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A COMPARISON OF READING AND LANGUAGE ACHIEVEMENT OF  
SECOND GRADE CULTURALLY DEPRIVED CHILDREN  
WITH AND WITHOUT HEAD START EXPERIENCE  
AND A STUDY OF SOME OF THE  
PROBLEMS OF THEIR  
FAMILIES

by

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"

A THESIS

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Who are these children? They live in your hometowns. They are the children of families of low income or no income. Circumstance has stranded them on an island of nothingness. But the day comes when they arrive at the door of a school they probably never heard about. And they are lost from then on. Some don't even know a hundred words because they have not heard a hundred words. Some don't know how to sit in a chair because they don't have as much as a chair. Some have never seen a book or held a flower.

Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson (94)

These children are the culturally disadvantaged children of our society—part of the 31 percent of Americans who are poverty-stricken (90). According to Riessman (171) in 1960, one child out of every three in the largest cities of the United States was culturally deprived. Deutsch (63) has described environmental circumstances and discussed various criteria that adequately define what is meant by "culturally disadvantaged." Deutsch (63) states:

. . . these children come from impoverished and marginal social and economic conditions, and their living conditions are characterized by great overcrowding in sub-standard housing, often lacking adequate sanitary and other facilities. In addition, there are likely to be large numbers of siblings and half-siblings, again with there being little opportunity for individuation. At the same time the child tends to be restricted to his immediate environment. In the child's home there is a scarcity of objects of all types, but especially of books, toys, puzzles, pencils, and scribbling paper. It is not that the mere presence of such materials would necessarily result in their productive use, but it would increase the child's familiarity with the tools he'll be confronted with in school.

Most of these children have missed many out-of-school experiences which children in middle class homes have from an early age, experiences which develop concepts, abilities, and attitudes favorable to school success (131, 64, 114, 107, 78, 79). Many of the parents cannot supply these experiences because they are limited by their own problems, by lack of time and energy after work, as well as by different values and often by ignorance of appropriate children's experiences (131). Henry (106) pointed out that the middle class home contains a "hidden curriculum" which enables the child to deal appropriately with his first school experience. The disadvantaged home contains no such curriculum and as pointed

out by Deutsch (63) represents a discontinuity with the school environment.

The existence of a language gap is one of the crucial differences between socio-economic groups (64). Research studies have indicated that children whose parents are in the upper socio-economic groups show better language development during the preschool ages than those who are in the lower groups (17, 109, 121, 1, 138, 145, 182, 79, 20, and 63). The language deficiencies of deprived children are probably due to the ways in which language is used in the home and to the amount of practice children have in using language in the home. In the deprived home, language usage is very limited (20). Much communication is through gestures and other non-verbal means. These children usually have never been read to and rarely does any one in the family read for pleasure (191). When language is used, it is likely to be terse and not necessarily grammatically correct (20). In any case, it is likely to be restricted in the number of grammatical forms which are utilized.

Thus, the deprived child enters school inadequately prepared for the typical language tasks of the first grade; he is unable to communicate orally as well as being unable



to read. A child's success throughout school depends, to a great degree, on his ability to read and use the language of his society (181). Language is probably the most important area for the later development of conceptual systems (64). The basic understandings in all other fields of learning are increased when children start with a richer language background (83, 11).

Many studies (63, 114, 21, 104) show that socio-economically disadvantaged children are not prepared by early experiences to handle the curriculum and style of thinking required for success in school. As a result, the disadvantaged child carries from the school a disproportionately smaller gain in learning. This decrement is reflected in a gradual decrease in intelligence and achievement test scores as the child moves through school (21, 25). Bloom (20) calls this pattern of deprived children falling increasingly behind their undeprived peers in school subjects a cumulative-deficit phenomenon and it also is supported by many other studies (5, 63, 131, 127). Generally such children can be expected to lose fifteen to twenty points in intelligence by the end of junior high school and to be from two to three years behind in school work (21).

The implication of much of the research is that with proper educational planning, the deficiencies of children from disadvantaged circumstances can be overcome (63, 20, 159, 57, 163, 171). The emphasis has been on early compensation for the deficiencies in home environment, to initiate programs before the gap between these children and their more advanced peers widens beyond reach. This emphasis has led to development of programs on the preschool level such as Project Head Start. Preschool programs that are oriented toward the stimulation of cognitive development find support in many studies (79, 120, 114, 63, 4, 20, 167). The emphasis in the research is that the preschool years are important in building the basic skills which underlie cognitive development and that children with preschool experience are more likely to cope with the intellectual demands of the school than are the children who have not had this experience.

Head Start was developed to provide the deprived child with enriching experiences and in some way make up for opportunities lacking in the home environment. According to Butler (29), it was hoped that children with Head Start experience would enter first grade ahead of where

they would have been without the experience.

Sargent Shriver, the former director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, stated that by meeting the disadvantaged children's need for attention and affection, by tending to medical needs that drain their energy, by opening their mind to the world of knowledge, we can set them on the road to successful lives and break the vicious cycle that would turn them into poverty's parents (180). This process of progress is already at work on well over a million children in the United States.

Besner (18) declared that the elemental place of the family in every person's life and the primacy of its influence make it a factor to be reckoned with in any effort at long-term change, either in society or in the individual. If, for example, we are to intervene successfully in the lives of the several million children in families receiving public assistance, we must at least know the outlines of their home environments. Otherwise, we are likely to miss the most vital points of leverage for our efforts.

The home environment has been studied as a means of understanding the factors which influence the development of children. Such studies repeatedly show that the

home is the single most important influence on the intellectual and emotional development of children, particularly in the preschool years (70).

Families are the nurturing centers for human personality. More than any other association in the society, families are held responsible for the well-being of their members. . . . No other social group receives the child so young, relates to him so intimately, interacts with him with deeper and more lasting emotion, influences his behavior so profoundly, or has continuing contact with him over so long a period (66).

Since family patterns are responsive to basic life conditions, the relative prevalence of different types of families varies between societies and between segments of a single society. Research to date seems to show that in the United States economic deprivation is associated with relatively more frequent occurrence of some family types and with characteristic differences in the internal functioning of the classic two-parent nuclear family (18).

Numerous studies have indicated that low-income families tend to have problems which middle and upper-class families do not usually experience (45, 53, 98, 108, 171).

Their way of life is handed down from generation to generation in a cycle of inadequate education, inadequate homes, inadequate jobs, and stunted ambitions. It is a peculiar axiom of poverty that the poor are poor because they earn little and they also earn little because they are poor. For the rebel who seeks a way out of this closed circle, there is little help. . . A spirit of defeatism often prevades his life and remains the only legacy for his children (41).

President Lyndon B. Johnson said the following in his Message on Poverty to Congress, March 16, 1964:

Our Objective: Total Victory  
. . . I have called for a national war on poverty. Our objective: total victory. There are millions of Americans, one-fifth of our people, who have not shared in the abundance which has been granted to most of us, and to whom the gates of opportunity have been closed.

What does this poverty mean to those who endure it? It means a daily struggle to secure the necessities for even a meager existence. It means that the abundance, the comforts, the opportunities they see all around them are beyond their grasp.

Worst of all, it means hopelessness for the young (102).

#### Statement of the Problem

The first purpose of this study was to explore the differences, if any, in reading and language achievement of a group of second grade children who had attended a 1965

summer Head Start program in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, for a period of eight weeks, and a group of children who were eligible to attend the same program but who did not attend.

This part of the study was done as a follow-up to the study done by Ann C. Stapp (Master's thesis, University of Alabama, 1967) who tested the same groups of children in reading and language skills at the end of the first grade in school.

More specifically, the first objective of this study was:

1. To compare grade placement scores of the two groups on a standardized Reading and Language Achievement Test.
2. To compare percentile rankings of the two groups on the same test.

The second purpose of this study was to explore the similarities and differences of the family background and family problems in the home life of these children. More specifically the second objective was:

1. To compare the family backgrounds of the two groups by using the information given by the parents in a questionnaire.

2. To compare the family problems of the two groups using the answers given by the parents questioned.

### Need for the Study

One of the purposes of the Head Start program is to give the deprived child a "head start" in school. An important part of Head Start is to conduct follow up studies of the children who participated in the program to see if this brief exposure was of benefit to the children. Ann C. Stapp (183) studied the differences in reading and language achievement of a group of first grade children who had attended in summer 1965, an eight week Head Start program and a group of children who were eligible to attend the same program but who did not attend. She found the scores in most of the tests were slightly higher for the Head Start group than for the Non-Head Start group. It would be helpful to test the same groups to see if any differences in reading and language achievement still exist at the end of the second grade.

It is believed that when a child with a background of cultural deprivation enters the public schools, he is ill-prepared for formal learning, and begins to fall behind.

Each consecutive year becomes worse as he falls further and further behind. It would be valuable to test this hypothesis with the groups of children studied and see if the brief exposure to a preschool enrichment program as Head Start helps to break this cycle.

Language achievement is a primary focus of Head Start and a vital aspect in school learning, as talking must precede reading. It is for this reason the area of reading and language achievement was chosen for study. It is impossible to know if a program has been of value unless a follow-up study of the situation takes place. Research studies are needed in order to provide some evaluation of the program.

A great deal is known about the children in the study but very little is known about their family life, background, and problems. It would be helpful to explore the similarities and differences of the family backgrounds and family problems of these children, as the home environment is considered to be a great influence in the children's development. A number of studies have been conducted which either directly or indirectly have dealt with family problems or difficulties (22, 137, 45, 98, 108).



Numerous others are relevant, such as Hollingshead and Redlich's Social Class and Mental Illness (112), although they dealt primarily with one aspect of the problem. However the majority of the studies have concentrated on the middle classes (14).

To the writer's knowledge, there has been no study similar to the present investigation and research of this nature is needed in the field. The knowledge resulting from the present study should be of particular value to the family life educator, as much of the family life education material is designed for use with the middle class and are likely to be meaningless to the lower class. A better understanding of the family life of culturally deprived people should enable professional people to work with them more effectively.

#### Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to the reading and language achievement of second grade children in the Thirty-Second Avenue Elementary School in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. All of these children were Negro.

In the original study, 25 children who had attended project Head Start in summer 1965 and 25 children who did not attend the program were tested. Six of the children in the original study had moved away from the Tuscaloosa area at the time of the present investigation, leaving only 44 children to be tested. Twenty-two children from the original Head Start group and 22 children from the original Non Head Start group were used as subjects. Therefore, only 44 families were studied.

#### Definition of Terms

The terms "culturally deprived," "educationally deprived," "deprived," and "disadvantaged" are used interchangeably. The terms "economically deprived," "low-income," "lower socio-economic group," and "lower class" are used interchangeably.

## CHAPTER II

### RELATED LITERATURE

#### Reading and Language Development

Cultural limitations impose serious handicaps on children from deprived backgrounds in all areas of school functioning at present. The area of learning in which there seems to be the most problems is that of reading and language skills (185, 17, 29, 63, 149, 183). Reading and language are the two chief tools on which success in school depends (185).

In the elementary school one of the principal emphases is reading. Reading problems loom large in the case histories of disadvantaged children, inevitably setting them farther back each year from other children in the classroom, not only in the obvious areas of English composition and spelling, but in all other areas as well (75, 63, 20). Silberman (181) believes that the root of the

problem educationally is that the slum child does not learn to read properly in the first two grades and falls further and further behind after the third grade; the gap widens, and the I.Q. actually declines. He adds that failure to read properly also has a profound impact on how the child regards himself and consequently how he regards school. Silberman (181) concluded that poor reading skill at the start is the major cause of school dropouts and subsequent unemployment.

Sexton (177) found that mean achievement scores favored the higher income groups increasingly from grade to grade, and that the lowest scores of the lower income children consistently occurred in the reading portions of the tests. He added that arithmetic and word skills tended to be higher, suggesting that lower class children are especially disadvantaged verbally.

Karp and Sigel (123) in relating an index of home environment to parts of achievement batteries, found the highest correlation on the tests of word knowledge and reading and lowest correlation with spelling and arithmetic. The results suggest that the home situation has the least

effect on skills principally taught in schools, such as arithmetic and spelling.

Barton (9) found a consistent relationship between socio-economic level and progress in reading. In a number of studies of reading retardation among selected groups, retardation was found to be most pronounced among school dropouts, children of migrant workers, and children from the lower classes in general (63).

The printed word is only one hurdle for the disadvantaged child. Many cannot speak a sentence and when they do speak many do not use the standard speech of the classroom but use a dialect that has a limited vocabulary and is impoverished in descriptive and qualifying words (75). Riessman (171) states that the greatest block to the realization of the deprived individual's creative potential appears to be his verbal inadequacies. He seems to have enormous difficulty expressing himself verbally in many situations. Ellis and Havighurst (68) point out that deprived children use a great many words with a fair amount of precision, but these are not the words used in the school. Success in school is based on facility with a middle class vocabulary, not with the language of the underprivileged.

Bernstein (16) believes that deprived groups are at home with what he calls a "public language," but are deficient in "formal language." Public, or informal, language is characterized by "short, grammatically simple, often unfinished sentences . . . simple and repetitive use of conjunctions and frequent use of short commands and questions." The disadvantaged child speaks dialect at home and hears standard speech in the classroom and does not understand very much of what the teacher is saying.

Recent studies (37, 48, 54, 154, 173, 47) have indicated that more than any other single factor, verbal ineptness in both vocal and written communication may contribute to disenchantment with education. Since our schools are verbal schools, verbal handicaps can act as a vertical barrier to educational progress. The problem is that the environment in which lower class children grow up does not provide the intellectual and sensory stimulus they so desperately need (181). The result is that youngsters from impoverished backgrounds enter school lacking a great many skills which the teacher and the curriculum take for granted, and which most middle class children have acquired as a matter of course.

Numerous studies beginning in 1929 and including those of the Lynds (137), Warner (195), A. Davis (53), and Hollingshead (112), have amassed extensive documentation for generalizations about the learning difficulties encountered in our schools by children from the lower economic levels of our society. More recent studies have clearly postulated that verbal disadvantage is customarily a specific and significant facet of overall educational disadvantage (33, 63, 80, 87, 111, 199).

Much research on children has focused on the effects lower social class and minority membership have on language development. Chamberlain (34) states that as early as 1847 Degerando reported that "the child of the rich understands more words and less actions, and the child of the poor less words and more actions." This early observation regarding the linguistic superiority of the privileged child has since been confirmed by a number of recent experimental studies. Chamberlain (34), also reports a study by Lombroso in which 50 children of well-to-do and educated families were found to have much larger vocabularies than 100 children from poor families. Deutsch and Brown (65) also found a relationship between range of oral

vocabulary and social class level.

Figure 1 (94) reported that in second grade the vocabulary of disadvantaged children was approximately one-third that of middle class children and that in sixth grade the vocabulary was approximately one-half. He stated further that second grade children in slum areas knew fewer than half of the words in the vocabulary of middle class preschool children. He pointed out that some disadvantaged children did have rather large vocabularies but that these were not appropriate or adequate for school. In reviewing Chamberlain's study Markey (143) states: "Both in the precocity with which they interpret the words and in the exactness reached, the children of the middle class families exceeded those of the poor in the proportion of two to one".

Descouedres (57) studied 300 children of the upper and lower classes as they were distinguished by attendance at private or public schools and found that on practically every item of her extensive battery of tests, nearly all of which involved language, the children of the upper social classes were decidedly superior to those of the lower social classes. Stern (184) who reworked these data, calculated that the differences between the educated class and the



working class would be equivalent to about eight months in linguistic development.

C. Buhler (26) reported that children from a neglected milieu show retardation in all aspects of their development, but that the retardation was more evident in language than in other aspects of development. She reported data of Hetzer and Reindorf, who compared a group of children from a "good" environment with a group from an "underprivileged" environment. The children from the more favored environment used more words meaningfully at earlier ages, a larger percentage of them were using two to three word sentences at earlier ages, and the same differences were revealed when syntax, inflection, and sentence structure were analyzed.

The classic studies of McCarthy (138), Day (56), and Davis (55), which utilize paternal occupation as a criterion of selection in efforts to secure representative samplings, concur in indicating that group differences favor children from the upper socio-economic levels on practically all aspects of language studied. Irwin (118) also showed the superiority of the speech sounds of infants whose fathers were in a business or profession over those

of infants whose fathers were skilled, semi-skilled, or unskilled. Parents of adequate readers were significantly higher in occupational status, according to Newton (153), than were parents of retarded readers.

