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A Literature Survey (1960-1970) to Identify the Slow Learner's Capabilities in Business Education

Loretta Sedlmayer

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A LITERATURE SURVEY (1960-1970) TO IDENTIFY

THE SLOW LEARNER'S CAPABILITIES

IN BUSINESS EDUCATION

by

Sister Loretta Sedlmayer, R.S.M.

B.S. in Education, College of Saint Mary, 1962

An Independent Study

Submitted to the Faculty

of the

University of North Dakota

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Science

Grand Forks, North Dakota

December, 1970

This independent study submitted by Sister Loretta Sedlmayer in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science from the University of North Dakota is hereby approved by the Faculty Advisory Chairman under whom the work has been done.

Dr. John C. Peterson, Chairman

<u>Permission</u>

Title   A Literature Survey (1960-1970) to Identify the
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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to identify the slow learner's capabilities in business education. The study began with a perusal of the Business Education Index and the Education Index for literature relative to slow learners in general and particularly to slow learners in business education. Materials used were those written between 1960 and 1970.

The findings were classified into three main parts: (1) a general description of the slow learner--his I.Q. range and characteristics pertinent to his educational and occupational potential and needs; (2) the role that business education plays in preparing him for satisfactory office employment; and (3) the acceptance of the slow learner into business offices.

The findings indicated that the I.Q. range of the slow learner is between 70 and 95; he is approximately two years below his peers in his class; he learns slowly and lacks self-confidence. He can be employed in office jobs performing tasks within his ability. The slow learner's needs are essentially the same as those of normal children, but he needs more feelings of success, acceptance, and affection.

Teachers must include in their efforts much patience, time, and encouragement. Methods should be adapted to include

participation, variety, audio-visual aids, and activity-oriented lessons.

Businessmen must become aware of the capabilities of slow-learning graduates and adapt some of their office jobs to make room for those people, perhaps by reducing secretarial variety and making allowances so that some of the menial tasks can be performed by slow-learning adults.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There are three important aspects of education--the learner, the instructor, and the facilities. For effectual progress, there must exist a continuous harmony among the three.

Educators have the important obligation of discerning the needs of students and must continually re-evaluate their educational system through a study of the philosophy and objectives of the institution, the principles that determine policy and regulations, programs for the development of character, attitudes, citizenship, skills, and productivity in preparation of students for their role in adult life.

The teacher is given the responsibility of helping every student increase his knowledge, to adapt to his environment in school, and insofar as possible to influence his outlook on life toward building a better society. Or, as Calhoun (1963, p. 26) says:

> It is not the duty of the teacher to remake each child into a mental equal of his classmates but to provide each person the opportunity to develop mentally to his optimum in his particular way.

The learning situation greatly influences the progress of the student. The teacher who integrates the facilities

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and resources at his disposal and who shows initiative, enthusiasm, and understanding of children attains the most satisfaction for himself and his students.

Every student is much like every other student in some ways--a growing individual developing his interests, talents, and abilities. Yet, he is very different from every other student--a unique individual in appearance, personality, interests, talents, and abilities.

For practical purposes, children are categorized within schools according to ability. Unless specifically so arranged, the school attempts to reach and develop all students within their capacities for learning. According to Cohen (1970), approximately 25 per cent of today's school children have an I.Q. above 110; 50 per cent are between 90 and 110; the national norm; and 25 per cent are below 90. In some areas, usually the affluent suburbs, the average I.Q. exceeds the national norm; and in places such as the inner city and Appalachia, the average I.Q. is lower than the national norm, although this statement does not eliminate slum areas, ghettos and pockets of rural poverty from having gifted children. It is therefore difficult to isolate the characteristics of disadvantaged students from normally slow-learning students.

A change in national emphasis on areas concurrent with the education processes has evolved in the past ten years. There was a strong emphasis on guidance and gifted students in the mid-sixties. However, attention has shifted to the dropouts and slow learners, and presently there is a wide

interest in disadvantaged youth and vocational education. In development of systems, current emphasis covers a wide expanse-- flexibility, modular scheduling, continuous education, and other experimental programs, all designed with the ultimate in education in mind.

Good student-teacher relationships can build student self-esteem and progress. The business education program pro- vides excellent opportunities for student-teacher rapport. Whereas in some classes the lecture-type arrangement negates chances to get to know pupils personally, skill-type courses present opportunities for conferences, sometimes minute, but nevertheless meaningful. The personal contact and comment about progress opens avenues for further confidences.

The business education field often is recipient of students not able to cope with academic and arts courses. Previously some business education teachers expressed dissatis- faction over the procedure for placement of low achievers into their department, but recently they are reconsidering their views and want to do all they can to make those students self- confident, productive citizens. Certain questions arise from these considerations--should special business education courses be offered for slow students? What programs could he handle effectively? How should present programs be adapted to suit the needs of all business students--low, average, and above- average?

With a positive attitude toward slow students, the teacher can look forward to better program arrangement,

teaching that is effective, and students ready to graduate and locate fruitful employment.

Slow learners are estimated to account for 15 to 20 per cent of the entire school population. This being true, there are about nine million slow learners presently enrolled in public schools, according to Schultheis (1967). The proportion in business education enrollments is likely to increase. To determine the role of business education in the education of slow learners, the two basic objectives of business education must be considered--the general or social business objective and the vocational business objective (Schultheis, 1967).

Statement of the Problem

This paper was designed to identify the capabilities of the slow learner in business education, including the I.Q. range of the slow learner (his learning capacity), characteristics peculiar to the slow learner, and the role that business education plays in the development of his potential as recorded by writers in the fields of education and psychology.

Purpose of the Study

The researcher attempted to distinguish "slow learners" from disadvantaged youth, reluctant learners, emotionally disturbed learners, physically handicapped, or mentally retarded children.

Because slow learners differ from "average" students, not in physical appearance, but predominantly in the degree of native intelligence and consequently in learning power, it was

deemed feasible to identify these differences. The researcher compiled such identifications as physical, mental, educational, emotional, and social characteristics and potentialities and employability.

The researcher wanted to find out whether business education is one of the fields of education which can direct low-ability students to achieve according to their potentiality and if so, what is being done to help those students realize their goals as self-supporting, contributing citizens.

Need for the Study

To further an understanding of the needs of under-achievers and teach them accordingly, teachers need to know the capabilities of slow learners and how to prepare those students for useful lives as wage-earners and consumers.

More clerical jobs will be available in this decade; skilled workers will be more in demand. The educators who know students' capacities for learning will be able to prepare them for clerical occupations. Slow learners can be readied to get satisfactory routine and/or other occupations to fill business needs.

