. not very often 3. not observed
4. quite often 5. most of the time. _____

13. This pupil is unhappy or depressed.
1. seldom or never 2. not very often 3. not observed
4. quite often 5. most of the time. _____

14. This pupil becomes sick when faced with a difficult school problem or situation.
1. seldom or never 2. not very often 3. not observed
4. quite often 5. most of the time. _____

15. This pupil is very shy and withdrawn.
1. seldom or never 2. not very often 3. not observed
4. quite often 5. most of the time. _____

TOTAL= _____

CORRECTED TOTAL= _____

When you have rated the pupil on each item, circle any item you have given the code number 3. Add the remaining numbers to get a total score. Multiply this total by the following fraction to get "corrected total":

$$\frac{8}{8 \text{ minus number of items circled } 3} \times \text{total} = \text{corrected total}$$

If you have not given any item a 3 rating, total score and corrected total are the same.