Membership in minority groups and its adverse influence on language facility was first pointed out by Klineberg (127) in regard to interpretation of mental tests administered to Negro children. Brown (23), Anastasi, and D'Angelo (3) compared young Negro and white children on the relationship of language development to I.Q. measures. They found among white children a greater frequency of mature sentence types and complex constructions and better elaborated concepts. In a longitudinal study of low socio-economic Negro groups in New Haven, the researchers pointed out that at the end of two years the infants' language behavior, though not retarded, was significantly lower than were other fields of behavior (161, 162, 129).

John (121) reported that consistent class differences in language skills were shown to emerge between groups of Negro children of different socio-economic class. Middle class children were reported to have a better command of language in terms of its classificatory and problem-solving

functions. The educational implication of these findings is for greater emphasis on language teaching for disadvantaged children, an implication supported in a study by Jensen (120).

#### Effects of Family Interactions

The home environment has been studied as a means of understanding the factors which influence the development of children. The ways in which parents spend time with their children at meals, in play, and at other times during the day have been found to be central factors in developing skills which prepare children for school (20). The objects in the home, the amount of parental interest in learning, and the amount of practice and encouragement the child is given in conversation and general learning have been found to be significant influences on language and cognitive development, development of interest in learning, attention span, and motivation of the child (20).

Most disadvantaged children spend less time in direct interaction with their parents than middle class children do (20). McCarthy (138) emphasized the relationship between verbal skills and parental availability,

particularly the amount and kind of contact the child experiences with his mother. The small amount of contact between parent and child with many siblings seemed to explain in part Nisbet's (155) finding that a large family is a handicap to verbal development. Walters, Connor, and Zunich (194) supported the same hypothesis of significantly fewer interactions between lower class mothers and children than between mothers and children in other social groups, on the basis of an experimental study of the observed facilitating-inhibiting behaviors used by lower class mothers in the guidance of their preschool children. Although the authors' categories did not differentiate between verbal and nonverbal interactions, the lack of communication between mother and child was clear.

Fowler (79) and Hunt (114) found that children from the middle class with adequate mothering revealed marked and persistent superiority in language facility over those who for reasons of low socio-economic level or institutionalization had received less than adequate mothering. Hess and Shipman (107) found that the child's ability to handle abstractions was related to maternal language styles. These investigators concluded further that the

mother's tendency to use abstract language was a better predictor of the child's abstract functioning on a cognitive task than was either the mothers' verbal I.Q. or the child's own I.Q. C. Deutsch (58) found that there are significant class differences in the time spent in parent-child communication.

The mere fact that the child learns the language of his environment is evidence of the importance of imitation (138). Stern (184) stated that the child can only become familiar with his mother tongue by continually hearing it, and can make it his own only by repeating its sounds; thus imitation is the factor which makes it possible to learn to speak. Fisher (76) said that by the age of six, normal children have acquired all the ordinary speech patterns used by the adults around them. Chandler (35) concluded that children can learn only what their environment provides, and what is most often seen or heard is most likely to be learned thoroughly.

Other environmental factors which seem to contribute to language development are parents' education, cleanliness and comfort of the family, space in which to live and move, number of children's books and pictures

which the child sees, opportunity for play with constructive materials and with companions, stories told and read in the home, excursions away from home that are meaningful to the child, activities in the home that are meaningful and which the child may share, a wholesome schedule of routines and play, and the amount of time the adults spend with the child (20).

Language development is contingent upon the environment. The form the child's language takes depends upon what he hears. If his experiences are rich and meaningful he is apt to acquire increasing power in comprehension and the use of language. Fowler (77) stresses the importance of the role of the adult in helping the child build meaning into words. She brings out that the extent to which the child makes a connection between words and actions is dependent on the accuracy and consistency with which parents use words in everyday situations (77).

Parents of children in the lower classes are presumably less gifted linguistically than parents of children in the upper classes, and hence not only afford a poorer example of language for a model but also probably provide less verbal stimulation. An extremely challenging study

by Milner (145) selected contrasting groups of first-grade Negro children on the basis of language I.Q. obtained with the California Test of Mental Maturity. Patterns of parent-child interaction were studied for the children who were high and low scorers on a language criterion similar to reading readiness tests. These children were drawn from widely divergent socio-economic levels. Striking differences were found in the patterns of family life between the high scorers and the low scorers. The families of high scorers usually had breakfast together and engaged in general two-way conversation at breakfast and before school as well as at supper, the children actively participating in such conversation. Children scoring high on the language tests were also the recipients of more overt expressions of affection from significant adults in the home than the children who earned low scores on the language tests as first graders. On the other hand mothers of low scorers did not eat breakfast with their children, did not talk to them during breakfast or before they started for school, except for occasional orders and cautions. These children did not talk to anyone at breakfast or before school. Neither did they have any two-way conversation while eating

their supper. These factors tend to be concomitant with variations in socio-economic status which has so often been shown to be related to language development. However, since these circumstances are so much more dynamic from the standpoint of language learning and familial attitudes towards children and their patterns of living, it appears that parental attitudes towards children and habits of family life are the really significant factors for language development and that they happen to vary with socio-economic class as well.

There is ample evidence that seems to indicate that the areas of comprehension, cognitive development, perceptual styles, auditory discrimination, linguistics, and language patterns that are manifested in the life of the culturally disadvantaged child have a devastating effect (122, 20).

### Comprehension

John and Goldstein (122) noted the disproportionate reliance the lower class child has on what he hears for his learning in contrast to the middle class child, who has the benefit of numerous conversational dialogues with adults to assist him in his verbal responses. While



it might appear likely that the lower class child begins to grasp meanings in advance of any opportunity he has for verbalizing them, even here a lack of differentiation among mental abilities based on lower verbal meaning and lower fluency scores was found to be characteristic of low status children compared with high status children studied by Mitchell (146). Pavenstedt (164) described children from lower class families as frequently not attending to instructions and needing to rely on concrete demonstrations to translate instructions into action. The language models to which impoverished children are exposed are often not only meager, restricted, and incorrect grammatically but also punitive, according to Gray and Klaus (96) and Bernstein (17), limiting divergence and elaboration in children's thinking, and thereby inhibiting the development of their ability to comprehend.

#### Cognitive Development

The Verbal Survey project being conducted by Deutsch (63) and associates at the Institute of Developmental Studies of the New York Medical College is generating a number of investigations regarding the relationship of language development and cognition. John's (121) and

John and Goldstein's (122) extensive work on certain patterns of linguistic and cognitive behavior in children from various social classes showed some of the specific limitations in the disadvantaged group's acquisition of the ability to label, discriminate, categorize, and generalize. In a discussion of the cognitive and motivational effects of disadvantaged status, Ausubel (5) concluded that a delay in the acquisition of certain formal language forms resulted in difficulty in the transition from concrete to abstract modes of thought. Deutsch (62) observed lower class children to be inferior in abstract conceptualization and categorization of visual stimuli. In another study Deutsch (64) studied the tasks performed at home by disadvantaged children and found that they tended to be motoric, required short time spans, and related primarily to concrete objects and services. In a later study, Deutsch and others (65) indicated certain functions underlying measures for which race is associated with poor performance. These were reported to be abstraction, verbalization, and experientially dependent enumeration. Siller (182) investigated the greater tendency toward abstraction in children from higher social classes. When

his subjects were matched on nonverbal scores with low status children, the higher status children were superior on tests of verbal concepts. The socially disadvantaged child, according to McCandless (139), tended to be more concrete and inflexible in his intellectual functioning than did the more privileged child.

Jensen (120) and John (121), working independently, concluded that the lower class child's use of language as a cognitive tool is deficient, and noted that the acquisition of more abstract and integrative language forms seems to be hampered by lower class living conditions.

Deutsch (60) and Hilliard and Troxell (110), have noted that differences in the quality of language between classes increases with age. As Deutsch (60) suggested, if a high level of language development is a prerequisite to advanced concept formation and problem solving, the lower class deficit in conceptual function can only be tremendous.

#### Perceptual Styles and Auditory Discrimination

Several investigators have noted in disadvantaged children perceptual styles and habits which are inadequate to academic efficiency. Although high levels of perceptual

sensitization and discrimination are often present, these skills tend to be developed better in visual behavior than in aural (171). Probably of greatest significance is the absences of any high degree of dependence on verbal and written language for cognitive cues. Many of the children have not adopted receptive and expressive modes traditional to and necessary for success in school.

The extent to which perceptual and expressive styles differ among children of varied backgrounds is well documented. Jensen (120) concluded that the socially deprived child has failed to learn the verbal mediators which facilitate school learning. On measures of level of communication based on meaning, Carson and Rabin (31) found white children to be superior to Negroes and Northern Negroes to be superior to Southern Negroes. Deutsch (60) found lower class children to be inferior to a comparable group of middle class children on tasks of concentration and persistence, and in a subsequent study he reported that lower class children are relatively poorer in auditory discrimination, in manipulation of syntactical aspects of language, and in recognition of perceptual similarities. He found no physical defects of eyes, ears, or brain. The

deficiencies were attributed to inferior habits of hearing, seeing, and thinking. He postulated that these children were deprived of sufficient variety of stimuli to which they were maturationally capable of responding and were therefore less prepared for school learning. Christine and Christine (42) indicated the relationship of auditory discrimination to articulatory defects and reading retardation. Bruner (24) reported, as a result of his studies of cognitive consequences of sensory deprivation, that children so deprived are handicapped not only in constructing models of the environment but also in developing strategies for evaluation information. Russell (172) suggested from his studies that concept and language development occur simultaneously and pointed out the consequent importance of teaching disadvantaged children concepts and language at the same time.

Silberman (181) believes that the slum child lacks the sense of auditory discrimination that is essential to reading. He says that the noise level in a household in which a half-dozen people are living in two rooms tends to be so high that the child is forced to learn how not to listen; he develops the ability to wall himself off

from his surroundings. Hence, he fails to develop an ability to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant sounds, and to screen out the irrelevant.

Silberman (181) and Deutsch (63) agree that more important, the lower class child has not had the experience of having adults correct his pronunciation; correction of baby speech and of mistakes in syntax or grammar is one crucial way in which the middle class child learns the ability to distinguish subtle nuances of sound and language. In the case of the lower class Negro youngster, the problem is compounded several times over by the fact that the phonic system of the language he speaks is quite different from the system of the language which the teacher speaks and which the reading primers use.

The lower class child tends to have a poor attention span and to have great difficulty following the teacher's orders (181). The reason is that he generally comes from a nonverbal household; adults speak in short sentences, if indeed they speak at all. When they give orders to the child, it is usually in monosyllables-- "get this," "bring that". The child has never been obliged to listen to several lengthy sentences spoken consecutively,

and the speech he does hear tends to be of a very simple sort from the standpoint of grammar and syntax. In school, the middle class teacher who rambles on for several sentences might just as well be talking another language. The non-verbal atmosphere of the home also means that lower class children have a limited perception of the world about them: they do not know that objects have names or that the same object may have several names (63).

#### Linguistics and Language Patterns

Research pursued in the area of linguistics and language patterns reflects an assumed conflict between the language structure and patterns which disadvantaged children acquire early in their development and the subsequent different language structure and patterns of the schools.

Bernstein (17) provided basic information concerning social class and linguistic behavior. Studying English families, he found two distinct types of language significantly related to class membership. The lower class used a restricted form and the middle class used an elaborated form. The elaborated form was more consistent with school

and textbook language. Bernstein (17) determined in his studies that lower class speech in English families is not only different from middle and upper class speech, but is deficient for educational purposes.

An important study of American children was conducted by Loban (136). Using a stratified sample of 338 children in the kindergarten through the sixth grade from the Oakland, California, public schools, he attempted to describe accurately the use and control of language, the effectiveness in communication, and the relationships among the subjects' oral, written, and reading uses of language. The findings revealed that except for linking-verb patterns and the use of partial expressions or incomplete sentences, the differences in structural patterns tended to be small between the low and high socio-economic groups. Very important differences, however, did appear in the dexterity with which subjects used elements within the structured patterns: the high socio-economic group used more clauses and infinitives than did the low socio-economic group. Reading, writing, listening, and oral language showed a positive interrelationship and also a positive relationship with socio-economic group. Templin (186)



reported a similiar relationship between sentence length and complexity of sentence structure with socio-economic level.

Frazier (80), as a result of extensive research, suggested three kinds of underdeveloped language found among disadvantaged children with learning disabilities: (a) true verbal destitution, that is, there is actually less language; (b) full but non-standard language development, that is, the language is highly developed but deviates sufficiently from standard English to require further language development; and (c) unconceptualized experience and underdeveloped language, that is, the language is well developed, but in certain aspects of experience valued by the school there may have been no occasion to verbalize meanings. These findings suggest that there might well be different kinds of language development among disadvantaged children.

Our present knowledge of the development of learning abilities indicates that the preschool years are the most important years of learning in the child's life. A tremendous amount of learning takes place during these years, and this learning is the foundation for all further learning (120, 166).

In 1925 Arnold Gesell (85) recognized the importance of the early years. He said:

The brain grows at a tremendous rate during the preschool age, reaching almost its mature bulk before the age of six. . . . The mind develops with corresponding velocity. The infant learns to see, to hear, handle, walk, comprehend, and talk. He acquires an uncountable number of habits fundamental to the complex art of living. Never again will his mind, his character, his spirit advance as rapidly as in this formative pre-school period of growth. Never again will we have an equal chance to lay the foundations of mental health.

The early childhood years are the root years for language development. A basic mastery of spoken language is normally acquired very rapidly during the preschool years, usually between the ages of one and five years, and the child whose language development is seriously delayed for any reason labors under an almost unsurmountable handicap in his social and academic relationships (138).

Heffernan declared that in order to counteract the effects on school performance of an impoverished environment, it is necessary to enrich not only the first grade school experience but also to provide enrichment or training in the skills underlying success in schools,

skills which children from these backgrounds have apparently developed insufficiently.

To meet these challenges school systems and other responsible agencies in many parts of the country have begun to mobilize both concern and talent. Using the research of Clark (44), Davis (53), Deutsch (63), Havinghurst (101), and others and the ideas of such leaders in the field as Bloom (20), Henkins (105), Riessman (171), Schreibner (175), and Shepard (179), special programs have been initiated to upgrade education and to increase the life chances of disadvantaged children and youth.

Available studies indicate that the effects of environmental restriction during infancy and early childhood cannot be erased, but good preschool training can make a positive difference (78, 63, 163). Preliminary results, from studies of enrichment programs show significant gains for welfare children in personality, intelligence and academic achievement. Although many children did not catch up to their middle class peers, the course of failure was broken.

Two of the earliest enrichment programs are the Peabody Early Training Project near Nashville and the

program of the Institute for Developmental Studies directed by Martin Deutsch in New York City. Although the directors of both projects emphasize the importance of long-range followup studies to determine program effectiveness, preliminary results have been reported. From the Peabody project, Gray and Klaus (96), reported substantial increase in I.Q. scores, as measured by either the Stanford-Binet or the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC), among children in the program as compared with those of children in control groups. There were gains of five and six points in two treatment groups and losses of four and six points in two control groups. Children in treatment groups also had higher scores on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test and the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Ability. When they entered the first grade they performed better on reading readiness tests.

From the Institute for Development Studies, Deutsch (61) reported comparable differences in Stanford-Binet I.Q. scores between children attending the experimental preschool program and controls. As in the Peabody project, there were apparently control group losses as well as experimental group gains. Also, as before, the experimental group performed better on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. In

both programs, gains in the early experimental groups had been maintained for about two years.

From an experimental nursery school program in Philadelphia, Beller (13) reported similar findings. The children gained about six points in Stanford-Binet I.Q. scores from mid-year in the nursery school to mid-year in kindergarten. Also, at the time of testing in kindergarten, the nursery groups were on the average about eight points higher in I.Q. scores than control children with no nursery school experience. The nursery groups performed better than the control groups on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. A group verbal intelligence test (Philadelphia Verbal Abilities) also reflected effects of nursery school.

Another experimental nursery school program of 116 children in kindergarten, first and second grades was reported by Allen and Masling (2). The results show that the differences between the nursery school and non-nursery school children reached statistical significance only in the second grade, even though there were consistent trends in the hypothesized direction in the earlier grades.

The Early School Admissions Project (67), for culturally deprived children in Baltimore Maryland,

reported that children who have participated in the pre-school program make a better start in school, have fewer adjustment problems, greater verbal ability, increased independence and increased ability to participate in group activities. They seem to score better on readiness tests and seem to make a better start in reading.