Teachers have been known to criticize administrators for using the business education field as a "dumping ground" for slow learners. In an attempt to change that image, Plymire (1968) admonishes business educators to abandon the dumping-ground cry and to indulge in a little introspection. He says that the lack of a few I.Q. points is not the criterion

to determine that a student does not desire to learn nor is unworthy of education.

Business teachers need to develop their own attitudes and become convinced that business education is a field in which under-achievers can succeed, and then proceed with assurance that they can play an important role in the development of self-confident, productive, self-supporting graduates. Teachers of slow learners need not feel inferior to teachers of the arts and sciences, but can be proud to have contributed in their unique way to the betterment of society in general and the economy in particular.

Delimitations

This study was limited to the availability of published materials at the University of North Dakota and the University of Nebraska at Omaha libraries.

This research paper has been limited to the identification of the slow learner's capabilities in business education. Although the researcher used articles pertaining to disadvantaged youth, emotionally disturbed children, the physically handicapped, special students, the deprived youth, and, in one or two instances, gifted students, there was no attempt at comparison of slow learners with any of them. The purpose in using those articles was to glean from the articles those characteristics which might also apply to slow learners or any different from the "normal" student. In some instances the slow learner is equated with other under-achievers, as

some characteristics might influence to a certain extent the accomplishments of the other group.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are presented to clarify certain uses of terms in this study:

AVERAGE STUDENT . . . . . . Student whose I.Q. score is between the national norm of 90 and 110.

ACADEMICALLY UNSUCCESSFUL . Student who has not met with satisfactory achievement in school.

DISADVANTAGED YOUTH . . . . Young people from inner city and poverty pockets of the nation; deprived of opportunities for educational growth because of socio-economic status.

I.Q.
(INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT) . . The capacity for learning, retaining, and applying concepts; based on the specific test instruments and standardized after a series of attempts to arrive at a norm over a period of time.

$$I.Q. = \frac{Mental\ age\ x\ 100}{Chronological\ age}$$

MENTALLY RETARDED . . . . . A person whose intelligence is so deficient that he is considered as

uneducable in the normal school situation. His I.Q. is below 70.

SLOW LEARNER . . . . The student with below-average intelligence whose capacity for learning is between the mentally retarded and the average learner. The I.Q. is between 70 and 95. He can learn certain limited skills, depending on his ability and opportunity, but cannot achieve standards set for average students.

RELUCTANT LEARNER . . . . . A student who, because of previous experience, hesitates or refuses to exert the effort required for learning. The I.Q. can be in any learning level.

CHAPTER II

PROCEDURES

The writer perused periodicals from January, 1960,
through May, 1970, using the major headings of "Slow
Learners," "Guidance," "Disadvantaged," and "Vocational
Education" as guidelines. The periodicals used were those
available at the University of North Dakota and University of
Nebraska at Omaha libraries between June, 1969, and June, 1970.

Some of the articles read were very general in scope
and not usable for this study; some were misleading according
to titles; some were specific to characteristics, methods,
or other subtopics of the paper.

One source for information was the Education Index
(1960-1970), January, 1960, through May, 1970. The source
for most of the literature perused was Business Education
Index (Delta Pi Epsilon Fraternity), issues 1960 through
1969, inclusive.

Books used as references pertained chiefly to the
slow learner. Some pertained to education in general and
business education in particular; books on psychology and
intelligence were used sparingly.

The writer began by locating and scanning articles
for relevance. After choosing pertinent articles, the writer

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recorded relevant notes on 5" x 8" cards (see Exhibit A,
page 11).   The next step was to separate the notes according
to the outline subdivisions and to decide on the specific
aspect of each part within Chapter III with which the note
card was associated.   The distinction between the character-
istics of the slow learner per se and other students was not
always easily discernible, but was made as closely as
possible.

EYSTER, ELVIN S. "Preparing the Lower One-Third in General Scholastic
                   Ability for Business Employment," Journal of Business
                   Education, Vol. 39, February, 1964, pp. 180-181.

        Unemployment rates are high. Pre-employment and on-the-job training
in business will make them employable. High schools must provide the
best-possible training for the lower 1/3 of the class.

Low achiever can achieve if:
            relatively few tasks make up the job (simple in nature)
            no specific areas of knowledge are required (but r-r-r skills
                                                are necessary)
            no previous work experience is required
            few procedures or processes are involved
            they have ability to follow directions
            little originality or resourcefulness is required
            little or no planning, developing, organizing, etc., are required

Role of Vocational Business Education:

      "The function of the prevocational instruction is to facilitate
       employment orientation and development and to make pupils more
       readily trainable on the job in the performance of specific tasks."

Courses suggested:

        general clerical, general selling, and service.

Sample of note card for periodicals.

CHAPTER III

FINDINGS

Several similar, yet different, descriptions of the slow learner were located by the writer. Some authors described him in terms of the major aspects of physical, mental, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual traits; some enumerated more general characteristics. This study was designed to identify his I.Q. range; to note influential factors; to categorize his academic characteristics, emotional maturity, potential, and employability; and to determine the role of business education in helping him to fulfill his needs.

The subdivisions concerned with I.Q. and factors which influence his behavior in school include the intellectual and socio-economic status of the individual. The subdivisions entitled "Characteristics" here refers to those identifying traits peculiar to slow learners; the "Needs" subdivision is designed to mention factors which lead to emotional maturity.

As business educators study the traits and needs of the slow learner, they can adapt their curriculum and course content accordingly; they can prepare the student for successful employment through new methods and experiences vital to the student.

Description of the Slow Learner

In 1965, Crawfis (1965a, 1965b) researched writings from 1950 through 1963 relative to slow learners. The definition she arrived at is a short but concise beginning:

> The slow learner . . . can be assumed to be a student with such intellectual retardation that he is unable to keep up with children of average intelligence, yet cannot be classified as mentally handicapped. Slow learners usually achieve scores from 75 to 90 on intelligence tests, though this is not necessarily absolute.

Johnson's (1963, p. 27) description continues with the observation that "as a result of continuing dissatisfying experiences in school, numbers of other problems are common to slow learners--discipline, lack of interest, inability to adjust socially, etc."

Schultheis (1968a), in his descriptive model of the slow learner derived from the writings of experts and conclusions from research, describes in detail the slow learner's characteristics within the five major aspects of each person's life. He found that physically the slow learner is slightly inferior in development; has a greater incidence of poor health and physical defects; and shows a slight inferiority in coordination, speed, and accuracy of movement. He adds that slow learners give superior attention to monotonous tasks. They resemble others in simple visual and auditory perception and in emotional characteristics. They respond well to concrete activities with immediate goals and can express simple ideas with which they have had experience. Slow learners have the ability to learn and perform motor skills; they show industry in appropriate tasks and make adequate social adjustment.

In contrast, Havighurst and Stiles (Shack, 1969) would place the category they refer to as "alienated youth" within the classification of low achievers, and they say emphatically:

> They are the uneducables, the non-learners, the hard to teach, the alienated, . . . the misfits in school. Either they are hostile and unruly, or passive and apathetic. They have quit learning and have dropped out of school at age 16 or before; they tend to come from broken homes, or homes which are inadequate emotionally or culturally. Yet this is not simply a group low in economic status and I.Q.

In a 1961-1962 study of conflicting opinions in teaching the slow learner in vocational business education, Gehring (1962) found that slow learners' physical and educational behavior characteristics are not much different from that of the average student. The degree of motor ability possessed by the slow learner was not specified. In social characteristics, the slow learner generally lacked the qualities needed for acceptance by average or above-average students in their own group.

The I.Q. Range

The intelligence quotient (I.Q.), or capacity for learning, is based on the national norm with 100 being the mean. The I.Q. range of the slow learner is generally accepted as between 70 and 95. A slight overlap occurs when one considers the national norm (average learning capacity) as being between 90 and 110. In this case, the 90 to 95 I.Q. range would be very low average or the highest 20% of slow learners. A further breakdown of the national norm would indicate that the lower the I.Q. rating of an individual, the

more limited is his capacity for learning. The possibilities for education for occupations mentioned in this paper would therefore necessarily have to be estimated according to an individual's intellectual ability.

Perhaps another explanation of the I.Q. will be more easily understood by the layman. The score is based on 100 as the average and is the ratio of one's ability to the average. For example, a 100 I.Q. for a six-year-old person means that that person can learn and do what is considered average for a person of that chronological age; and a 75 I.Q. means that he can learn and do 75 per cent of the amount an average person his age can, or the equivalent of what is expected of a four-and-one-half-year-old child. This ratio can be computed only until about age 16, the age at which the plateau of increasing learning ability is reached (Johnson, 1963, pp. 41-42).

<div align="center">

Factors Which May Influence
Behavioral Patterns

</div>

How much do factors such as heredity, environment, socio-economic status, and experience affect the behavioral attitudes of a person who is already academically behind some of his peers in the classroom? Does he feel insecure and unaccepted? Are these feelings well-founded? Are his reactions normal for a student with an I.Q. below 95? These are some of the questions the researcher attempted to answer through this study.

Some authors, from results of research study and experience, predict with a high degree of certainty the progress that a slow student can be expected to achieve in regular school situations.

It is difficult to separate the idea of heredity from enviornment as factors which influence student reaction. It was mentioned in Chapter I that the children of more affluent families often have a higher ratio of I.Q. scores above 100 than those from lower income sections of cities. It appears that most of those with higher I.Q.'s learn more and have more educational and cultural opportunities; they obtain better working positions; and consequently, they have higher financial incomes. Their environment influences their desire to learn.

Although the socio-economic status of a family does not determine the intelligence quotient of a child, perhaps the environmental factor belongs with the socio-economic factor rather than with heredity in this case, since environment is largely determined by the family income. For instance, the family income largely determines quality of living quarters, nutrition, health and hygiene, educational and cultural luxuries. Values, friends, and acquaintances are similar and associates influence one another. Experience helps or hinders progress.

Awareness of one's limited ability can result in one of two reactions: passive or overt reactions. Morris (1969) explains that passive reactions are expressed through such symptoms as sullenness, depression, loneliness, shyness,

listlessness, or introvertedness. The overt reaction expresses
itself in boisterousness, destruction, defensiveness, hos-
tility, boastfulness, untruthfulness, truancy, obscenity,
and/or extrovertness.

Negative attitudes engender negative attitudes. The
inferiority complex is nurtured by environmental and experi-
ential circumstances. In a profile of the disadvantaged
student, Wood (1969c) lists forty-four causes and conditions
prevalent among those students. Those selected by the writer
as applicable to slow students are listed below:

> poor health and nutrition
> crowded home and neighborhood
> despair
> no place to study
> poor parent-child relationships
> noise and confusion
> little home supervision
> fighting
> feels rejected at home
> lack of privacy
> corporal discipline common
> lack of discipline
> parents have minimal education
> lacks counseling
> little chance for leisure reading, etc.
> lack of understanding
> books, magazines are scarce
> low scholastic ability
> little chance for recreation
> constricted experiences
> perceptions limited to neighborhood
> feels humiliation
> crime, delinquency, courts
> low self-image
> lacks community identity
> failure oriented
> peer group, not adults, are the model
> denies feeling for other people
> distorted values
> has learned not to hope
> dreams, hopes become nightmares
> does not plan for the future

Characteristics of a Slow Learner

The knowledge that some students do not learn as much as or as fast as others sometimes influences a teacher to look at and judge children by their defective qualities and then emphasize those instead of trying to develop their positive qualities. The researcher found that most authors write in terms of slow students' limitations rather than their potentialities, but generally in a positive manner. Doubtless this is because a reader would then know the limitations of the learner.

In comparison with the average student, the slow learner is not readily recognizable by physical characteristics; that is, his physical development is only slightly inferior to the person of average intelligence. Poor health, impaired vision, and defective hearing are more common among the slow learners; coordination, speed, and accuracy are also slightly inferior.

Socially, most slow learners are able to make social adjustments and to become law-abiding citizens. They are more self-centered, less popular, and more withdrawn than average learners. The socio-economic background most often is that of the lower income level; hence, their lesser interests in things important to other students (Schultheis, 1968a, p. 24).

The maximum mental age of the slow learner will be around fifteen years for a child closer to the 95 I.Q. range,

and eleven years for the child near the 70 I.Q. range. He learns less than and more slowly than the average child. By age sixteen he will have reached his peak (Schultheis, 1968a, p. 21).

Rothchild (1965) enumerates the general characteristics of the slow learner, not all specific to the categories included in this chapter:

1. His achievement record is below average.

2. His reading comprehension is below average and he is usually more than two years below his grade level in reading skills and comprehension.

3. He has an attention span that is briefer than average when he is faced with traditional school work.

4. He is NOW oriented rather than FUTURE oriented. He needs to see the present value of an activity because he thinks little of the future (and less of the past).