Weikart, Kamii, and Radin (196) reported a preliminary two-year evaluation of the Perry Preschool Project in Ypsilanti, Michigan. There was a dramatic spurt in mean I.Q. scores for each experimental group during the first year in the program. Whereas mean I.Q. scores for the experimental and control groups were about equal at the beginning, those for the experimental groups were significantly higher at the end of the first year and somewhat higher at the end of the second year. Comparisons between experimental and control groups on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test showed significant differences favoring the experimental groups. Comparisons between the standard scores of the experimental groups and the control groups on the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities showed that the experimental group scored higher on most of the subtests than did the controls. On the Gates reading

Readiness Tests, the experimental group scored higher than the control group on all five subtests.

In Nashville, Tennessee, where more than 1,000 children had eleven months of Head Start before entering first grade, principals reported: Those with Head Start experience learned colors, the concepts of left and right, opposites, comparatives, the concept of a set, which is the beginning of new math, and showed improved visual perceptual ability, vocabulary, and spacial concepts, as well as broadened cultural experiences (196).

In Tuscaloosa, Alabama, a group of 25 children who attended Head Start and 25 children who were eligible but did not attend were tested at the end of the first grade in reading and language achievement using the California Achievement Test (183). The Reading Test consisted of Reading Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension; the Language Test consisted of Mechanics of English and Spelling. Although all test scores were low, the scores on most of the tests were slightly higher for the Head Start group than for the Non-Head Start group. On the Reading and Language tests percentile rankings, as a whole, were higher for the Head Start group than for the Non-Head Start group. More

of the children in the Non-Head Start group seemed to have difficulty understanding test directions than did those in the Head Start group.

In another study done in Tuscaloosa, Alabama using the same groups of children, Goldstein (89) compared personality test scores and pupil progress reports of the Head Start and Non-Head Start children. She found that on the California Test of Personality, the children who had attended Project Head Start achieved higher percentile averages, in most instances, than did the group of children who had not attended the program. The group of children with Head Start experience scored higher on the total California Test of Personality than did the group of children without Head Start experience. The children who had attended Project Head Start achieved higher grade averages than did the children who had not attended Project Head Start in nine out of ten areas of growth included on the report cards. These areas were Personal and Social Growth, Social Studies and Science, Reading, Arithmetic, Handwriting, Spelling, Language, Music, and Art. The Non-Head Start group achieved higher grade averages on Physical Education.



No project for the disadvantaged child has received the public attention given to Head Start, a program for preschool children developed and funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity. It is one of the most popular anti-poverty programs and the one that many feel holds the most promise. It offers to take disadvantaged children in their most formative years, and help them to become productive, competent pupils, able to compete with others many times more advantaged.

It has been predicted that Head Start and other preschool educational programs will result in some of the most revolutionary developments in elementary education this country has ever known (29). If these children really are to have a head start, changes will have to be provided in the experiences provided by many schools, emphasizing some of the same goals as the Head Start program.

Dr. Keith Osborn (159), Chief Educational Consultant to Project Head Start, states that Head Start is a recognition of something people in the early childhood field have been preaching for years - that the first five years of life are very important; they can't be wasted. We must educate the children of today to be the parents of tomorrow, for only through better parents will we have better

children.

Head Start has passed its first trials with flying colors. Tested in practice the past two years, it has proven worthy of its promise. Through this program, hope has entered the lives of hundreds of thousands of children and their parents who need it the most.

Lyndon B. Johnson (102)

#### Problems of Low Income Families

Citizens of the United States in the "late-sixties" enjoy what is generally considered to be the highest material standard of living in the world. Unfortunately everyone in the nation does not share in this affluence (69). In spite of this general economy of wealth and abundance, many American families still have a substandard level of existence.

MacDonald (142) defined poverty in terms of those who are denied the minimal levels of health, housing, food, and education that our present stage of scientific knowledge specifies as necessary for life as it is now lived in the United States. The incidence of poverty for any specified group of families is the percentage of that group with incomes below \$3,000 (51).

Estimates differ as to how many millions of Americans are poor. The numbers given range from 34 to 76 million persons comprising one-third, one-fourth, or one-fifth of the population who are living in abject conditions (160, 51, 126, 127). According to the Conference on Economic Progress (49) two-fifths of the 1960 census population could be classified as either poverty stricken or deprived.

The Council of Economic Advisers (51) reports the following concerning poor families:

Approximately 40 percent of the poor are non-white, and nearly one-half of all non-whites live in poverty. The heads of over 60 percent of all poor families have only grade school educations. One-third of all poor families are headed by a person over sixty-five and almost half of families headed by such a person are poor. Almost half of poor families are headed by women. Of the poor, 54 percent live in cities, 16 percent on farms, and 30 percent are rural nonfarm residents. Excessive unemployment is reflected in 40 percent of the poor. The South with 30 percent of the nation's families has 47 percent of the poor families.

When a family and its head have several characteristics frequently associated with poverty, the chances of being poor are particularly high: a family headed by a young woman who is non-white and has less than an eighth

grade education is poor in 94 cases out of 100 and even if she is white, the chances are 85 out of 100 that she and her children will be poor (51).

The characteristics of low income families obviously overlap; being non-white may also mean being a farmer or being aged, or being a female head of family. The poor do not usually have only one problem and many poor families are classified as "multi-problem" families (158). Clague (43) emphasized that it is important to recognize that social, economic, environmental, cultural, and emotional factors affecting family living are so intertwined that it is impossible to speak of one without including the others. Brim (22) maintained that economic difficulties are the fundamental cause of problems of other kinds, such as problems in interpersonal relations, and thus must be found in association with them. A review of the literature on low income families indicates the complexity as well as the diversity of problems which face families.

#### Economic Factors and Standard of Living

Income.—In our society, a continuously low income is directly associated with certain life situations. Poorer, more crowded living quarters, reduced access to

education and recreation, occupational restriction to simpler, manual types of work, limited food and clothing, are all characteristics of the very poor. The most obvious problems of the low-income family are those which are the direct result of insufficient money (108). There may not be enough money to pay bills and to provide for the needs of the family (108, 45, 53, 98). In addition, bad physical and mental health are characteristic and contribute to poverty to an undetermined but clearly significant degree (58).

Employment.—In 1963, according to the Council of Economic Advisers (51), 30 percent of families with incomes below \$3,000 were headed by persons who held jobs (mostly full time) throughout the year. An additional 14 percent were headed by persons in the labor force during only part of the year but who were never counted as unemployed because they moved out of the labor force. The heads of 16 percent of poor families experienced unemployment during 1963 and the largest group of poor families (39 percent of the total) was headed by persons completely out of the labor force during 1963 (51).

The incidence of poverty is 76 percent for families with no earners, and 49 percent for families headed by

persons who work part time (197). A family may be in either of these situations as a result of age, disability, premature death of the principal earner, need to care for children or disabled family members, lack of any saleable skill, lack of motivation, or simply heavy unemployment in the area(194).

Keyserling (126) observed that unemployment is about twice as high among nonwhites, as was previously noted by the excessively high concentration of poverty among nonwhites. Keyserling (126) further stated that poverty can be traced back to unemployment, underemployment, and low earnings in perhaps half of the families with incomes under \$3,000 in 1962.

Lower class families suffer greatly from prolonged unemployment; relief is often substituted for self support. Many accept unemployment as a normal way of life and become permanently unemployed. Cavan (32) found that permanently unemployed families are relief clients year in and year out, in prosperity as well as in depression; or they have found some unrespectable way to live without working. Cavan (32) adds that these families tend to accept their impoverished status and to stabilize family life at a

dependency level; some members may have been reared in similar families and thus have been socialized into this type of family from birth. A recent sample study of AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) recipients found that more than 40 percent of the parents were themselves raised in homes where public assistance had been received (86).

Like many other characteristics of poverty, unemployment has its own link with large families. Secretary of Labor, W. Willard Wirtz (200), made this point recently:

There is a strong indication that a disproportionate number of the unemployed come from large families. We know that almost half of the boys rejected for military service because of inadequate mental capacity and education come from families with six or more children.

Occupation.—The chances of a family's being poor differ not only with the amount of employment of the head but also with the kind of work he does. This is a reflection, according to Orshansky (160) of the different pay rates and lifetime earning patterns that workers at different trades can expect. For example, the incidence of poverty among families headed by employed persons is

45 percent for farmers, 74 percent for domestic service workers, 23 percent for laborers, and almost 22 percent for other service workers (51).

The chief reason for low rates of pay is low productivity, which in turn can reflect lack of education or training, physical or mental disability, or poor motivation (51). Other reasons include discrimination, low bargaining power, exclusion from minimum wage coverage, or lack of mobility resulting from inadequate knowledge of other opportunities, or unwillingness or inability to move away from familiar surroundings (51).

A steady, secure job is valued more by the poor than a job with prospects for advancement (124). The notion of a career, which plays such a significant part in the lives of middle class individuals is hardly ever developed in the lower class (46, 124). Along with this, is the short-range time perspective of the lower-class individual who tends to be oriented to the present rather than to the future and who tends not to plan ahead (124). Even more than "getting ahead," they value "getting by," avoiding the worsening of an already unstable situation. Merely holding on to what they have seems to be a full-time concern for them (46, 101). They are unwilling to



take risks, and seek security rather than advancement (117).

All of these things are compounded by the fact that workers in the occupations that pay very little tend to have larger families than the others (160). Thus an income unlikely to be high to begin with must be stretched to provide for more children rather than less.

Education.—It is well known that poverty particularly affects those who have little education. Two-thirds of our poor families are headed by persons who have less than an eighth grade education (41). Another one-fifth of them have, as their head, persons with less than a high school education. Keyserling (126) reported a 1962 survey by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, finding that out of about 100 million Americans, aged 25 and over, 7.8 percent were functionally illiterate, with four years or less of education. More than 28 percent had only five to eight years of education, and only about 18 percent had 13 or more years of education.

Relating these types of data more closely to poverty, Keyserling (126) found that only 16 percent of the mothers in families receiving public assistance have completed high school, contrasted with 56 percent of all women aged

20 to 54, and 42 percent of the fathers in families receiving public assistance report less than five years of schooling, contrasted with only 9 percent of all adult males. In Chicago, a study of 680 able-bodied men and women on the relief roles indicated that more than half were functionally illiterate (126).

The incidence of poverty drops as educational attainments rise for non-white as well as white families at all ages (51). Weisbrod (197) declares that the relationship between education, productivity, and earning capacity is so powerful that it transcends some of the discriminatory income barriers that confront non-whites. He states that a non-white family headed by a person with some college education is less than one-third as likely to be poor as a similar non-white family headed by a person who has gone no further than elementary school.

The poorly educated person finds few employment opportunities open to him, and these decrease as technological advancement eliminates more and more unskilled jobs. Such jobs as open to him are the least desirable ones in terms of pay, job security, working conditions relevant to health and safety, and fringe benefits such as insurance

and sick leave (86). Frequent layoffs are likely, and savings to tide the family over a crises are almost impossible to come by.

Employment opportunities are rich for those who have had rich opportunities for education and general development as they were growing up. The demand for highly trained professional and technical workers is high. This high demand for the educationally advantaged and low, almost no demand for the disadvantaged, make a powerful contribution to the widening gulf in our society between the affluent and the deprived.

A survey of 2800 families showed clearly that the education of the head of a family is "far more important than any of the other variables" in determining the education actually attained by the children (150). This was confirmed by Turner's (189) 1962 survey of over 2000 non-ethnic high school seniors in Los Angeles, in which parental education was found to be highly associated with a high level of ambition.

Although they may not expect to achieve it, most low-income people value advanced education(12). Bell (12) found that up to 65 percent of parents will say they want

a college education for their children. He studied 202 lower class Negro mothers of children in nursery school or kindergarten to discover their educational aspirations for their children, particularly their long range aspirations for college educations. The principal suggestion was that there were significant differences within the lower class, according to a mother's level of education and size of family. He found that "low status" mothers (zero to eight years of education and seven or more children) had lower aspirations than "high status" mothers (nine or more years of education and six or fewer children).

Consumer Problems.—Capovitz (30) studied 464 families in the low-income public housing projects in New York City. He sought to determine what kind of goods these families buy, prices paid for durables, their financial position in terms of the relationship among income, debt, and savings, as well as problems they encounter as consumers. He reached the following conclusions:

- (a) These families consume high cost durables;
- (b) They pay higher than average prices for these items and often get shoddy merchandise;
- (c) They tend to own expensive appliances with the same frequency as families at much higher income levels and often buy expensive models where less expensive ones were available, and
- (d) They buy on credit.

These families shop mostly in neighborhood stores or from peddlers rather than in department stores, discount houses, or chain stores.

Caplovitz (30) explained that the poor buy high priced durables probably in order to win the respect of others and to maintain their self respect. These social pressures to consume, he adds, are perhaps inevitable in a society characterized by a rising standard of living. Compounding the force of a rising standard of living is the fact that most low income families (many of which belong to minority racial and ethnic groups) have little opportunity to base their self respect and the respect granted them by others on occupational, educational, or other accomplishments; and this poverty of opportunity may only reinforce the significance of consumption in the pattern called "compensation consumption." (30)

Richards (170) stated that low income consumers do not know how to get the most from their dollar - the best quality for the lowest price. They are not deliberate in their shopping, not more price conscious, and not more informed on the characteristics of products than families with higher incomes (170).

They do not budget their income and plan their purchases. The poor save very little and are not often covered by insurance (170).

Education is an important factor in explaining low efficiency of planning among the poor as education can affect not only the amount of knowledge one has about financial matters, but also one's mode of thinking about money (170). For the uneducated consumer it is easy to "buy now" with a small portion of the weekly paycheck and hard to see in advance how difficult it will be to "pay later." It is doubtful whether many carry out home production activities to supplement cash purchases and many probably do not make full use of the programs established to provide services and goods free or at reduced rates.

Home Conditions.—Poverty and deprivation are responsible for the fact that millions of people still live in urban and rural slums because they do not earn enough to live better (126). The slums also help to perpetuate poverty and deprivation, because they affect the health and morale and behavior of those who live in them (126, 49).

The 1960 Census data reveals about 9.5 million housing units in the United States are "seriously deficient,"

or about one-sixth of all housing units (27). Keyslering stated that it seems that at least a fifth of all Americans are still ill-housed. In addition, some 6.2 million units need repair and alterations including modernization beyond ordinary maintenance requirements (49). Sheerer states that nearly one house in five does not even have adequate plumbing.

Analysis of preliminary findings of a current study in six census areas of low-income neighborhoods in Washington, New York, and Chicago is reported (73). Indications are that inadequate housing is perceived by the great majority of persons interviewed as their most severe problem, far more acute than their need for improved health and welfare services. This was equally true for whites, Negro, and Puerto Rican respondents.

Another source of information may be found in a report on an extensive, nationwide, Philadelphia based study and analysis of the housing conditions of low income persons (113). The authors concluded that the "gap between the cost of adequate shelter and the ability of the poor to pay is the most urgent housing problem facing Philadelphia and the nation today."

According to a 1960 national survey of a sample of recipients in the Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) program, the incomes of many of these families were not adequate to provide even a minimum level of living and most of them had seriously inadequate housing (86). Overcrowding was a common problem, especially so for Negroes and rural whites. A relatively small percentage of the persons studied (23 percent) owned their own homes; renters were particularly found in urban areas.

There are many examples of the inverse relationship between income and overcrowding and the direct correlation between income and the physical qualities of housing, the extent of conveniencies and the quality of the neighborhood (69, 15). Among poorer families, and especially among Negroes, there is much overcrowding in the home; many share their households with relatives (15). Most nonwhite children under eighteen live in large families and the chances are great that these families are living in crowded conditions (15). The 1960 Census (27) showed that almost a third (30 percent) of all nonwhite members of households in 1960 lived in dwelling units with 1.5 percent or more persons per room. Although crowding



is the lot of slum families of whatever color, it is more likely to occur and be more severe among Negroes (15).

Sometimes the crowding results not from generosity to relatives, but from the necessity of sharing expenses with roomers or lodgers. Bernard (15) states that almost 8 percent of nonwhite households in 1960 included non-relatives. In either case, the situation can be confusing for children. The fact that overcrowded housing in rundown neighborhoods with lack of privacy at home and lack of proper play space may have unfortunate effects on children and needs no underlining (69).

Housing is, of necessity, usually in cheap rental units where the condition of the building may create problems in housekeeping and in efforts to make the home attractive (86). Drab and deteriorating housing, depressing both adults and children, often discourages women from any effort to improve their homes.