5. He is easily discouraged by traditional school work which he has faced with failure for years.

6. He cannot handle abstractions too well. Fewer concepts, each taught with many interesting examples, will serve him better.

7. He has had little to work with because in the past there have been few instructional materials planned for him.

8. He does not fit well socially into the usual school pattern of extracurricular activities. He is not likely to belong to clubs, vote for school council, or show school spirit.

9. He does not work well when grouped with student who tests average or above, but who is resisting his school environment.

10. He needs routing, but must also have variety within the routine. Directions should be clear, simple, and repeated as required.

11. He can learn and wants to learn but requires more time to achieve than does the average learner.

Academic Characteristics

Teachers and other school officials are often the first to determine the scholastic ability of students through various testing devices, particularly mental abilities tests. The I.Q. was discussed in an earlier section of this paper. In achievement tests, the slow learners will consistently show scores of actual learning to be considerably below their completed grade in school (Christensen, 1969).

The academic characteristics of the slow learner follows closely in line with his mental ability, for he can learn only in accordance with his native ability. When his mental age is below the norm of his peers of the same age and school grade level, the amount he will learn in school will be limited, and can be predicted. For example if his mental age ($\frac{MA \times 100}{CA}$) is lower than his chronological age, he cannot be expected to perform as well as one whose mental age is equal to or superior to his own chronological age.

In trying to detect a slow learner in the classroom, the external symptoms to observe are the reading comprehension, speed, and vocabulary; the communication expression in writing and speaking; the application of mathematical skills in abstract reasoning and computational skills; the power to concentrate, generalize, reason, and organize; the ability for self-direction and error detection; the response to stimulus; and motor skill proficiency.

The keen observer will consider the under-achiever who appears bored or disinterested. These attitudes sometimes are

used as defense mechanisms to hide the fact that they did not understand or could not read and follow directions given them (Christensen, 1969).

To summarize the general academic characteristics of the slow learner, Crawfis (1965a) presents the following listing:

1. He learns in shorter steps or units.

2. He needs more frequent checkups on his progress and more remedial work.

3. His vocabulary is more limited and less precise.

4. He needs to have many new words made very clear in meaning.

5. He does not see relative generalizations or meanings as readily.

6. He has less creative ability and less ability to plan for himself.

7. He is more interested in individuals and in practical topics.

8. He is slightly slower in acquiring mechanical and other skills, particularly complicated ones.

9. In proportion to his dullness he tires less quickly of mechanical routine tasks and he tires more quickly of difficult reading or abstract discussion.

10. He is quick to generalize crudely, is lacking in self-criticism, and is easily satisfied with superficial answers.

11. He is less envious than brighter students.

12. He has had unhappy experience with previous school work and is hence more likely to be irritable in class, lacking in self-confidence, and more interested in non-school life.

13. He is more susceptible to the suggestions of other people.

14. His difficulties in learning are cumulative.

15. He has a narrow range of interests.

16. He possesses a slow reaction time.

17. He tends to engage in overcompensating activities.

18. He is less able to see the end results of his actions.

19. He fails to detect identical elements in different types of situations.

20. His attention span is short and must be reinforced by engaging appeal.

21. He especially needs evidence of his progress.

Some additional learning traits characteristic of the slow learner mentioned by Work (1960) are his ability to set up standards for work; his limited ability for evaluation and for critical thinking; and his capacity to learn slowly and forget quickly; and his slow reaction time.

Schultheis (1968a) adds that slow learners have difficulty with delayed recall, logical memory, and memory of abstract ideas. Mongo (1967) found in a study that the slow learners are seldom ready for the activity of the day, lack incentive and self-confidence, are extremely dependent on other students to relay teacher directions, and lack definable or identifiable education goals.

The slow learner's potential in measurable academic characteristics, then, can be described in terms of what is commonly accepted as a "D" student. This is based on the alphabetic grading system prevalent in most American schools, and usually indicates a student who works to the best of his ability but who is seldom able to reach the average grade of "C" in course work because of limited native intelligence.

He would be classed within the lower one-fourth of the regular schoolroom class.

Emotional Maturity

The manner of reacting to situations is often a sign of one's emotional maturity. Emotional stability is reflected in learning achievement in the way in which one conducts himself under unusual circumstances as well as in normal circumstances.

Emotionally, slow learners possess the same characteristics as all children. They have the same emotional needs, desires, and wants, but there exists a greater need for affection, praise, reassurance, and belonging. Johnson (1963, p. 48) clarifies this point in the following statement:

> Such characteristics as excitableness, oversensitiveness, repression, shyness, and apathy are frequently attributed to this group of children, but it should not be concluded that they inevitably possess temperamental or emotional difficulties. . . . For the individual slow learner the degrees and intensities of his emotions undoubtedly show the same variations as are found in a normal child although they may have a somewhat different content and be based upon somewhat less abstract values.

In leadership, slow learners are generally followers, and they leave responsibilities and decisions to others. They depend on others for directions, and at the same time possess unrealistic levels of aspiration.

A few characteristics displayed or recognized as deficient in the slow learner are his low self-esteem and lack of self-confidence (perhaps because of unreasonable standards set by parents or teachers), the failure complex, and easy discouragement from further exertion after the slightest difficulty.

There seems to be a balance between the effect of emotions on educational accomplishment and the effect of achievement on emotional maturity as expressed by the slow learner.

Potentialities

One of the objectives of education is to help every student achieve according to his potential. The I.Q. score presented a general view of the student in terms of his relation to the average person his age. However, there is another aspect of the individual that perhaps the I.Q. cannot tell--that is, his potential ability in specific areas of interest because motivation plays an important part in a person's progress.

Generally speaking, the slow learner can do a satisfactory job within his capabilities if given enough time. The degree of competence that he can be expected to achieve is dependent upon his capacity for that job coupled with his motivation, another's encouragement, and other incentives.

Successful completion of simple tasks give him satisfaction in doing those tasks, even repeatedly. Success at a challenging task will develop his self-confidence. The difficulty of tasks expected of him can gradually be increased until he has reached the peak of his performance ability.

Employability

In determining the employability of the slow learner, one must consider the achievement potential of the student.

The slow student, under the direction of guidance counselors or business education teachers, must be guided to select a job within his scope and abilities. Knowing his capabilities can aid the counselor in programming the student for his high school courses.

The student's employability would, of course, have been determined according to his ability to learn, his achievement in school, and his willingness to work in a business office situation. A counselor should determine what inherent traits a student possesses, ignoring to a degree the testing results. Tests are not infallible; they are merely man-made instruments to assist directors in making evaluations of measurable qualities.

Placement of students into business firms depends upon their preparation, efficiency, progress, and the evolution of job descriptions. Perry (1960) cautions teachers that there apparently is little possibility for educating low-ability students for security and effective participation in business, as the inefficient will be disposed of quickly. He says further that slow learners with minimum skills will be displaced by those with better skills. The percentage of jobs available to the best of the slow learners diminishes each year.

In contrast to Perry's views, other writers are more optimistic about future employment of slow learners. Wells (1967, p. 60) obtained these comments from businessmen:

> Though we do not employ these people now, _if_ they were properly trained we would do so.

> We have found in employing people in our office that the low-ability high school graduate can and does make a good employee providing he . . . has made up his mind to do his best to fulfill the obligation that he has to his employer.

Schultheis (1968b) completed research studies in 1966 wherein he analyzed the ability of slow learners to develop the competence essential to the performance of the duties and responsibilities of recordkeeping positions. His purpose was to provide information useful in educating slow learners for and placement of those students in office positions appropriate to their capacities.

In other office-related occupations, slow learners can handle simple operations, depending on their capabilities. The job range for them according to Perry (1960), includes switchboard operation; general office work, such as folding, stapling, and keeping the office neat; general clerical work such as straight copy, form letters, printed forms, envelopes, labels, and alphabetizing. In saleswork they might be competent for some selling, delivering, checking, and wrapping.

Some conclusive general statements made by Schultheis (1967) relative to the slow learner's employability, based on research reports between 1929 and 1965, were:

1. Slow learners have been able to secure office positions.

2. Office positions are of low-level general office occupations.

3. Positions which they obtain don't require previous experience except in typewriting and a high school diploma.

4. Slow learners have few opportunities and are limited to marginal employability.

5. Female slow learners have the greatest possibility of success in securing office work.

6. Slow learners vary considerably in their aptitudes and may possess clerical aptitudes which are greater than their general intelligence.

7. Slow learners have been able to secure jobs but not much evidence is available about success in those positions.

Needs of the Slow Learner

For a well-developed personality, the basic needs of the individual must first be met before higher needs have priority. The hierarchy of his needs involve physical surroundings, personality development, and fulfillment of the basic aspects of living in this order: the physical, social, emotional, mental, and spiritual aspects.

Business education has a significant contribution to make in helping the slow learner to feel success and to be prepared to be a self-supporting wage earner and to find a meaningful, rewarding role in society (Wood, 1969b).

The slow student needs a good daily routine. The teacher fulfills this need by setting a good aim for each day, repetition of questions throughout the week, good motivating devices, a dignified but businesslike atmosphere, activity without rigid discipline, and an example of self-discipline.

In the learning situation, the teacher will allow for enough time for the student to achieve success. Price (1960) aptly describes this need, "The student who is a slow learner needs a teacher who is a slow teacher." This is not a weaker

teacher, but an unusually capable one. He is one who possesses those qualities of understanding, interest, and dedication to the needs of those whom he serves.

The slow student needs simple, concise assignments, practice accompanied by repetition, opportunities for doing, supervision and guidance, the opportunity for execution of jobs more than planning, and a resourceful, patient teacher (Blake, 1968).

The first need for a slow learner is for the teacher to use preventive measures for success rather than corrective measures after failure. In other words, he needs to know confidence and self-confidence, acceptance and self-acceptance. Continued dissatisfaction from school experiences promotes negative attitudes, discipline problems, lack of interest, and inability to adjust socially.

Earlier it was mentioned that characteristics of slow learners and disadvantaged youth are somewhat similar. Wood (1969c) has prepared a very comprehensive listing of the needs of disadvantaged youth. The researcher has selected from that list those needs which can be partially fulfilled by the business education teacher:

a positive self-image	student-centered learning
recognition	activities
status	to know he is succeeding
personal dignity	to set long-term goals
success	acceptance by authority figures
acceptance by peers	individual guidance
physical activity	activity-oriented instruction
rewards for success	teachers to whom he can relate
a chance to be heard	short assignment units
fair discipline	simulated or actual work
personal objectives	experience

to have people care	opportunities to evaluate own
tutoring	progress
fun	opportunities to lead
learn to trust	development of basic skills
hope	understandable objectives
friends at school	involvement in school activities
reachable goals	to learn how to study
praise	credit for the things he knows
relevant content	a feeling of belonging
time to learn	

Christensen (1969) seems to have combined all those needs into one when she mentions that what the slow learner needs is to be able to give an opinion and not have to worry about someone saying that he is wrong.

Business Education's Role in Teaching
the Slow Learner

Administrators of educational institutions constantly re-evaluate their systems and their methods, weigh their strengths against their weaknesses, improve standards and effect changes, increase and/or replace equipment, add teaching and learning materials, and integrate past experience with innovations.

Schools have traditionally been organized to teach students on a doublt-track system for college preparation or vocational education. One controversial issue among education authorities today is whether or not to require all students to complete a four-year comprehensive high school course. One side of the question argues that students need a broad background of learning experiences in the arts and sciences. The opposing argument favors the idea of training students according to the interests of the student as early as in junior high

school. According to Rothchild (1965), the challenge for educators now is to educate all. This requires: (1) the recognition of what has happened and is happening in the secondary school population, and (2) careful planning for providing a broader education for a broader school population.

Even though the educational process has become geared for education of the masses, within the total realm lies the need for a specific concern also for individualized instruction, where each person is important as himself--one part of the whole. When the individual becomes the essential factor, then the school system is concerned with the whole person.

In looking toward this goal, Warner (1970) mentions several variables that must be explored and an attempt made to understand their inter-relatedness in developing the whole learner to everyone's satisfaction: the student's needs and characteristics; the teaching staff's personalities and their expertise; the administrator's leadership and support; the community's involvement and support; and the physical resources (facilities, hardware, and software).

A concerted effort has been made toward prevention of high school dropouts, particularly through governmental legislation. The implementation of government programs will bring more slow learners into the business education field. Some basic elements must be considered when thinking of enrollments increased as a result of recruiting. Andrews (1969) mentions five basic points, first negatively, and then discusses each positive counterpart. She states:

1. You can't teach students if they are not in school.

2. You can't teach students marketable skills in isolation from supporting knowledge and personal development.

3. You can't teach students unless you can get their interest and appeal to their desire to learn.

4. You can't teach many . . . students job competencies without the opportunity and motivation provided by a real work experience.