Besner (18) believes that materially, the lower classes are not satisfied with poor housing or living conditions. He found that high on their list of desirable improvements are better housing and neighborhoods. Besner (18) added that inside their homes they value the same

things as the average American—comfortable and durable furniture, a television set, an array of electrical appliances and a few ornaments and art objects.

Allison Davis (53) emphasized that the slum culture has its own "decent" and "respectable" standards for food and housing. Lower-class people, he says, learn their own group's cultural standard of "enough to eat" or "a good house" or "good furniture." Davis (53) adds that it is probably only when the cultural goals for subsistence are threatened that a person experiences marked anxiety. He states that lower-class people consider the same house or job as "good" which middle-class people regard as humiliating.

Health.—United States National Health Survey statistics have shown that the poor get sick more frequently, take longer to recover, seek and receive less medical, dental and hospital treatment, and suffer far more disabling consequences than persons with higher incomes (73).

The poor can't afford adequate health protection. Only one-third of families with incomes under \$2,000 have health insurance compared with three-quarters of all American families (73). The hospitalization rate for

poor Negroes is twenty times lower than for the population as a whole (69).

Increasing numbers of pregnant women of low income receive little or no prenatal care (73). It has been found that premature births are more frequent among the lower class mothers and that infant mortality is strongly associated with both low income and low occupational status (116). Reflecting the high concentration of poverty, four times as many Negro as white women die in childbirth.

Recent studies have shown that mental illness is often a product of the strains and stresses of poverty. One report states that unskilled and semi-skilled workers were six times more likely to be hospitalized for psychoses than professional or managerial personnel (73). Hollingshead and Redlich (112) found that three times as many persons in the poorest group studied had experienced psychiatric illness than did persons in upper groups.

Although more vulnerable to ill health than the rest of the population, the low income strata are likely to be more ignorant about it; they have less factual information about causes, treatment and outcome of various diseases (116). There is relatively little participation

in community health practices and less is known about public health programs and resources (69). They have a low rate of participation in prevention programs as was shown in a study of the Salk vaccine trial. It was found that high and middle status groups were each about twice as likely to have their children immunized as lower class patients were (116).

There is an immediate relationship between income and the seeking of health services. People who have little money, no savings, and scant hope of improving their finances do not spend money for insured, perfect health (116). They consider themselves sufficiently healthy so long as they are able to keep working and bringing in the little money they can earn (69).

A clear relationship between family income and the quantities of nutrients provided by the diet of non-farm family was found by the Department of Agriculture (190). Malnutrition can have serious results. The statistical probabilities of insufficient protein and other qualitative deficiencies in the diets of the children of the poor have been reinforced by studies (69, 116, 160). Orshansky (160) stated that everyday living implies choosing between an adequate diet of the most economical

sort and some other necessity because there is not enough money to have both.

Family Relationships and Patterns.—Family life has a distinctive influence upon the things, persons and ideas we perceive upon our attachments and upon our valuations of experience (140). For this reason, variations in family background result in different learning situations. The life style of the home sets limits upon the kinds of reality testing and insights a young person may experience and upon the selection of models for identification and imitation (140).

Life style for the great majority of Americans tends to vary according to socio-economic status of husband and wife, and whether or not they are middle or lower class in participation and reputation (195). The lower status family is characterized not only by material deprivation, but also by practices and standards of conduct which are different from those of other social classes (108). Hence, through systematic variations in perceptual and valuational experiences in family life, children and youth seem to learn somewhat different motives and ways of behaving, ideas and beliefs, attitudes and values (18).

Poverty environments are seen as being the most important causative factors in the development of poverty subcultures to which child-rearing and family life patterns are related (39). Brim (22) maintained that economic difficulties are the fundamental cause of problems of other kinds, such as problems in interpersonal relations, and, therefore, must be found in association with them. Brim (22) added that clinical or therapeutic theory consistently has taken the position that disturbances in the parent-child and husband-wife relations do not occur independently; that problems in one of these cause and reflect problems in the other.

Marital Discord.—Successful marriage and family living are correlated in a high degree with steady employment and stability of income (22). Inadequate income seems to affect families in their intrafamilial relationships. Research indicates that there is a high proportion of separations and divorces among low-income marriages (15, 171, 193, 141, 124).

In Elmtown, Hollingshead (112) found that one-third of the lower classes were broken by death, desertion, separation or divorce. Keller (124) reported that in one

sample the members indicated the presence of friction between their wives and mothers and the occurrence of broken marriages in the lives of two out of their five closest friends.

It is possible that the marital discord found among these families is closely related to the problems which they experience as a result of low income (108). If the marriage partners are worried about their financial situation, they are likely to be irritable with each other. They may tend to argue about how their limited income should be spent, or about possible ways of increasing the family income. Their jobs may entail unsatisfactory work hours so that they are unable to spend time together. Esptien (69) states that poor and overcrowded housing and pressure for earnings to supplement or substitute for those of the father may affect family life unfavorably. A number of studies agree that life in the lowest social class is often violent and is generally highly unstable as people move about seeking work, adventure, escape from the law, or more living space (112, 132, 124).

The general deprivations suffered by lower class result in a family life that appears to be more unstable

and strife-ridden than is true in any other class (124).

Mothers As Family Heads.—Research indicates that low socio-economic status families are one-parent families (41, 18, 141, 126, 197, 45, 98). The female based household is a widely prevalent and persisting form among the poor (18). Milner (145) estimates that between 25 and 40 percent of the child-rearing units in urban slums are of this type. This seems to be especially true of the Negro family (15). Bernard (15) states that in 1960 over half (50.9 percent) of all the non-white families with incomes under \$2,000 in central cities were headed by women. Many such households consist of one or more women of child-bearing age, often related by blood or through marriage and spanning two or more generations. Non-white women are more than three times as likely to have their marriages disrupted than white women and more often by separation than by divorce (41).

The mothers in these one-parent families generally have little education and only marginal employment skills, and they have great difficulty in finding jobs and are faced with critical problems of child care if they should go to work (41). The absence of a father in the home may have unfavorable effects on the children.



Children from the broken families who represent so large a proportion of the poor undoubtedly will often fall in the same unskilled labor category as their parents did (41). The mothers with no education or cultural expectations for themselves, with little money to provide a home environment conducive to study, and needing the help of the older children's earnings to satisfy basic needs of the younger ones, often are in no position to encourage children to study or to stay in school (41).

Parent-Child Relationships.—Moles (147) reported that there are differences in child training practices within low-income groups. He compared public recipients, usually the poorest of poor, and low-income non-recipients, regarding their child training practices. Differences were found in several important respects. More of the recipient than non-recipient mothers wanted their children to finish college, and they set higher standards for their children's academic performance. In the intact recipient families, the father played a larger role in child training.

Parents of lower status tend to be more punitive and forbidding in rearing their children, and they also tend to be less consistent in their methods and give their

children less affection and attention than parents of the middle class (147). Keller (124) suggested that there is considerable emotional distance between parents and children as well as stress on the overt, formal aspect of their inter-relationships. She states that children have a world of their own which is of little concern to the parents and that parents are often unaware of their child's activities.

O. Lewis (135) and H. Lewis (134) concluded that very poor parents become resigned to a loss of control over their children after an early age. Parents continue to want respect from their children, as well as help with household tasks, but feel unable to attain these objectives (135). Inability to enforce clear rules of conduct seems to be related in part to the number of children a family has (134). It is known that AFDC families are larger than the national average for families or even the average for families headed by a woman (28). Lower income people and particularly low-income Negroes tend to have larger families and a higher rate of illegitimacy than middle and upper income people. The more children a family has, the more difficult it may be for the parents to control and even to pay attention to them (147).

Problems in the parent-child relationship are related to the other problems in the family. The research of Baruch (10) and Nye (156) finds that marital discord is significantly related to the personal adjustment of the child. Wortis and others (201) who studied 250 lower class Negro women with two and two and one half year old children, and restudied 47 of them when the children were five, draw a picture of extremely disorganized homes, with "permissiveness" to such a degree that it was closer to indifference. They concluded:

The inadequate incomes, crowded homes, lack of consistent families ties, the mother's depression and helplessness in her own situation, were as important as her child-rearing practices in influencing the child's development and preparing him for an adult role.

It was for us a sobering experience to watch a large group of newborn infants, plastic human beings of unknown potential, and observe over a five year period their social preparation to enter the class of the least skilled, least education, and most rejected in our society.

Problems Concerning Attitudes.—The economic and educational deprivations seem to foster characteristic attitudes of suspicion, distrust, fear of the future, and concern with immediate gratifications not found as extensively in the higher classes (124). Ireland and

Besner (117) state that the constant struggles with the problems fostered by living in poverty produces a feeling of estrangement from society. The poor see life as an unpatterned and unpredictable series of events over which they have no control. They are widely convinced that individuals cannot influence the workings of society and doubt the possibility of being able to influence their own lives (124). They are likely to voice such views as "Just live for today and hope the sun will shine tomorrow"; they have a philosophy of "getting by" and living for the present and not worrying about the future (124, 140). They often feel that happiness in life is a matter of luck and they believe they do not have a fair amount of good luck or breaks in life (108).

There are obvious relationships between these problems and economic insecurity, lack of education, and lack of prestige experienced by low-income people (41, 53, 171 187). This finding is especially true of the Negro of low income as he has income problems with which to contend and also problems regarding his place in society (15). The Negro often perceives that he is considered to be inferior by others, and this could have a psychological impact on his personal adjustment to all situations in life (15, 124).

Related Studies of Problems  
of Low Income Families

Glasser and Navarre (86) reported a study of mothers in the AFDC Program; a study undertaken to explore the mother's perceptions of their problems. Some of the results were as follows:

Fifty-eight percent of the problems mentioned involved the need for money, either in general or for specific purposes such as medical care or school clothes. This percentage included the 16 percent of the problems mentioned which were concerned with the mothers' own employment difficulties or those of their husbands, and the 13 percent that were concerned with poor living quarters or the necessity of living with relatives.

One-quarter of all the problems delineated had to do with children. Among the specific difficulties mentioned were dressing children adequately for school, locating a good babysitter, and the effects on a child of living in a crowded home with quarreling relatives. In addition, a good deal of general anxiety about the children's future was expressed, especially in relation to the lack of a father in the home, the mother's inability to give children the things they needed or wanted, and fear of not being

able to rear the children properly.

Somewhat less expected, according to the investigators (86), was the degree of concern about health—the focus of 19 percent of the problems mentioned. Many women expressed worry about specific conditions and the out-of-reach cost of needed medical or dental care. Some mentioned their own and their husband's inability to work because of ill health, and some expressed worry about having nobody to care for their children if they became ill. Four of the women said they had a nervous condition. Women whose husbands were incapacitated saw problems in the effect of the man's illness upon relationships within the family and in their own ability to accept the role of household head and breadwinner.

Few of the respondents said much about marital problems, possibly because of the shortness of the interviews. In general, when marital problems were mentioned they were expressed as hurt over divorce or desertion, hope of reconciliation, or unhappiness over the actions of an estranged husband.

While much anxiety was expressed about specific areas of social functioning, almost one-fourth (23 percent)

of the problems mentioned indicated the existence of a more or less generalized anxiety about the present or the future. Nevertheless, few respondents indicated having plans for alleviating their problems or any idea where they might get help with them.

In Elmtown, Hollingshead (112) found that two out of three parents in the lower social class did not complete elementary school and only a small fraction completed a year or more of high school. In this study of social class in the United States, the husband-wife relationship in the lower-lower class tended to be unstable, with more than half of the families broken by death, desertion, separation or divorce. Quarrels and vicious fights between husband and wife followed by desertion and divorce were not unusual. Marriage occurred in the middle of the teens for girls and the late teens or early twenties for boys. It was estimated that one-fifth to one-fourth of all births in this class were illegitimate. Adolescent boys of the lower lower class usually began sex activity while in their early or middle teens. Members of the lower-lower class took almost no part in organized community activity. Leisure was spent in loafing around the neighborhood, at home or

in various designated places of meeting. Family members usually went their separate ways in search of diversion. Social life consisted of informal visiting of neighbors, gossip, petty gambling, attending motion picture theaters, drinking at home or in taverns and festive Sunday gatherings of relatives. Men associated with men, and women with women except for sexual activity.

A detailed study of the home background of 110 well adjusted and 144 poorly adjusted children was made by Hardy (99). The children were under observation as they progressed from grade three to junior high school. Situations in which the maladjusted children appeared to have had a less favorable home environment than their better adjusted classmates were as follows:

1. A greater number of the portion of the maladjusted children were said to be in relatively poor health, indicating a less healthy and wholesome home atmosphere.

2. A larger proportion of them were from homes that had been broken by divorce, legal separation and desertion, giving evidence of dissension and family unhappiness.



3. A greater number of their mothers were employed outside of the home, tending to reduce the amount of parental care and supervision.

4. A larger proportion of their mothers were under 25 years of age at the time of their birth, suggesting the possibility of less stability and interest in family problems.

5. A wide disparity between the ages of their fathers and mothers was more prevalent, pointing to a lack of congeniality and disagreement in management.

6. A much larger proportion of them had many brothers and sisters, thus opening the way to numerous problems in the complex interactions of the child-members of the family.

In 1960 the Neighborhood Improvement Project (152) of New Haven, Connecticut, conducted an intensive survey of all the households, numbering 300, in a low-income public housing project, in an effort to locate every seriously disorganized family with children under eighteen in the project. The survey preceded the establishment of a treatment program for these multi-problem families. Twenty-five families were found to be clearly multi-problem. This

number is about 8 percent of the families in this particular neighborhood, which is known for its high rates of economic dependency and delinquent behavior. Though it is not known how representative this housing project is of other deteriorated areas, it can safely be said that deprived neighborhoods contain the bulk of multi-problem families in a community.

Willie and Weinandy (198) conducted a study comparing multi-problem families of low income status with other families of similar status to determine if the characteristics of multi-problem families differ significantly from other families. When social status was held constant, the groups were called problem families and stable families.

Housing, neighborhood, and environmental circumstances of life were held constant because of the families' residence in the same public housing project. The problem and stable families were similar in education, occupation, and religion. Approximately 80 percent of the problem and nearly 75 percent of the stable parents had not graduated from high school; median school year completed was 10.2 and 10.7, respectively, for problem and

stable parents.

The rate of unemployment was very high; approximately 30 percent of the men in all families were unemployed. About 35 percent of the problem and slightly less than 25 percent of the stable two-parent families had unemployed fathers. Most of the employed were "blue-collar" workers—nearly 90 percent of the problem and almost 80 percent of the stable fathers. Three-fourths of both problem and stable families earned less than \$4,000 per year.

Although similar in many respects, the stable and problem families were significantly different in family structure. In the families, 78 percent of the stable and 48 percent of the problem families had male heads of household; all families with male heads were two parent families. Consequently, a majority of the problem families were broken, having only one parent,, the mother, present in the home.

About 20 percent of problem family heads had multiple marriages. Slightly less than 10 percent of the stable family heads had married two or more times.

Disintegration occurs most frequently during the first ten years of marriage. Thus, the stable families

have an advantage in that half had been together thirteen or more years while two-thirds of the problem families had been married less than eight years. A majority of the fathers in problem families were under 35 years of age, as compared with one-third of the fathers in stable families. Mothers in problem families tended to be younger.

Although problem families were younger than stable households and had been married fewer years, they nevertheless had produced more children; the average number of children in problem households was 3.9 as compared with 2.7 for stable families. Probably a more important difference was that only one stable household had as many as seven children while six, or 10 percent, of the problem households had eight or more children—the largest family consisting of eleven. Though the median length of marriage was about six years less than the median for stable households, problem families tend to average one child more.

Several women in problem families identified by the housing project manager had out-of-wedlock children.

Hanley (98) administered a modified form of the Family Problems Checklist developed by the Southeastern

Council on Family Relations to 114 low-income Southern teenagers. He found that more boys than girls indicated that their family income was insufficient, and more girls than boys reported that they were unable to talk with their fathers about personal problems and that they wished their families could move to more desirable neighborhoods. Adolescents belonging to families with an older family head-of-the-household more often than those from families with a younger head-of-the-household reported that the head of the family does not have enough education to get a job, and that someone in the family is often nervous and upset. The subjects from broken homes perceived problems regarding lack of time for fun and their mothers' long work hours keeping her away from the home more frequently than did subjects from intact homes. Respondents who had a large number of siblings perceived more family problems than those from small families, and those who lived in small communities reported more family problems than those who lived on farms. The adolescents whose mothers were gainfully employed checked numerous problems related to the mother's absence from the home, lack of family cohesiveness, lack of respect for the parents, and poor communication among

family members.