5. You haven't made students vocationally competent until they know how to handle their personal money.

At the same time the complexity of the problem of job preparation makes educators recognize their limitations. For instance, Tonne (1965c) indirectly refers to training of slow learners for jobs when he explains that many jobs that fall into the same semi-skilled category require on-the-job training. He feels that too many jobs are too specific in scope to be offered in high school. As regards beginning business office education, he feels that low-ability students need more time for learning and most times need three or four years of general education before they are ready for specific job skills (Tonne, 1965b).

Rothchild (1965) is of the opinion that school programs for slow learners should differ primarily in intensity--not the same depth or rapid progress as with average students. Plymire (1968) asks business educators to accept the challenge to educate slow learners. Our real opportunity, he says, is to prove our teaching ability and to help these students achieve their educational goals. He further states, "It is

about time to shake business education free from the tangle-
roots of the syndrome of inferiority."

Curriculum Adaptation

In the development of curriculum for the slow learner,
the business education chairman needs to first get an occu-
pational analysis of those jobs which will be open to business
education trainees of low ability. Haines (1966-1967)
emphasizes this need when he says:

> The need for occupational analysis exists more today
> than ever in business education. Technological changes
> give birth to new occupations, cause the death of others,
> and modify many. Yet, even with modest changes in
> business procedures there is need to examine jobs in
> the local community to determine how tasks are performed
> and the standards that must be maintained. There is
> need to examine course content to prevent the biases
> of the teacher's experiences from distorting the proper
> sequence of instruction and from devoting too much
> pupil time and energy to the teacher's "favorite" topics.

As a follow-up to the analysis, an evaluation must be
made of present course offerings to determine whether they
fulfill the needs of the business community served. Also, the
needs of the near future in business should be studied and the
present curriculum adapted to correspond with those needs.
Long-range plans can then be prepared for future. Entire
programs will be arranged to meet the needs of slow learners
and business simultaneously. The slow learner's program will
include his needs for successful employment and for his con-
sumer role.

Gruber (1965) tells business education curriculum
planners that one of the reasons students drop out of school

is that they are not interested in the course of study. If vocational business education is not included in the first years of high school, the students may not stay in school. He feels that the school should offer courses the students will be interested in and that will prepare them for prosperous and happy jobs.

Samson (1960) feels that there is a place for slow learners in distributive education and that a program is limited only by the adaptability of the coordinator, the availability of student training stations, and the presence of materials and facilities suited to the needs of each student. The slow learner could be educated to the maximum level in a marketable skill.

Once the needs are known, slow learners can be taught in courses that will be most beneficial to them. They need thorough training on a rather elementary level. Herber (1968b) emphasizes a lively, interesting curriculum, realizing that (1) low achievers must get out in the world of work as soon as possible; (2) these students must learn at their own rates; (3) programs must be approved which will allow low achievers to succeed; and (4) work experience programs must be expanded to include slow learners.

An observation about the emergence of new stress comes from Byers (1968b):

> It is becoming self-evident that the emerging strategy in developing effective instruction for the '70's is one that features performance rather than subject matter. The job is used as the criterion for deciding what will be taught and in what order and depth. . . . The method of instruction stresses inquiry, discovery, structure, and problem solving.

Conflicting opinions with respect to homogeneous grouping versus heterogeneous grouping have arisen. For example, on the one hand Brown (1960) believes homogeniety is the solution for students with an I.Q. under 95, as they need and seek business occupational preparation in greater numbers than those above 95. However, Crawfis (1965b) favors heterogeneous grouping. She advises a tailor-made curriculum to meet the low achiever's needs so he can obtain a maximum opportunity to develop his particular potentials. She suggests such offerings should include heterogeneous grouping for several reasons: (1) the slow learner should learn to compete with all levels because this is how it will be when he is out of school; (2) a special class often carries with it an unfavorable stigma; (3) slow learners are often stimulated by brighter students; (4) slow learners can sometimes understand easier when something is explained by another student rather than by the teacher; (5) ability-grouped classes present a problem in grading; (6) it is not impossible for the teacher to teach all levels effectively in a class; and (7) separation from brighter students hinders the slow learners' socialization process, for he is with others like himself who tend to be less advanced socially.

It seems that where a teacher can integrate adequate learning experiences for all members of the homogeneous group, that this should be done. However, some courses should be organized specifically for slow learners and closed to average and better-than-average students in a school system large enough

to make this provision. To be specific, shorthand, because of
its level of difficulty, should be closed to the slow learner;
however, courses in basic business and recordkeeping should be
closed to others who can meet the challenge of accounting.

Only one author advocates the use of independent
study, where students learn largely by themselves. The use of
packaged learning and programmed materials are the method
being developed for self-instruction and achievement, according
to Farris (1967).

Some authentic consultants on what is most valuable in
education for slow learners might be graduates of such programs
who themselves were slow learners. In a study of this kind,
Hansen (1962) found that 75 per cent of working slow learning
graduates were employed in the same county in which they
attended school. A questionnaire revealed that the school
should make adjustments in course content, instructional
materials, and methods. High school mathematics and indus-
trial arts proved most important to men; business subjects
were valuable to women.

Course Content

The development of personal traits and work habits
can be achieved in slow learners through business education
programs. Some desirable social attitudes can be included in
clerical office practice or a specially-designed personal-
improvement course.

Activities within the scope of slow learners to be in-
cluded in clerical office practice are messenger and mailing

services, office receptioning and switchboard operation,
greeting and entertaining people, telephone and communications,
collating and stapling, proofreading and verifying, sorting,
inventory recording, and filing.

Although secretarial jobs as understood are closed to
slow learners, Agnew (1967, pp. 3-12) develops twelve clerical
duties required of the general clerical worker or the special-
ized clerical worker, most of which are applicable to office
work expectations of low achievers:

1. preparing business forms--both handwritten and typed
2. processing purchasing and sales records
3. maintaining stock inventories and related records
4. processing data for computers
5. handling the mail
6. using telegraphic services
7. using the telephone
8. meeting business callers
9. filing and retrieving records
10. reproducing business papers
11. typing business papers
12. keeping financial records.

Business English and correspondence communications are
designed to improve the learner's competency in spelling,
grammar, reading, letter composition, listening skills, and
speaking.

Recordkeeping has been included in slow learners'
programs in recent years. Tonne (1961, p. 288) includes in
the topics which may be contained in a course in personal-use
bookkeeping such units as using checks, keeping a bankbook,
figuring interest, keeping personal cash accounts and files,
planning and maintaining a budget, taking inventory, keeping
insurance and social security records, figuring income and
other taxes, keeping family income and expense records, and

making known to students opportunities open in bookkeeping
and accounting.

Social business education subjects acquaint the student
with a knowledge of common everyday business practices. These
courses are designed to assist the consumer in planning and
buying economically, as well as using money wisely and to
advantage.

Skill proficiencies resulting from typewriting in-
struction are forms typing, envelopes, business forms, form
letters, tables, reports, and other production jobs.

A simplified basic machine instruction course should
provide for a certain degree of proficiency on the ten-key
adding machine, the full-bank keyboard, key punch, and a
variety of duplicating machines and processes. Using machines
to add checks, deposit slips, sales slips, and proofreading
exercises to check machine accuracy, percentage of net cost
or net per cent of sales, are a few of the learning possibil-
ities for underachievers.

Occupational Preparation and Work Experience

The matter of curriculum development toward education
for employment has been discussed. Eyster (1964) feels that
pre-employment with on-the-job training in business will make
low-ability students employable. His belief on the role of
vocational business education is expressed in these words:

> The function of the prevocational instruction is to
> facilitate employment orientation and development and to
> make pupils more readily trainable on the job in the
> performance of specific tasks.

Work experience in real business firms often results in a two-fold effect: (1) practice in a real situation following basic training and (2) an incentive to continue to learn at top level so that the student will be excellent in performance.

Through cooperation of businessmen, slow students can learn and earn, reinforce their self-confidence, apply job-entry skills learned in school, and be reassured that they are employable.

Business Education
for Consumer Role

As citizens of the world society, the slow learner needs training in the art of wise use of his money as well as being able to remain off employment welfare rolls. As his self-respect demands that he become a self-supporting citizen, the social business education courses can develop his potential as a wise adult consumer. The slow student needs especially to learn the elemental economic facts for wise spending, banking, insurance, keeping personal records accurately, and acquaintance with taxation.

Some business courses beneficial to non-business oriented people and within the learning range of the slow learner are general business, consumer economics, and record-keeping.

Flood (1960) feels everyone should be permitted to take business education courses in secondary schools, if they can profit by the experience for personal use and vocational use

and if the students are educable. She advocates teaching of concepts basic to all consumers.

Teaching Techniques for the Slow Learner

The effective teacher seeks for ways and means to teach students within their range of ability, yet challenges them often. He sets goals that are attainable; he makes competition an interesting experience so that every student competes at his level and knows success.

The effective teacher has the interests of his students in mind and creates a warm, friendly atmosphere. He gains the confidence of his students by displaying fairness and personal interest. Through guidance and encouragement he can build self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-acceptance within each individual. Time and patience are the two major keys to success for the teacher of slow learners.

The teacher of students who know failure and cannot learn at the same rate as their peers will find ways to adapt curriculum and methods to the needs of the students. He will simplify regular methods and routines; he will avoid analyzing and outlining lessons; he will make the lessons interesting to his class.

Sabin (1969) makes a broad statement about the techniques in these words:

> Any teaching strategy that attempts to reverse (the) pattern of failure and establish a momentum toward success must be sufficiently sensitive to accomplish each student's individual problems and his individual objectives.

His principles that must underlie any such strategy are:

1. Make it easy for the student to succeed. . . .

2. Use vocational training for skill development. . . .

3. Respect the student's aspirations. . . .

4. Compensate for reading problems. . . .

Crowley (1969) presents four negative approaches to the restoration of the child's self-esteem through effective teaching: DON'T (1) ridicule, (2) deal in abstracts, (3) be complacent, and (4) rely on past lessons. These are followed by four positive approaches to a successful relationship between the teacher and the learner: DO (1) avoid personality clashes, (2) overcome frustrations, (3) help to project slow learners into the future, and (4) adjust your goals realistically.

Perry (1960) mentions several specific important phrases to keep in mind while working with slow learners. They are to eliminate fear, be sympathetic, give praise, be patient, never be sarcastic, develop confidence, give recognition, provide for success, establish goals, vary assignments, be specific, be sure they understand, encourage questions, answer a few beginning problems, develop good habits, stress punctuality, encourage class participation, demand homework on time, provide for group teamwork, allow time for personal counseling, give responsibilities commensurate with abilities, vary procedures, demonstrate often using visual and auditory aids, adjust courses to suit the needs, use simple language, repeat often, promote competition, lengthen periods when feasible, and offer abbreviated courses.

Business Teacher Orientation to the Needs
of the Slow Learner

The teacher of the slow learner has three means of
learning about the slow learner--from other teachers or
educators versed in the needs of slow learners, the students
themselves, and experience in the field of working with low
achievers. Since the latter two sources are better after one
has had experience with slow learners, the teacher will find
it profitable to learn first from other people's experiences.

Huffman and Welter (1969) suggest five means for
getting to know learners: (1) observation of student reac-
tions and behavior leads to an understanding; (2) establish-
ment of dialogue brings about discovery of differences;
(3) reinforcement of comments draws the student to self-
confidence; (4) listening draws the expression of ideas; and
(5) conversation nurtures development of communication. They
further say that relevant course content, recognition and
acceptance of other learning styles, new teaching styles,
attention-getting devices, and gaining of students' respect
are a few of the necessary steps for effective teaching of
needful youth.

Where possible, pre-service programs for teachers of
slow learners could be profitable. The teacher needs to know
how to make the learning situations appealing and relevant
to the student's experience of the past and plausible for the
future. Not only are the facts important, but the staff need
to be sensitive to the individual learner's needs and trained

to work with individualization of instruction. He must be willing and capable of working beyond the call of duty. Four essential prerequisites for the teacher are empathy, willingness, expertise, and stamina, according to Warner (1970). The teacher must be able to teach students how to "learn how to learn."

How does the business education teacher get to know each individual's problems, needs, and capabilities? Christensen (1969) believes he can first gain much insight by looking up past school records to determine possible learning problems. She suggests talking individually with the students--ask them what they feel is important; ask them if they are interested in trying something new; ask them if they would like to help set up a course of study designed to meet their needs. This is one method for developing personal relations and understanding.

The teacher is the vital ingredient for success. It is the teacher who, working toward functional programs that fulfill the pressing need of the underachiever, must find ways to deviate from traditional methods and standards of learning. He should keep in mind that every child is born with considerable potentials and some children have great obstacles to overcome in order to develop them. He will allow for preparation of students in skills primarily common to the more routine jobs, for teaching one step at a time and repeated as often as necessary until the student has mastered the skill or concept, and then less frequently as a reinforcement.

Materials selected must reflect the world of the learner. Papers, assignments, tests, and projects will be geared for 100 per cent achievement grades for underachievers. Wood (1969a) suggests using topics of instruction with which learners can relate; that is, substituting for stocks and bonds such items as purchasing food and clothing items, using transistor radios, or going to the corner drug store.