Clarson (45) administered this same Family Problems Checklist to 130 students from middle-class families and 170 students from lower socio-economic status families. They were Southern white high school seniors. The lower-status teenagers more often perceived interpersonal relationships, the economic situation, working conditions, and housing as problems. Those subjects who had a larger number of brothers and sisters still living at home checked more items as problems than those from families with three or fewer children at home. Teenagers whose family head was older seemed to experience a greater number of family problems than those whose family head was younger.

Hewitt (108) studied a group of 526 white boys and 587 Negro boys from low income families in north Florida. The subjects were in the eighth, ninth, and tenth grades. The purpose of the study was to determine the number and intensity of family problems perceived by these culturally deprived boys and to examine the relationship between these problems and a family adjustment as measured by a phenomenon called "homeyness-homelessness." A modified form of the Family Problems Checklist was used to detect

family problems and homeyness scores were obtained from the Family Adjustment Test developed by Elias.

Hewitt (108) found that these culturally deprived boys perceived a large number of family problems, many of which were primary problems rather than secondary ones, in what they regarded the necessities of life. The types of problems perceived were similar to the types of problems reported by the culturally deprived adolescents studied by Clarson (45) and Hanley (98) who used the same checklist. The problems mainly regarded finances and the standard of living, which is often not as high as the families would like for it to be due to their limited income. According to the homeyness-homelessness norms approximately 20 percent of the white boys and 30 percent of the Negro boys in the study experienced homelessness and tension which had disrupted family bonds. The number of family problems perceived was examined in relation to certain personal and familiar variables. The following were significantly related to the number of family problems perceived: race, the number of siblings, whether or not the home was intact, and the source of family income.

If change agents are to intervene in the vicious cycle of cultural deprivation so that the children of the poor today won't become the impoverished parents of tomorrow, some social intervention is needed to break the cycle. It is most important to gain a penetrating understanding of the underlying attitudes and problems of the low-income population. Much is being done to alleviate poverty in the United States. The Economic Opportunity Program, for which nearly 900 million dollars was authorized in its first year, received nearly doubled authorization in its second year, with further increase in sight (51 ). Additional billions of dollars are flowing to other facets of President Johnson's antipoverty effort - to assist the economic development of Appalachia, to strengthen preschool, elementary, and secondary education for disadvantaged children, to provide health insurance for the aged, to provide public and low-rental housing, to provide more employment opportunities and many other worthwhile programs to aid the poor of our society.



## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURE

The major concerns of this study were (1) to compare similarities and differences in reading and language development between second grade culturally deprived children with and without the experience of Project Head Start, and (2) to compare similarities and differences of family backgrounds and family problems in the home life of these children.

A standardized achievement test was used as the measuring instrument in testing the children. A comparison was then made of the various scores of the two groups.

A family problems checklist and a background information sheet with added questions concerning Project Head Start was administered to the parents of these children. Comparisons were made of the answers given by the two groups of parents.

### Subjects

The subjects of this study were two groups of 22 second grade children of Thirty-Second Avenue Elementary School in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The same children who were tested at the end of the first grade in reading and language development by Ann C. Stapp (183) were retested at the end of the second grade for this study. These children were originally selected as eligible to attend the summer Head Start Program in Tuscaloosa, Alabama because the yearly income of their families was \$1500 or less. Only 44 of the original group were still living in Tuscaloosa County at the time of the retesting; 22 who had attended the eight week Head Start program in summer 1965 and 22 who had not attended but were eligible to attend. The parents of these children, all of whom lived in the Tuscaloosa area, were interviewed.

### The Instruments

The instrument used to assess reading and language achievement was the California Achievement Test, Lower Primary Battery, Form W, Reading and Language sections.

The California Achievement Test was developed by Ernest W. Tiegs, Ph.D., Minnesota, and Willis W. Clark

Ed.D, Southern California. The test has been widely used since 1937 and has been revised several times in order to keep the instrument up to date.

The California Achievement Tests, Lower Primary Battery, are a series of comprehensive tests designed for the three-fold purpose of facilitating evaluation, educational measurement, and diagnosis. The test has been so designed that it may be used by teachers with a minimum of formal training in standardized testing and in diagnostic procedures as well as by specialists in the field.

The series is composed of reliable and valid tests of skills and understandings in reading and language (188). It was for this reason this particular test was selected as it reflected achievement in two areas upon which this study concentrates, reading and language. Grade placement scores, percentile ranks, and national norms can be obtained from the manual accompanying the test.

The Reading and Language tests are divided into two parts each: the Reading Test consists of Reading Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension; the Language Test consists of Mechanics of English and Spelling.

The Reading Vocabulary Test consists of four sections: Word Form, Word Recognition, Meaning of Opposites, and Picture Association. The Reading Comprehension Test is not divided into sections, but covers two areas, "following directions" and "interpretation of material." The two areas are presented in the form of one fifteen-item test. The Mechanics of English test is also divided into sections: Capitalization, Punctuation, and Word Usage. These three sections sample thirteen different elements of the mechanics of English. In the Spelling test there are twenty words. These words were carefully selected and scaled in order of difficulty. Spelling is included as a part of language because of its use as a means of written expression.

The instrument used to analyze family problems and background factors was a checklist consisting of 100 items concerning family problems and a background information form, developed by a Research Committee of the Southeastern Council on Family Relations in 1963. The Research Committee of the Southeastern Council on Family Relations designed the instrument entitled "Problems of Low Income Southern Families" in order that many southern states could participate in a common research problem. The

instrument is quite general in nature and affords opportunities for many varied kinds of analyses. The instrument was designed on the assumption that greater understanding is needed concerning the problems of low-income families living in the Southeastern region of the United States. Obtaining information concerning areas of family life in which members of low income perceive they have difficulty is valuable, as an understanding of relevant symptoms is an important first step in the alleviation of distress.

The focus of the instrument is on families whose total gross family income does not exceed \$3,000 a year. The families must have at least one child living at home and the family members must have lived together for a period of one year.

The instrument consisted of a background information form and of 100 items in checklist form to be used with adults in detecting problem areas in their families. It was for this reason this particular instrument was selected.

At the end of the family problems checklist, the investigator added three questions concerning project Head Start. The purpose of these questions was to learn

why the child in question did or did not attend Project Head Start, if the parent thought it had helped the child to attend and in what ways, and if the parent would send another child to Head Start.

### Administration and Analysis

California Achievement Test.--After the California Achievement Test was selected, permission was obtained from the school to proceed with testing. The assistance and cooperation of the principal and the second grade teachers were very important in obtaining the data for the investigation.

The testing was done in the last three weeks of the 1966-1967 school year. The investigator went to the school and tested the children. A small group of children was tested first in order for the examiner to gain experience in administering the test and that problems and difficulties likely to arise might be anticipated. No difficulties arose and the actual testing situation for the study was subsequently set up.

The subjects were tested in groups of from six to fifteen children, according to directions in the test manual. The subjects were introduced to the investigator

in their classroom and were instructed to accompany the investigator to the testing room. Rapport was established with the subjects in the testing room and the test was introduced as "some games to play to see how well you can read," as suggested by the testing manual. Instructions were given as to what to do if a pencil broke and what to do if a part of the test was completed before the time allowed or not completed in the time allowed. The directions for each subtest were read slowly and carefully to the children and explained very simply. The children were instructed to raise their hands if they needed to ask any questions or did not understand something. The test was started and time limits were observed. After the test was started, if a question was asked, it was answered as adequately as possible without giving any actual help on the test.

The response of the children to the testing situation was excellent. They seemed to enjoy taking the test and appeared to think of it as a series of games.

After the testing was completed, the raw scores were obtained for each test according to directions in

the test manual. From the raw scores the grade placement scores and percentile ranks were derived, using the national norms tables in the manual accompanying the California Achievement Test.

Grade placement scores of the major divisions of the test, Reading Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, Total Reading, Mechanics of English, Spelling, and Total Language, were listed in rank order for each subject in each group. The highest, lowest, and median scores were noted for all children in the two groups.

The number of subjects in each group scoring above, at, or below the actual grade placement on every division of the test was tabulated.

The percentile scores for each subject in each group on the major divisions of the test were listed in rank order. The highest, lowest, and median scores were noted.

Comparisons were made between the two groups on all scores. Any differences between the groups were noted.

Family Problems Checklist.--A letter of introduction was sent to the families in the study, introducing the investigator and describing the project. The letter



explained that in order to complete the study, the investigator would like to call in the home. It was stressed that the parent's help and assistance in this study would be greatly appreciated.

The instrument was pre-tested using several families not involved in the study for the practice of the investigator.

Visits were made to the forty-four families included in the study during the last two weeks of October and first two weeks of November 1967. Several families had moved their residence but were located.

Rapport was established by the investigator upon entering the home. The questionnaire was read by the investigator to the mother of the family. The mother was asked to give the background information called for on the sheets and to respond to each statement of the checklist by answering "yes," if the statement was definitely a problem in their family; "somewhat," if it was sometimes a problem in their family; and "no," if it was not a problem in their family. The questions concerning Head Start were also answered.

The families were extremely cooperative with the

entire project and answered the questions freely. The length of the visit varied as there was casual conversation with the families as well as questioning. The mothers in the families seemed to enjoy the visit very much and also answering the questions. This was very helpful to the investigator.

Upon completing the visits, the investigator divided answered questionnaires into two groups: Group 1 -- questionnaires answered by mothers of children who attended project Head Start and Group 2 -- questionnaires answered by mothers of children who did not attend Head Start.

Background information of the two groups was compared on the basis of marital status, ages of both parents, number of children and average number of children per family, level of education of both parents, average family income and source of income, and both parent's occupational level. Answers that the mothers gave to the questions "What are some things in life that bother you most" and "What are some things in life that you are happy about" were listed and compared.

Questions from the family problems checklist were grouped into eight categories -- Income Problems, Employment, Occupational, and Education Problems, Home Problems,

Health Problems, Family Problems, Marital Problems, Problems concerning Children and the Parent-Child Relationship, and Problems concerning Attitudes and Opinions.

Comparisons between the families of Head Start children and families of Non Head Start children were made according to the responses to the questions. Answers given to the questions concerning Project Head Start were recorded and compared.

## CHAPTER IV

### DATA AND DISCUSSION

#### Reading And Language Development

Part one of this study comparing reading and language achievement of second grade culturally deprived children dealt with twenty-two children who were enrolled in the 1965 summer project Head Start program and twenty-two children who were eligible but were not enrolled in the program. The California Achievement Test was used in assessing reading and language achievement. It contained five subtests in the area of reading and four subtests in the area of language. Grade placement scores and percentile ranks were derived from the raw scores on each child's test, according to the national norms tables in the test manual (188).

Some tests could not be scored. If a child marked three or more responses to any one question, the section was considered unscorable. If on any section of the test, a child made no attempt to answer any of the

questions, that section was also considered unscorable.

### Grade Placement

The actual grade placement of the children in this study was 2.8 since they had completed the eighth month of the second grade. From the norms tables in the test manual, grade placement scores were derived from the raw scores for each test. A score below 2.8 meant that the child was achieving below actual grade placement. The grade placement scores of the children in each group were listed in rank order. The highest, lowest, and median scores were noted.

### Reading

Reading Vocabulary.--On the Reading Vocabulary test one child scored at actual grade placement, 2.8, and this was a member of the Head Start group. For the Non Head Start group the highest score was 2.4. The lowest score for the Head Start group was 1.2 while for the Non Head Start group the lowest score was 1.0. The median score was higher for the Head Start group at 1.8 than for the Non Head Start group at 1.3. In the Non Head Start group the test of one subject was unscorable.

Reading Comprehension.--For this test the highest grade placement score was 2.8 which was made by two members of the Head Start group. The highest score for the Non Head Start group was 2.1. The Head Start group had a higher median score, 1.8, while the Non Head Start group's median grade placement score was 1.5. The lowest grade placement score for both groups was .9. In Reading Comprehension the tests for three subjects in the Head Start group were unscorable. In the Non Head Start group, the tests of nine subjects were unscorable.

Total Reading.--On the Total Reading test one subject scored above grade placement, 2.9, and one subject scored at grade placement, 2.8. Both were members of the Head Start group. The highest grade placement score for the Non Head Start group was 2.1. The lowest grade placement score for the Head Start group was 1.4, while for the Non Head Start group it was 1.3. In the Head Start group, the median score was higher, 1.9, than for the Non Head Start group, 1.5. The tests of three subjects in the Head Start group were unscorable for the Total Reading Test. In the Non Head Start group, the tests of ten subjects were unscorable. The grade placement scores

for both the Head Start and Non Head Start groups in Reading Achievement are shown in Table 1.

### Language

Mechanics of English.--On the Mechanics of English test, the highest score for the Head Start group was 2.4. No child in the total group of forty-four children scored at actual grade placement. The lowest score for the Head Start group was 1.5 while for the Non Head Start group the lowest grade placement score was 1.0. The median score for the Head Start group was 2.0 which was greater than the median score of 1.5 for the Non Head Start group. In the Non Head Start group the test of one subject was unscorable.

Spelling.--In the Head Start group on the Spelling Test, the highest grade placement score was 3.4. Three children in this group made this score. One child in the Non Head Start group scored above grade placement, 2.9. The lowest score for both groups was .0. In the Head Start group the median score was 2.3 which was much higher than the median score of 1.5 for the Non Head Start group.

Total Language.--On the Total Language Section, for the Head Start group, the highest grade placement score was

TABLE 1

GRADE PLACEMENT SCORES ON THE CALIFORNIA ACHIEVEMENT TEST

-- READING PORTION --

Highest, Lowest, and Median Scores

Test Section	Head Start Group			Non Head Start Group		
	Grade Placement Score	Highest Score	Lowest Score	Grade Placement Score	Highest Score	Lowest Score
Reading Vocabulary	2.8	1.2	1.8	2.4	1.0	1.3
Reading Comprehension	2.8	.9	1.8	2.1	.9	1.5
Total Reading	2.9	1.4	1.9	2.1	1.3	1.5



2.9. The highest score in the Non Head Start sample was 2.6. The lowest grade placement score for the Head Start children was 1.5. The lowest score in the Non Head Start group was 1.1. The median score of 2.0 was higher in the Head Start group than the score of 1.5 in the Non Head Start group. In the Non Head Start group the test of one subject was unscorable. The grade placement scores for both the Head Start and Non Head Start groups in Total Language Achievement are shown in Table 2.

Subjects Above, At, And Below  
Actual Grade Placement

Grade placement for each subtest was taken from the profile sheet on the back of each test booklet.

Reading

Word Form.--In the group of forty-four children, five scored above actual grade placement on this test. They were all from the Head Start group. Four children in the Head Start group scored at actual grade placement, and thirteen scored below actual grade placement. In the Non Head Start group none scored above actual grade placement, four scored at actual grade placement, and eighteen scored below actual grade placement.

TABLE 2

GRADE PLACEMENT SCORES ON THE CALIFORNIA ACHIEVEMENT TEST

-- LANGUAGE PORTION --

Highest, Lowest, and Median Scores

Test Section	Head Start Group			Non Head Start Group		
	Grade Placement Score			Grade Placement Score		
	Highest Score	Lowest Score	Median Score	Highest Score	Lowest Score	Median Score
Mechanics of English	2.7	1.5	2.0	2.4	1.0	1.5
Spelling	3.4	.0	2.3	2.9	.0	1.5
Total Language	2.9	1.5	2.0	2.6	1.1	1.5

Word Recognition.--In the Head Start group, one subject scored above actual grade placement, none scored at actual grade placement, and twenty-one scored below grade placement. In the Non Head Start group, all twenty-two children scored below actual grade placement. On this test only one subject of the forty-four tested scored above actual grade placement; this was a member of the Head Start group.

Meaning of Opposites.--On this test, three subjects in the Head Start group scored above actual grade placement, none scored at actual grade placement, and nineteen scored below actual grade placement. In the Non Head Start group, none scored above actual grade placement, none scored at actual grade placement; all twenty-two scored below actual grade placement. While no child in the group of forty-four children scored at actual grade placement on this test, three children scored above grade placement. They all were in the Head Start group.

Picture Association.--Of the group of forty-four children, one subject scored above actual grade placement on the Picture Association test. This was a member of the Head Start group. No subjects in the Head Start group scored at actual grade point and twenty-one scored below actual grade placement. In the Non Head Start group all twenty-two subjects scored below actual grade placement.

Total Reading Vocabulary.--In the Head Start group, none scored above actual grade placement, one scored at actual grade placement, and twenty-one scored below actual grade placement. In the Non Head Start group all twenty-two scored below actual grade placement.

Reading Comprehension.--In the Head Start group, none scored above actual grade placement, two scored at actual grade placement and twenty scored below actual grade placement. In the Non Head Start group all twenty-two subjects scored below actual grade placement.

Total Reading.--On the Total Reading Test, one

subject scored above actual grade placement. This was a member of the Head Start group. One, in the Head Start group, scored at actual grade placement. In the Non Head Start group, again all twenty-two subjects scored below actual grade placement. The number of subjects in each group who scored above, at, and below actual grade placement in Reading Achievement is shown in Table 3.

#### Language

Capitalization.--In the Head Start group, two subjects scored above actual grade placement, two scored at actual grade placement, and eighteen scored below actual grade placement. In the Non Head Start group none scored above actual grade placement, none scored at actual grade placement; all twenty-two subjects scored below actual grade placement.

Punctuation.--In the Head Start group, one subject on this test scored above actual grade placement, one scored at actual grade placement, and twenty scored below actual grade placement. In the Non Head Start group, again all twenty-two subjects scored below actual grade placement.

Word Usage Test.--In the Head Start group, four subjects scored above actual grade placement, none scored

TABLE 3  
 SUBJECTS ABOVE, AT, AND BELOW ACTUAL GRADE PLACEMENT  
 ON THE CALIFORNIA ACHIEVEMENT TEST

-- READING PORTION --

Test Section	Num-ber In Group	Head Start Group			Num-ber In Group	Non Head Start Group		
		Subjects Above Actual Grade Placement	Subjects At Actual Grade Placement	Subjects Below Actual Grade Placement		Subjects Above Actual Grade Placement	Subjects At Actual Grade Placement	Subjects Below Actual Grade Placement
Word Form	22	5	4	13	22	0	4	18
Word Recognition	22	1	0	21	22	0	0	22
Meaning of Opposites	22	3	0	19	22	0	0	22
Picture Association	22	1	0	21	22	0	0	22
Total Reading Vocabulary	22	0	1	21	22	0	0	22
Reading Comprehension	22	0	2	20	22	0	0	22
Total Reading	22	1	1	20	22	0	0	22

at actual grade placement, and eighteen scored below actual grade placement. In the Non Head Start group, one subject scored above actual grade placement, none scored at actual grade placement, and twenty-one scored below actual grade placement.

Total Mechanics of English.--In the Head Start group, on this test, none scored above actual grade placement, none scored at actual grade placement, and all twenty-two subjects scored below actual grade placement. The same was true for the Non Head Start group. This test seemed to be the one on which the greatest number of children had difficulty. All forty-four subjects scored below actual grade placement, however, the Head Start group had higher scores than the Non Head Start group.

Spelling.--In the Head Start group, four subjects scored above actual grade placement, none scored at actual grade placement, and eighteen scored below actual grade placement. In the Non Head Start group one scored above actual grade placement, none scored at actual grade placement, and twenty-one scored below actual grade placement.

Total Language.--On the Total Language Test, one subject scored above actual grade placement. This child

was in the Head Start group. None in the Head Start group scored at actual grade placement, and twenty-one scored below actual grade placement. In the Non Head Start group none scored above or at grade placement and all twenty-two subjects scored below actual grade placement. The number of subjects in each group who scored above, at, and below actual grade placement on all sections of the Language Achievement Test is shown in Table 4.

#### Percentile Rank

The percentile ranks for the Reading and Language Sections of the test were derived from the raw scores on the major divisions in each test. The scores were listed in rank order and the highest, lowest, and median scores were noted for each group on each test. The percentile ranks for the minor test divisions were not obtainable from the norms tables in the test manual.

#### Reading Achievement

Reading Vocabulary.--In Reading Vocabulary the highest rank in the Head Start group was fifty-four. The lowest rank for this group was the first percentile, with the median rank being the eighth percentile. In the Non



TABLE 4

SUBJECTS ABOVE, AT, AND BELOW ACTUAL GRADE PLACEMENT  
ON THE CALIFORNIA ACHIEVEMENT TEST

-- LANGUAGE PORTION --

Test Section	Head Start Group					Non Head Start Group				
	Num- ber In Group	Subjects Above Actual Grade Place- ment	Subjects At Actual Grade Place- ment	Subjects Below Actual Grade Place- ment	Num- ber In Group	Subjects Above Actual Grade Place- ment	Subjects At Actual Grade Place- ment	Subjects Below Actual Grade Place- ment		
Capitalization	22	2	2	18	22	0	0	22		
Punctuation	22	1	1	20	22	0	0	22		
Word Usage	22	4	0	18	22	1	0	21		
Total										
Mechanics of English	22	0	0	22	22	0	0	22		
Spelling	22	4	0	18	22	1	0	21		
Total Language	22	1	0	21	22	0	0	22		

Head Start group the highest percentile rank was twenty-one. The lowest rank in this group was also the first percentile. The median rank was lower for this group, being the first percentile. In the Non Head Start group, the test of one subject was unscorable.

Reading Comprehension.--In the Head Start group, on this test, the highest percentile rank was fifty-four. The lowest rank was the first percentile, with the median rank being the eighth percentile. For the Non Head Start group the highest percentile rank was twenty-one, with the lowest rank and median rank being the first percentile. In this test, for the Non Head Start group, the tests of three subjects were unscorable. For the Non Head Start group, nine tests were unscorable.

Total Reading.--The highest percentile rank represented in the Head Start group for the Reading section was the fifty-eighth percentile, with one subject in that category. The lowest rank represented for this group was the first percentile, with four subjects in that category. The median rank for this group was the tenth percentile. In the Non Head Start group the highest percentile was the eighteenth, with one subject in that category. The lowest percentile rank

represented was the first percentile with seven subjects scoring in this category. The median percentile rank for this group was the first percentile.

In this test, the tests for three members of the Head Start group were unscorable, while for the Non Head Start group ten tests were unscorable. The percentile ranks for the Reading section are shown in Table 5.

#### Language Achievement

Mechanics of English.--On this test the highest percentile rank in the Head Start group was fifty. The lowest rank in this group was the first percentile, with the median rank being the eighth percentile. In the Non Head Start group the highest percentile rank was thirty-four, with the lowest and median rank falling in the first percentile. The test of one Non Head Start subject was unscorable.

Spelling.--The highest percentile rank of all was in the Spelling test. Three children in the Head Start group had the highest percentile rank, eighty-eight. The lowest rank in this group was the first percentile and the median rank was the twenty-seventh percentile. The highest rank in the Non Head Start group was sixty-two.

TABLE 5

PERCENTILE RANKS ON THE CALIFORNIA ACHIEVEMENT TEST

-- READING PORTION --

Highest, Lowest and Median Ranks

Test Sections	Head Start Group Percentile Ranks			Non Head Start Group Percentile Ranks		
	Highest Ranks	Lowest Ranks	Median Ranks	Highest Ranks	Lowest Ranks	Median Ranks
Reading Vocabulary	54	1	8	21	1	1
Reading Comprehension	54	1	8	21	1	1
Total Reading	58	1	10	18	1	1

The lowest and median ranks were in the first percentile.

Total Language.--The highest percentile rank represented for the Head Start group on the Total Language test was sixty-two. One subject scored at this level. Five subjects in the Head Start group scored in the lowest rank, which was the first percentile. The median rank was ten. For the Non Head Start group, the highest percentile rank was forty-two, with one subject scoring in this category. Seventeen subjects in the Non Head Start group scored in the lowest rank represented, which was the first percentile. The median rank for this group was also the first percentile. The Total Language test was unscorable for one subject in the Non Head Start group. The range in percentile rankings was greater and the scores were higher for the Head Start group. These scores are shown in Table 6.

Both groups as a whole seemed to do slightly better on the Language portion of the test than on the Reading portion. The range of group placement scores was higher in both groups in the Language portion; there were fewer unscorable tests, and the percentile ranks were higher than for the Reading portion of the test. In all

TABLE 6

PERCENTILE RANKS ON THE CALIFORNIA ACHIEVEMENT TEST

-- LANGUAGE PORTION --

Highest, Lowest and Median Ranks

Test Sections	Head Start Group Percentile Ranks			Non Head Start Group Percentile Ranks		
	Highest Ranks	Lowest Ranks	Median Ranks	Highest Ranks	Lowest Ranks	Median Ranks
Mechanics of English	50	1	8	34	1	1
Spelling	88	1	27	62	1	1
Total Language	62	1	10	42	1	1

the Reading and Language tests, grade placements and percentiles were higher for the Head Start group than for the Non Head Start group. In Total Reading and Language the entire Non Head Start group scored below grade placement. In the Head Start group two scored above actual grade placement, one scored at actual grade placement, and forty-one scored below actual grade placement.

#### Family Background And Problems

Part two of the present investigation compares the family background and family problems in the families of the children studied. Problems of parents of the Head Start children were compared to those of the parents of the Non Head Start children.

#### Description of Families

All the families included in the study lived in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, a community of about 60,000 population. The families lived mostly in an apartment complex or in houses near their children's school in a Negro section of town. All the parents in the study were born in Alabama; half of all the parents were born in Tuscaloosa County. The others were born mostly in counties

surrounding Tuscaloosa.

Marital Status.--The number of married parents was slightly higher among parents of Head Start children. There were slightly fewer divorces and separations and more widows among the parents of the Head Start children. Single parents were noted among Non Head Start families.

Of the twenty-two families with Head Start children, fourteen parents were married and living together, whereas in the twenty-two families of Non Head Start children only ten parents were married and living together. One family of the Head Start children was separated by divorce and four families of the Non Head Start children were divorced. In the families of the Head Start children, two mothers were separated from their husbands; one because the husband was in a mental hospital. In the families of the Non Head Start children, three mothers were separated from their husbands. Of the mothers of the Head Start children, five were widowed as compared to three mothers in the Non Head Start group who were widowed. No women in the Head Start group said they were single, while two women in the families of Non Head Start children said they were single. These findings tend to be in agreement



with most of the research indicating a high proportion of separation and divorce among low-income families. Table 7 shows the marital status of the families studied.

TABLE 7

## MARITAL STATUS OF FAMILIES

Situation	Number of Parents of Head Start Children	Number of Parents of Non Head Start Children
Married	14	10
Divorced	1	4
Separated	2	3
Widowed	5	3
Single	0	2
Total Number of Parents	22	22

Age.---The average ages of parents of Non Head Start children were found to be slightly higher than the ages of Head Start parents. The youngest mother of a Head Start child was 25; the youngest mother of a Non Head Start child was 31. The average age of the mothers of Head Start children was 36 and the average age of mothers of Non Head Start children was 37-1/2. The oldest mother of a Head Start child was 49, as was also the age of the oldest mother of a Non Head Start child.

The youngest father of a Head Start child was 28; the youngest father of a Non Head Start child was 37. The average age of the fathers of Head Start children was 38 and the average age of the fathers of Non Head Start children was 42. The oldest father of a Head Start child was 49 whereas the oldest father of a Non Head Start child was 50.

TABLE 8

## AGE OF PARENTS

	Parents of Head Start Children	Parents of Non Head Start Children
Youngest Mother	25	31
Average Age of All	36	37 1/2
Oldest Mother	49	49
Youngest Father	28	37
Average Age of All	38	42
Oldest Father	49	50

Children.--There were more children in the families of the Non Head Start children than in the families of Head Start children. There was a total number of 118 children in the families who had a child to attend Head Start and a total of 130 children in the families who had no children to attend Head Start. The largest number of children in a

family with a Head Start child was eight whereas the largest number of children in a family where no children attended Head Start was eleven. The average number of children per Head Start family was 5.4 and was 5.8 for the Non Head Start families. The smallest number of children in the Head Start families was three whereas in the Non Head Start families, the smallest number of children in a family was two.

TABLE 9

## NUMBER OF CHILDREN

Children	Number in Families of Head Start Children	Number in Families of Non Head Start Children
Largest Number in a Family	8	11
Smallest Number in a Family	3	2
Average Number Per Family	5.4	5.8
Total Number	118	130

Amount of Annual Family Income.---The highest annual income in the families of Head Start and Non Head Start children was \$3,100 at the time of this study. The average annual income per family in the families of Head Start

children was \$2,850, whereas the average annual income per family in the families of Non Head Start children was \$2,098. The lowest income in the families of Head Start children was \$840 annually and in the families of Non Head Start children, the lowest income was \$912 annually. As a whole the incomes of the families of Head Start children were higher.

TABLE 10

## ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME

Amount of Income	Parents of Head Start Children	Parents of Non Head Start Children
Highest	\$3,100	\$3,100
Average	\$2,850	\$2,098
Lowest	\$ 840	\$ 912

Main Source of Income.--The main source of income for all the families was from hourly wages or weekly checks. Several families received income from more than one source, for example, some received social security and welfare. There were sixteen families receiving hourly wages or weekly checks among the families of Head Start children and thirteen families receiving hourly wages or weekly checks in the families of Non Head Start children. Salary on a

monthly basis was the main source of income for two families of Head Start children and one family of Non Head Start children. Social Security was the main source of income for three families of Head Start children and of three families of Non Head Start children. Total relief was the main source of income for one family of a Head Start child and of five families with no children who attended Head Start.

TABLE 11

## MAIN SOURCE OF FAMILY INCOME

Main Source	Number of Parents of Head Start Children	Number of Parents of Non Head Start Children
Hourly Wages, Weekly Checks	16	13
Monthly Basis	2	1
Social Security	3	3
Total Relief	1	5

Education of Parents.--Most of the mothers of Head Start children had from 9 through 12 years of schooling. Most of the mothers of the Non Head Start children had from eight through eleven years of schooling, the average years of schooling being higher for the mothers of Head Start children. In a breakdown of grades completed by

mothers of Head Start children, one mother had never attended school, one mother had completed grades 5-7, two had completed grade eight, eight mothers had completed grades 9-11, seven mothers had completed grade twelve or had graduated. Three mothers of Head Start children had attended from 1-3 years of college but there were no college graduates. The breakdown of grades completed by mothers of Non Head Start children were as follows: One mother completed grades 1-4, five mothers completed grades 5-7, six mothers completed grade eight, six mothers completed grades 9-11, four mothers completed grade twelve or had graduated. No mothers had attended any college.

TABLE 12

## EDUCATION OF MOTHERS

Grades Completed	Number of Mothers of Head Start Children	Number of Mothers of Non Head Start Children
None	1	0
1-4	0	1
5-7	1	5
8	2	6
9-11	8	6
12 or High School Graduate	7	4
1-3 Years College	3	0
College Graduate	0	0

The fathers of the Head Start children had more education than the fathers of the Non Head Start children. There were fourteen fathers present in the homes of the Head Start children and ten fathers in the homes of the Non Head Start children. In a breakdown by grades completed of the fathers of Head Start children, one father had completed grades 1-4, one completed grades 5-7, three fathers completed grade eight, four fathers completed grades 9-11, three fathers completed grade twelve or had graduated. One father had attended two years of trade school and one father was a college graduate. For the fathers with Non Head Start children, four fathers completed grades 5-7, three completed grade eight, three completed grades 9-11. There were none who had completed grade 12 or had graduated from college or trade school.

TABLE 13

## EDUCATION OF FATHERS

Grades Completed	Number of Fathers of Head Start Children	Number of Fathers of Non Head Start Children
None	0	0
1-4	1	0
5-7	1	4
8	3	3
9-11	4	3
12 or High School Graduate	3	0

TABLE 13--Continued

Grades Completed	Number of Fathers of Head Start Children	Number of Fathers of Non Head Start Children
1-3 Years College or Trade School	1	0
College Graduate	1	0

Occupational Level of Parents.--The occupational levels of the mothers made up six categories. Of the mothers of Head Start children two mothers were in the professional field, one of these only part time as a substitute teacher. Five of the mothers worked as domestics in private homes, three worked as cashiers or waitresses, three worked as laborers (such as laundry worker) and nine mothers were unemployed. Of the mothers of Non Head Start children, there were no professionals, eight domestics, two of whom only worked part-time. There were three laborers, one mother did home sewing, and ten mothers were unemployed.



TABLE 14  
MOTHERS' OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL

Occupation	Number of Mothers' of Head Start Children	Number of Mothers' of Non Head Start Children
Professional	2 <sup>a</sup>	0
Domestic	5	8 <sup>b</sup>
Cashier/Waitress	3	0
Laborer	3	3
Home Sewing	0	1
Unemployed	9	10

<sup>a</sup>One only part-time.

<sup>b</sup>Two only part-time.

The occupational levels of the fathers made up five categories. Of the fourteen fathers of Head Start children, one father was a teacher, eight were laborers, three were bus or truck drivers, one was a janitor, and one was a bartender. Of the ten fathers of Non Head Start children none were teachers, eight were laborers, and two were janitors. None of the fathers in either group was unemployed.

TABLE 15  
FATHERS' OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL

Occupation	Number of Fathers of Head Start Children	Number of Fathers of Non Head Start Children
Teacher	1	0
Laborer	8	8
Truck or Bus Driver	3	0
Janitor	1	2
Bartender	1	0
Unemployed	0	0

Things That Bothered the Mothers Most.---The answers the mothers gave to the question "What are some things that bother you most" were classified into eight categories.

(1) Unemployment was stated as a problem by three mothers of Head Start children and no mothers of Non Head Start children; (2) Not enough money to pay bills and buy things the family needs was stated as a problem by nine mothers in both groups; (3) Not enough time to spend with the family was stated as a problem of one mother of a Head Start child; (4) Nervousness was stated as a problem by two mothers of Head Start children and by four mothers of Non Head Start children; (5) Sickness in the family was stated as a problem by one mother of a Head Start child and four mothers of Non

Head Start children; (6) Family problems bothered one mother of a Head Start child; (7) The children bothered one mother of a Head Start child and two mothers of Non Head Start children; (8) Nothing bothered four mothers of Head Start children and three mothers on Non Head Start children.

TABLE 16

## THINGS THAT BOTHERED THE MOTHERS MOST

Items	Number of Mothers of Head Start Children	Number of Mothers of Non Head Start Children
Unemployment	3	0
Not Enough Money to Pay Bills and Buy Things Family Needs	9	9
Not Enough Time to Spend With Family	1	0
Nervousness	2	4
Sickness in Family	1	4
Family Problems	1	0
Children	1	2
Nothing	4	3

Things That Mothers Were Happy About.---The answers the mothers gave to the question "What are some things that you are happy about" were classified into seven categories. Mothers often gave more than one response and all were noted. (1) Good health was mentioned by eight mothers of

Head Start children and seven mothers of Non Head Start children; (2) Good home was mentioned by four mothers of Head Start children and two mothers of Non Head Start children; (3) Family was mentioned by thirteen mothers of Head Start children and eight mothers of Non Head Start children; (4) Managing in getting children through school was mentioned by three mothers of Head Start children and one mother of a Non Head Start child; (5) Husband being a good provider was mentioned by two mothers of Head Start children; (6) Job was mentioned by two mothers of Head Start children and two mothers of Non Head Start children; (7) Nothing especially made one mother of a Head Start child happy and four mothers of Non Head Start children.

TABLE 17

## THINGS THE MOTHERS WERE HAPPY ABOUT

Items	Number of Mothers of Head Start Children	Number of Mothers of Non Head Start Children
Good Health	8	7
Good Home	4	2
Family	13	8
Managing in Getting Children Through School	3	1
Husband Being Good Provider	2	0
Job	2	2
Nothing	1	4

Family Problems Checklist

The family problems checklist of 100 problems was divided into eight categories. The checklist was used to see what the mother of the family perceived as their family problems.

Income Problems.--Both groups of mothers perceived more problems concerning income than in any other single category. Mothers of the Non Head Start children marked considerably more income problems than did the mothers of the Head Start children. More mothers of the Head Start children indicated that income problems were "somewhat" of a problem to them.

Mothers of the Non Head Start children marked more frequently the problems "Making income stretch to pay bills" and "Not enough money for recreation." All the twenty-two mothers marked this problem. Mothers of children in the Head Start group marked most frequently the problems "Present income is not adequate; too low to allow for the things we need" and "Making income stretch to pay bills."

The statement with the greatest difference in responses to income problems was the statement "Not enough money to pay bills." Less than half the mothers of the Head Start children marked this as a problem, while all the

mothers of the Non Head Start children marked the problem.

The number of responses to each income statement is shown on Table 18.

Employment, Occupation and Educational Problems.--

Mothers of the Non Head Start children indicated more problems concerning employment, occupation and education than did the mothers of the Head Start children. More mothers of the Head Start children indicated that employment, occupation and education were "somewhat" of a problem in their families. The most frequently marked problems by the mothers of the Head Start children were "Unemployment," "Little or No Prospect for Occupational Advancement of the Wage Earner," and "Work too Hard." The problem "Lack of Transportation to Work" was marked most frequently by the mothers of the Non Head Start children.

There were no notable differences in responses between the two groups on any particular question. The answers were somewhat similar.

The number of responses to each of the statements concerning employment, occupation and education is shown on Table 19.

Home Conditions and Problems.--Mothers of the Non

TABLE 18

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RESPONDENTS CONCERNING INCOME PROBLEMS

Problems	Number of Families							
	No Problem		Somewhat		Yes Definitely			
	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start
Present Income Not Adequate; too Low to Allow For The Things We Need	0	0	7	3	15	19		
Making Income Stretch to Pay Bills	1	0	6	0	15	22		
Not Enough Money For Recreation	6	0	6	0	10	22		
Difficult to Pay Doctor or Dentist Bills	10	6	4	0	8	16		
Paying Bills on Time	7	3	5	2	10	17		
Going Too Far in Debt	14	11	5	5	3	6		
Cost of School, Text-books, School Lunches, etc.	8	2	4	4	10	16		
Taxes Too High	5	4	5	0	12	18		
Total Responses to Problems	51	26	42	14	83	126		

TABLE 19

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RESPONDENTS CONCERNING EMPLOYMENT,  
OCCUPATION, AND EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS

Problems	Number of Families							
	No Problem		Somewhat		Yes Definitely			
	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start
Unemployment	14	16	4	1	4	4	5	
Seasonal Employment	19	16	0	0	3	6		
Your Amount of Education or Training For Your Job	9	12	2	0	2	0		
Lack of Transportation to Work	19	13	0	0	3	9		
Lack of Knowledge of How Best to Spend Income	19	20	2	2	1	0		
Lack of Skill in Wage- Earners Trade	21	22	0	0	1	0		
Little or No Prospect for Occupational Advancement of Wage Earner	16	15	2	5	4	2		
Work Hours Keeping Family Split Up	15	20	4	0	3	2		132
Husband Working in Another Geographic Area, or In Service	14	10	0	0	0	0		



TABLE 19--Continued

Problems	Number of Families							
	No Problem		Somewhat		Yes Definitely			
	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start
Getting Along With Employer	22	20	0	0	0	0	0	2
Work Too Hard	15	14	3	2	4	6	4	6
Total Responses to Problems	183	178	17	10	25	32	10	32

Head Start children indicated many more problems concerning home conditions than did the mothers of the Head Start children. More mothers of the Head Start children indicated that home conditions were "somewhat" of a problem in their families.

The most frequently marked problem of the mothers of Head Start children was the statement "Need better housing," but only slightly over one-fourth of the mothers marked this. The statement "Need better or more furniture" was marked more frequently by the mothers of the Non Head Start children. This problem also showed the largest difference in responses concerning home conditions. Very few mothers with Head Start children indicated this as a problem while a majority of the mothers of Non Head Start children perceived this as a problem.

Table 20 shows the number of responses to each question concerning home problems by both groups of mothers.

Health Problems.--The mothers of the Non Head Start children perceived more than twice as many problems concerning health. More mothers of the Head Start children indicated that items concerning health were "somewhat" a problem. The most frequently marked problem of the mothers

TABLE 20

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RESPONDENTS CONCERNING HOME CONDITIONS

Problems	Number of Families							
	No Problem		Somewhat		Yes Definitely			
	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start
Neighborhood Quarrels	22	22	0	0	0	0	0	0
Need Better Housing	15	14	1	3	6	5		
Household Chores Too Disagreeable	18	20	3	2	1	0		
Having to Move Too Often	22	22	0	0	0	0		
Getting Along With Neighbors	22	22	0	0	0	0		
Need Better or More Furniture	13	6	6	0	3	16		
Place For Children to Keep Their Things	14	8	3	0	5	14		
Prefer Living in Another Neighborhood	16	21	1	1	5	0		
Not Enough Privacy Within Your Home	20	9	1	3	1	10		135
Neighborhood Poor Influence on Children	16	21	4	0	2	1		

TABLE 20--Continued

Problems	Number of Families							
	No Problem		Somewhat		Yes Definitely			
	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start
Repair on Home Too Expensive	20	18	1	0	1	4		
Lack of A Good Place For Children to Play	14	17	3	0	5	5		
Total Responses to Problems	212	200	23	9	29	55		

of Head Start children were "Someone in the family very nervous," which was marked by a little less than half of the mothers. The statements "Someone in the family very nervous," and "Not enough food" was marked most frequently among the mothers of Non Head Start children.

The most notable difference in responses to health problems was on the statement "Poor quality of food that we can afford to buy." Very few mothers of Head Start children indicated this as a problem while a few more than half of the mothers of Non Head Start children perceived this as a problem.

The number of responses to each of the statements concerning health problems is shown in Table 21.

Problems Concerning Family Relationships and Patterns.--Mothers of Non Head Start children indicated considerably more problems concerning family relationships and patterns than mothers of Head Start children. More mothers of Head Start children indicated that problems concerning family relationships and patterns were "somewhat" of a problem. Marked most frequently by the mothers of Head Start children was the problem "Not enough time for recreation," which was marked by less than one-third of the

TABLE 21

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RESPONDENTS CONCERNING HEALTH PROBLEMS

Problems	Number of Families							
	No Problem		Somewhat		Yes Definitely			
	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start
Family Members Often Bothered By Illness	14	9	4	4	4	9	4	9
Poor Quality of Food That We Can Afford to Buy	9	0	11	7	2	15		
Someone in the Family Often Worried, Nervous, or Upset	7	4	6	3	9	15		
Getting a Good Doctor When We Need Him	22	22	0	0	0	0		
Continuous Medical Care For a Family Member	19	19	2	2	1	1		
Someone In The Family Very Nervous	10	6	2	0	10	16		
Physical Handicap of Some Family Member	21	17	1	0	0	5		
Not Enough Food	15	1	0	5	7	16		
Always Tired	13	13	3	3	6	6		
Total Responses to Problems	130	101	29	24	39	83		138

mothers. The statement "Insufficient clothing for family members" was marked most frequently and by a majority of mothers of Non Head Start children.

The most outstanding difference in responses to problems concerning family relationships and patterns was on the statement "Insufficient clothing for family members," with one-fourth of the mothers of Head Start children marking the statement and more than three-fourths of the mothers of Non Head Start children marking the statements.

Table 22 shows the responses to each of the statements concerning Family Relationships and Patterns.

Marital Problems.--More marital problems were indicated by the mothers of the Non Head Start children than the mothers of the Head Start children. Only the parents who were married and living together responded to the statements concerning marital problems. Of the families with Head Start children, fourteen were married and of the families of Non Head Start children, ten were married. More mothers of Head Start children indicated that marital discord was "somewhat" of a problem. The statements "Agreement with mate concerning how children should be reared," and "Husband running around with friends too much" were marked more frequently by the mothers of Non Head Start children. The mothers of the Head Start children marked most frequently





TABLE 22 ---Continued

Problems	Number of Families							
	No Problem		Somewhat		Yes Definitely			
	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start
Poor Family Morale	22	22	0	0	0	0	0	0
Family Members Doing Interesting Things Together	17	22	5	0	0	0	0	0
No Car	19	9	0	0	3	0	13	
Not Enough Time to Visit With Friends or Relatives	17	19	2	0	3	0	3	
Family Members Don't Accept Responsibilities As Well As They Should	12	10	7	5	3	0	7	
Insufficient Clothing For Family Members	15	2	2	1	5	0	19	
Relative or Boarder Living in Your Home	22	20	0	0	0	0	2	
Wife Working Outside the Home	19	19	3	1	0	0	2	
Family Member Keeping Bad Company	22	22	0	0	0	0	0	141
Police or Law Trouble	22	22	0	0	0	0	0	0

TABLE 22--Continued

Problems	Number of Families							
	No Problem		Somewhat		Yes Definitely			
	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start
Clothes Not Good Enough to Go To Church	18	8	3	5	1	9		
Total Responses to Problems	396	368	35	18	31	76		

the statements "Not enough time to spend alone with husband," "Husband is not home enough," and "Divorce, separation, or spouse desertion;" however, these statements were marked by only two of the fourteen married mothers.

The numbers of responses to each of the statements concerning marital problems are shown on Table 23.

Problems Concerning Children and Parent-Child Relationships.--Mothers of the Non Head Start children perceived more problems concerning children and parent-child relationships than did the mothers of the Head Start children. More mothers of the Head Start children perceived "somewhat" more problems concerning children and parent-child relationships than did the mothers of the Non Head Start children.

Mothers of the Head Start children marked the problem "Worry about the future of the children" more frequently than any other problem. Mothers of the Non Head Start children marked the problem "Children careless about picking up their things" most often.

The number of responses to each problem concerning children and parent-child relationships is shown on Table 24.

TABLE 23

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RESPONDENTS CONCERNING MARITAL PROBLEMS

Problems	Number of Families					
	No Problem		Somewhat		Yes Definitely	
	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start
Getting Along With Your Husband	13	6	1	1	0	3
Husband's Friends	14	10	0	0	0	0
Conflicting Religious Beliefs With Mate	14	5	0	0	0	5
Agreement With Mate Concerning How Children Should Be Reared	11	4	2	0	1	6
Not Enough Time to Spend Alone With Husband	10	7	2	0	2	3
Poor Relationship With Husband	13	6	0	1	1	6
Husband Running Around With Friends Too Much	13	6	0	1	1	6
Participation of Husband in Outside-The-House Activities	13	7	0	0	1	3
Being Able to Talk Problems Over With Your Husband	12	10	2	0	0	0
						144

TABLE 23--Continued

Problems	Number of Families							
	No Problem		Somewhat		Yes Definitely			
	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start
Unfaithfulness of Husband	14	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Husband Not Home Enough	12	10	0	0	2	0	0	0
Differences in Interests Between You and Your Husband	12	7	2	0	0	0	0	3
Poor Love Relationship Between Husband and Wife	14	7	0	0	0	0	0	3
Husband Hard to Get Along With	13	7	1	0	0	0	0	3
Divorce, Separation, or Spouse Desertion	20	19	0	0	2	0	2	3
Total Response to Problems	198	122	11	2	9	2	9	41

TABLE 24

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RESPONDENTS CONCERNING CHILDREN  
AND PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

	Number of Families					
	No Problem		Somewhat		Yes Definitely	
	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start
Children's Grades in School	14	11	7	11	1	0
Children's Friends	21	22	0	0	1	0
Lack of Time to Spend With The Children	14	16	1	2	7	4
Children Careless About Picking Up Their Things	5	9	8	4	9	9
Getting Children to Behave Right	9	9	10	5	3	8
Too Many Children	20	22	0	0	2	0
Children Dislike School	21	18	1	4	0	0
Relatives Interfere With Child Rearing	22	22	0	0	0	0
Not Being Able to Talk With Children About Their Problems	20	15	2	3	0	4
Getting Children to Go to School	21	20	1	2	0	0
						146

TABLE 24--Continued

Problems	Number of Families							
	No Problem		Somewhat		Yes Definitely			
	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start
Children's Sex Practices	22	22	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transportation to Schools	22	22	0	0	0	0	0	0
Children Not Respecting You or Your Husband	21	22	1	0	0	0	0	0
Children Won't Obey Parents	19	16	3	3	0	0	0	3
Children Having Bad Habits	21	14	1	4	0	0	0	4
Worry About Future of The Children	6	14	6	0	10	0	0	8
Total Responses to Problems	278	274	41	38	33	40		

Problems Concerning Attitudes.--Mothers of the Non Head Start children perceived more problems concerning attitudes than did mothers of Head Start children. Mothers of Head Start children perceived "somewhat" more problems concerning attitudes than did mothers of Non Head Start children.

The problem marked most often by the mothers of the Head Start children was "Worry about saving for old age," but only one-third of the mothers marked this. Most frequently the mothers of the Non Head Start children marked the problem "Don't have enough good breaks or luck in life." One-half of the mothers marked this.

Table 25 shows the number of responses to each question concerning attitudes.

#### Project Head Start

Three questions concerning Project Head Start were added at the end of the family problems checklist to gain understanding of the parents attitudes toward Head Start. The questions were: (1) Are there any special reasons why your child did or did not attend Project Head Start in summer 1965? (2) Do you think it helped your child to attend Head Start? In what ways? (3) Would you send another of your children to Head Start? Why or why not? All three questions were asked the mothers of the Head



TABLE 25

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RESPONDENTS CONCERNING ATTITUDES

Problems	Number of Families							
	No Problem		Somewhat		Yes Definitely			
	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start	Head Start	Non Head Start
Too Much Work to Do to Make Life Fun	15	15	4	0	3	7		
Other People Looking Down On Us	22	22	0	0	0	0		
Not Enough Things to Do to Make Life Fun	20	17	2	2	0	3		
Worry Over Prospects of Retirement	20	22	1	0	1	0		
Worry About Saving For Old Age	13	15	2	0	7	7		
Don't Have Enough "Good Breaks" or "luck" in Life	12	9	6	2	4	11		
Feel That A Lot of People Give You a Hard Time	15	18	2	0	5	4		
Total Responses to Problems	117	118	17	4	20	32		

Start children and the first and last question was asked the mothers of the Non Head Start children. Most mothers gave several answers to the questions.

When asked are there any special reasons the child attended Head Start, the mother's of the Head Start children had these things to say. Nine mothers commented that they thought Head Start would prepare the child for first grade and help him in school. Six mothers though Head Start would be good for the child and help him. Four mothers said Head Start was a good replacement for kindergarten. Four mothers sent their children to Head Start so that they could mix with other children and be around more people. Three mothers thought Head Start would help the child to get along with others and help the child not to be shy. One mother sent her child to Head Start because the child wanted to go.

When asked if there were any special reasons the child did not attend Head Start, the mothers of the Non Head Start children had these things to say. Nine mothers said they did not know about Head Start in time to send the child. Five mothers stated that they didn't get a chance to send the child. Three mothers said they were

off on vacation. One mother said that lack of transportation was the reason her child did not attend Head Start and one mother said that she worked and would not be home to get her child off to Head Start. One mother said her child started to Head Start but left to go visit father and one mother said her child went to kindergarten instead.

When the mothers of the children who had attended Head Start were asked if they thought Head Start helped their child, all the mothers said "Yes"; most of the mothers said "yes, definitely." When asked in what ways the replies were as follows: Nine mothers said Head Start gave their children a better start in first grade and better adjustment to school. Nine mothers said their child learned how to get along better with others. Seven mothers said that Head Start brought out their child's personality and that he could now express himself better. Six mothers said their child learned how to print his name, learned his alphabet, and numbers. Four mothers said Head Start helped form many good habits in their children as getting clothes ready and manners. Three mothers said their child learned better eating habits. One mother said her child

had a better understanding of nutrition and that breakfast was not a problem. Two mothers believed that from Head Start their child had learned to trust himself and thought more of himself. One mother believed Head Start helped her child in adjustment and one mother said Head Start helped her child's vocabulary. One mother stated that the medical care her child received was of great help to the child. One mother said her child learned to do many different things in Head Start. One mother commented that the Head Start field trips had been a great help to her child. She said her child talked about them and enjoyed them. The same mother said that she could tell the difference between the child who had attended Head Start and the other children who did not attend when they started to school. One mother said she could still see the improvement in her child from having attended Head Start. Most all the mothers said their children had enjoyed Head Start.

When asked if they would send another child to Head Start, all the mothers of the Head Start children said yes, definitely. They all said it helped their first child and they would send another child if they had one that was eligible.

When mothers of the Non Head Start children were asked if they would send another child to Head Start, all

the mothers said yes. Most of them commented that they think Head Start helps the child. Three parents said that they had sent another of their children to Head Start in summer 1967 and it had helped them.

From the answers the mothers of the children gave to these questions, it seems that the summer 1965 Head Start program in Tuscaloosa, Alabama was of great benefit to the children who attended.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The first general purpose of this study was to explore the possible differences in reading and language achievement of a group of children who had attended a 1965 summer Head Start program in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, for a period of eight weeks, and a group of children who were eligible to attend the same program but who did not attend.

The investigation was done to follow up an earlier study involving the same subjects. The purpose of the study was to see if there was a difference in reading and language achievement test scores at the end of the second grade in school,

The subjects were forty-four of the original group of fifty children who were tested. They were all in the second grade at the Thirty-Second Avenue Elementary School. Twenty-two of these children had attended a Head Start program and twenty-two had been eligible to attend the same program but did not attend.

The instrument used to assess reading and language

achievement was the California Achievement Test, Lower Primary Battery, Form W, Reading and Language sections.

When the data were all collected, comparisons were made between the two groups of children on the scores available for each subtest and for total test sections. Comparisons were made in grade placement scores and the percentile ratings of the two groups.

Certain findings resulted from the data obtained in this study of reading and language achievement of culturally deprived children.

### Conclusions

#### Reading and Language Development

1. All test scores for both groups of children were low. In Total Reading one subject scored at actual grade placement and one subject scored above actual grade placement. Both were members of the Head Start group. In Total Language one subject scored at actual grade placement and one subject scored above actual grade placement. Again, both were members of the Head Start group.
2. On the subtests more subjects in the Head Start group scored above and at actual grade placement

than did the subjects in the Non Head Start group, on six of the nine subtests all subjects in the Non Head Start group scored below grade placement. On no subtest did all of the Head Start subjects score below actual grade placement.

3. The highest score on each test was made by a Head Start child. The median score on each test was higher for the Head Start group than for the Non Head Start group. Except in two instances where the lowest score was identical, the lowest score on each test was made by a Non Head Start child.

4. Percentile ratings were derived for the reading and language sections. On all tests highest percentile rankings were made by children in the Head Start group. On all tests the median percentiles were higher for subjects in the Head Start group. In Total Reading the scores of four of the subjects in the Head Start group fell into the lowest percentile rank, which was the first percentile. In the Non Head Start group the scores of seven subjects were in the first percentile. In Total Language five subjects in the Head Start group scored in the first percentile while seventeen subjects in the Non



Head Start group scored in the first percentile.

5. More members of the Non Head Start group had tests which were unscorable than did the members of the Head Start group. On both Reading and Language three subjects in the Head Start group had tests which were unscorable, while eleven subjects in the Non Head Start group had tests which were unscorable.

Based on the findings, it would appear that the summer 1965 Head Start Program in Tuscaloosa, Alabama was of benefit to the children who attended, especially in the areas of reading and language development.

#### Family Background and Problems

The second purpose of this study was to explore the similarities and differences of the family background and family problems in the home life of the children in the study.

The instrument used to analyze family problems and background factors was a background information form and a family problems checklist developed by the Southeastern Council on Family Relations. The areas of problems studied were: Income problems, problems concerning Employment, Occupation, and Education, problems concerning

Home Conditions, Health problems, problems concerning the Family Relationship, Marital problems, problems concerning Children and the Parent-Child Relationship, and problems concerning Attitudes.

When the data were all collected the background information and family problems of the families of the Head Start children and families of Non Head Start children were compared.

These data did not reveal any outstanding differences between parents of Head Start children and parents of Non Head Start children. This suggests that in terms of how they perceive their family problems both of these groups may generally be considered part of the same multi-problem, low-income population. The needs of one group would appear to be very similar to the needs of the other group. There were similarities in several areas studied. In many areas, however, meaningful differences were noted.

1. The parents of both groups were similar in age, number of children in the family, occupational level, and main source of the family income.

2. Both groups of families perceived family problems in all areas studied.

3. The greatest problems for both groups of

families were Income Problems.

4. Parents of Head Start children had slightly fewer divorces and separations, slightly higher incomes, fewer were on total relief, and both parents had slightly more education than parents of Non Head Start children.

5. Parents of Non Head Start children perceived more problems in all areas studied than parents of Head Start children.

6. Parents of Head Start children perceived more areas classified as "somewhat" of a problem rather than a definite problem in their families.

7. In most of the specific areas studied, the two groups of families perceived a different problem as being their greatest problem in that area. For example, concerning Family Relationships and Patterns, the problem "Not enough time for recreation" was marked most frequently by the mothers of the Head Start children whereas the problem "Insufficient clothing for family members" was marked most frequently by mother of the Non Head Start children.

#### Suggestions for Further Research

To determine how far these findings from a rather

restricted sample can be generalized, it would be helpful to replicate this study in other localities with different children and families from a more broadly representative group of low income families.

A modification of the instrument with fewer items would be helpful in order to gain focus and emphasis in the areas studied.

APPENDIX

SOUTHEASTERN COUNCIL ON FAMILY RELATIONS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FORM

FAMILY LIFE PROJECT: Problems of Low Income  
Southern Families

Respondent's name \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Marital status \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Age of husband \_\_\_\_\_

Ages of girls in family \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Ages of Boys in family \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Race \_\_\_\_\_

Grades completed (wife):

Grades completed (husband)

none

none

1-4

1-4

5-7

5-7

8

8

9-11

9-11

12 or is high school  
graduate

12 or high school  
graduate

1-3 years of college

1-3 years of college

college graduate

college graduate

Family lives:

on a farm

in a community of less than 2,500 population

in a community of 2,500 to 50,000 population

in a community of over 50,000 population

APPENDIX--Continued

If you live on a farm, rate your occupation below:

- ( ) Farm owner with hired help or an operator of leased property who supervises
- ( ) Small landowner; or an operator of rented property hiring hands
- ( ) Tenant on a good farm; or a foreman or an owner of a farm who "hires out"
- ( ) Sharecropper; or an established farm laborer; or a subsistence farmer
- ( ) Migrant worker, or a "squatter" or a "nester"

The main source of family income is:

- ( ) wages, hourly wages, piece work, weekly checks
- ( ) profits and fees from a business or profession
- ( ) savings and investments
- ( ) inherited savings and investments
- ( ) private relief, odd jobs, share cropping, seasonal work
- ( ) salary paid on a monthly basis
- ( ) social security

Wife's occupation (work) is: (Describe fully)

Husband's occupation (work) is: (Describe fully)

Husband born where:

Wife born where:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX--Continued

Today we hear many comments about people's problems and people's blessings. Please tell me the three or four things in life that bother you most.

Now could you please tell me the three or four things that you are happy about?

---

APPENDIX--Continued

## FAMILY PROBLEMS CHECKLIST

	<u>No</u>	<u>Some- what</u>	<u>Yes Definitely</u>
1. Present income is not adequate; too low to allow for the things we need	_____	_____	_____
2. Family members often bothered by illness	_____	_____	_____
3. Unemployment	_____	_____	_____
4. In-law difficulties	_____	_____	_____
5. Children's grades in school	_____	_____	_____
6. Getting along with your (husband, wife)	_____	_____	_____
7. Poor quality of food that we can afford to buy	_____	_____	_____
8. Neighborhood quarrels	_____	_____	_____
9. Making income stretch to pay bills	_____	_____	_____
10. Someone in the family often worried, nervous or upset	_____	_____	_____
11. Children's friends	_____	_____	_____
12. Seasonal employment	_____	_____	_____
13. Bad habits of some family member	_____	_____	_____
14. Need better housing	_____	_____	_____



APPENDIX--Continued

	<u>No</u>	<u>Some- what</u>	<u>Yes Definitely</u>
15. (wife, husband) or children spending money foolishly	_____	_____	_____
16. Lack of regular church attendance	_____	_____	_____
17. Conflicts over TV programs	_____	_____	_____
18. Your amount of educa- tion or training for your job	_____	_____	_____
19. (Husband's, wife's) friends	_____	_____	_____
20. Lack of time to spend with the children	_____	_____	_____
21. Household chores too disagreeable	_____	_____	_____
22. Children's relationship with teachers	_____	_____	_____
23. Children careless about picking up their things	_____	_____	_____
24. Drinking	_____	_____	_____
25. Having to move too often	_____	_____	_____
27. Getting children to behave right	_____	_____	_____
28. Conflicting religious beliefs with mate	_____	_____	_____

	<u>No</u>	<u>Some- what</u>	<u>Yes Definitely</u>
29. Continuous medical care for a family member	_____	_____	_____
30. Relatives borrowing but never returning things	_____	_____	_____
31. Gambling	_____	_____	_____
32. Care of older parents or grandparents	_____	_____	_____
33. Too much work to do to make life fun	_____	_____	_____
34. Getting along with neighbors	_____	_____	_____
35. Need better or more furniture	_____	_____	_____
36. Other people looking down on us	_____	_____	_____
37. Not enough money for recreation	_____	_____	_____
38. Difficult to pay doctor or dentist bills	_____	_____	_____
39. Place for children to keep their things	_____	_____	_____
40. Agreement with mate concerning how the children should be reared	_____	_____	_____
41. Not enough time for recreation	_____	_____	_____
42. Not enough time to spend alone with (husband, wife)	_____	_____	_____

APPENDIX--Continued

	<u>No</u>	<u>Some- what</u>	<u>Yes Definitely</u>
43. No car	_____	_____	_____
44. Too many children	_____	_____	_____
45. Not enough things to do to make life fun	_____	_____	_____
46. Children dislike school	_____	_____	_____
47. Prefer living in another neighborhood	_____	_____	_____
48. Poor relationship with (husband, wife)	_____	_____	_____
49. Family members doing interesting things together	_____	_____	_____
50. Not enough time to visit with friends or relatives	_____	_____	_____
51. Family members don't accept responsibilities as well as they should	_____	_____	_____
52. Not enough privacy with- in your home	_____	_____	_____
53. Relatives interfere with child rearing	_____	_____	_____
54. Not being able to talk with children about their problems	_____	_____	_____
55. (Husband, wife) running around with friends too much	_____	_____	_____

APPENDIX--Continued

	<u>No</u>	<u>Some- what</u>	<u>Yes Definitely</u>
56. Insufficient clothing for family members	_____	_____	_____
57. Lack of transportation to work	_____	_____	_____
58. Participation of (husband, wife) in outside-the-house activities	_____	_____	_____
59. Neighborhood poor influence on children	_____	_____	_____
60. Paying bills on time	_____	_____	_____
61. Lack of knowledge of how best to spend income	_____	_____	_____
62. Being able to talk problems over with your (husband, wife)	_____	_____	_____
63. Getting children to go to school	_____	_____	_____
64. Relative or boarder living in your home	_____	_____	_____
65. Children's sex practices	_____	_____	_____
66. Lack of skill in wage-earners trade	_____	_____	_____
67. Poor family morale	_____	_____	_____
68. Transportation to schools	_____	_____	_____
69. Going too far in debt	_____	_____	_____

APPENDIX--Continued

	<u>No</u>	<u>Some- what</u>	<u>Yes Definitely</u>
70. Cost of school, textbooks, school lunches, etc.	_____	_____	_____
71. Little or no prospect for occupational advancement for wage-earner	_____	_____	_____
72. Unfaithfulness of (husband, wife)	_____	_____	_____
73. Children not respecting you or your husband	_____	_____	_____
74. Work hours keeping family split up	_____	_____	_____
75. (Husband, wife) not home enough	_____	_____	_____
76. Wife working outside the home	_____	_____	_____
77. Someone in the family very nervous	_____	_____	_____
78. Worry over prospects of retirement	_____	_____	_____
79. Differences in interests between you and your (husband, wife)	_____	_____	_____
80. Taxes too high	_____	_____	_____
81. (Husband, wife) working in another geographic area, or in service	_____	_____	_____
82. Poor love relationship between husband and wife	_____	_____	_____

APPENDIX--Continued

	<u>No</u>	<u>Some- what</u>	<u>Yes Definitely</u>
83. Family member keeping "bad company"	_____	_____	_____
84. (Husband, wife) hard to get along with	_____	_____	_____
85. Children won't obey parents	_____	_____	_____
86. Divorce, separation, or spouse desertion	_____	_____	_____
87. Police or law trouble	_____	_____	_____
88. Physical handicap of some family member	_____	_____	_____
89. Repair on home too expensive	_____	_____	_____
90. Lack of a good place for children to play	_____	_____	_____
91. Worry about saving for old age	_____	_____	_____
92. Not enough food	_____	_____	_____
93. Getting along with employer	_____	_____	_____
94. Clothes not good enough to go to church	_____	_____	_____
95. Work too hard	_____	_____	_____
96. Always tired	_____	_____	_____
97. Children having bad habits	_____	_____	_____

APPENDIX--Continued

	<u>No</u>	<u>Some- what</u>	<u>Yes Definitely</u>
98. Worry about future of the children	_____	_____	_____
99. Don't have enough "good breaks" or "luck" in life	_____	_____	_____
100. Feel that a lot of people give you a hard time	_____	_____	_____

## HEAD START QUESTIONS

Are there any special reasons why your child did or did not attend project Head Start in summer 1965?

Do you think it helped your child to attend Head Start?  
\_\_\_\_\_ In what ways?

Would you send another of your children to Head Start?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Why or why not?

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