Dawson (1968b) lists ten criteria for the teacher of youth from poverty areas. Her questions for evaluation are enumerated as statements in the affirmative and can be used by teachers of slow learners of all socio-economic levels:

1. The subject matter should be related to personal experience.

2. The content should help the students to become more aware of the world around them and of their relationship to it.

3. The content should indicate that the students are gaining in feelings of self-confidence and self-worth.

4. The content should arouse the students' motivation, so that they become personally involved and interested in continuing learning outside the classroom.

5. The content should include new and review material.

6. The students should be given all possible opportunities for self-expression.

7. The teacher should listen in on their wavelength.

8. The teacher should remember not to talk too much.

9. The content should help the students to develop more realistic concepts of their responsibilities as prospective employees.

10. The students should become less fearful of failure on a job.

Dawson (1968b) also mentions practices to avoid:

1. Don't criticize a student in the presence of his peers.

2. Don't preach. (In fact, talk as little as possible.)

3. Don't be condescending or patronizing.

4. Don't judge by middle-class standards.

5. Don't think of things in black-and-white terms if you want the student to be able to see more than one side of a question.

6. Don't be authoritarian.

7. Don't subject the students to changes without advance notice; they are insecure enough already.

8. Don't expect consistency in progress toward more acceptable standard social behavior. There will be many retrogressions precipitated by environmental influences.

9. Don't be afraid to admit your own mistakes.

10. Don't expect to reach every one of your students.

Motivation

Teachers are often the first source of inspiration to students who have had little or no opportunity to succeed before and hence teachers discover that they (slow students) are looking for someone to emulate. Cobb (1961) has found that the attitudes of slow learners toward teachers are more forthright than attitudes of other groups toward teachers. He says they are not striving to make good impressions on teachers but teachers are perhaps more important to slow learners than to better students for emotional stability.

Perhaps this awareness will aid the teacher to be alert to provide the stimulus needed for development of self-esteem and the desire to learn. Schultheis (1969) feels that

slow learners already want very much to learn, but they just
don't want to learn what some teachers want them to learn, and
often there is a motivational problem.

A teacher can directly or indirectly display incentives
for staying in school, the idea of income being a major one.

Barber (1961) stresses the need to develop reliability,
responsibility, punctuality, organizational loyalty, and
cooperativeness. When these qualities are observed by the
student in the teacher, he may tend to adopt the teacher's
qualities.

After the student has begun to build self-esteem and
recognizes reasons for learning subject matter, he can be
motivated toward learning school subjects with a view to the
future. The motivation process is a continuous one, for,
according to Tonne (1965b), the key to motivated learning is
business teachers who have been trained to teach fundamental
processes with ultimate job efficiency.

Methods and Means for Fulfillment of the Needs of Slow Learners

Methods used for teaching and learning in our educa-
tional institutions are designed to help fulfill the needs of
students. Means adapted particularly for the slow learner
will aid him in his acceptance of life situations.

The integration of all his needs presents a challenge
to any classroom teacher. Shack (1969) compiled a few means
by which business education could answer some of the needs of
low achievers: (1) interdisciplinary instruction which

provides for employment and simultaneously satisfies the need for education; (2) theory and practical work experience as a part of education for every student who needs it; (3) offering alternative vocational training without limiting ambition levels; and (4) developing constructive attitudes toward self, education, work, and citizenship.

The continual change of approach in education for maximum achievement has evolved into the adoption of instructional methods that somewhat abandon the traditional textbook memorization type of lessons and make the classroom a student-centered one. Texts, supplementary aids, and audio-visual materials are updated to present current trends in business.

Inquiry, discovery, and problem-solving experiences are geared to lead students to occupational goals. Simulated real-life experiences, field trips, and actual experience enhance the education program. In this section, the writer presents methods that teachers in the field have found effective for slow learners.

Morris (1969) offers several simple, easy-to-do approaches for variation of classroom methods. Some of her suggestions were selected for listing: teach concepts, watch television and copy television games, use the problematic approach for problems to which students can relate, use groups for projects and involved problems, praise often for the slightest indication of growth, use creativity in your reviews, become a "collector", use care in creating tests, use animation, and use your lab--the world of work.

Besides the teacher, the student, and teaching materials, another important aspect of education is the facility appropriate to the particular instruction. Where school facilities are inadequate, Warner (1970) suggests compensation through contractual arrangements with the business community for using offices, factories, and stores.

Business Law.--Repetition is the key word in teaching business law to slow learners. It can be interesting as well as effective. Patchen's (1967) article describes his method for teaching business law to slow learners. He uses a study sheet for each chapter with simple questions to be answered. The same information is used for lecture, explanations, and discussions. Then from the workbook, he presents the material before its assignment as homework. Using the case studies is the fourth repetition of the same lesson, without boredom to the students. For tests and reviews, the summary sheet from the workbook is utilized.

General Business.--General business, or basic business, the pre-business education introductory course teaches slow learners how to live in a world of work. Some means of learning that are meaningful are field trips, which lead to observations, meeting people, lessons in courtesy, and find-ing out what the local resources are in business firms.

Basic Business Courses.--Kleindl (1970) suggests that teachers start with that which all students of high school age are familiar--money. Using this concept, the author began with a student's summer hourly wage and had the class calculate

a week's salary. From there such terms as "gross pay," "deductions," and "net pay" were introduced. Students practiced with some basic mathematic principles as they converted a per cent into a decimal and calculated the income tax.

Spelling and business correspondence are improved through neat, correct letters that are really mailed. Using mail order catalogues taught the students to work out details such as quantity, quality, cost, tax, order forms, weight of goods, means of transportation, freight charges, parcel post, total cost, and re-checking for accuracy (Kleindl, 1970).

The teacher's methods and approaches are adapted when the curriculum is not designed for the slow learner. To compensate for the limited reading and listening skills, Meyer (1965) suggests some ways the teacher can help the student are in getting the cooperation of the English teacher for work on vocabulary words from the basic business text and in practicing listening skills. He advocates changing the pace according to the needs of the class; for instance, to change from lecture-discussion to written or group activity. Mental and physical participation, reports, group activities, board presentations by students, spelldowns, organized note-taking, change of physical layout of the classroom, and even stretching are conducive to better learning.

Bulletin board displays of supplementary information centering around each unit is a means of teaching suggested by Thorne (1964). Regarding homework, her philosophy is to assign problems that are designed to coordinate with the unit

and to carry an underlying message regarding the value of
educational preparation for future personal success. She
further recommends group projects in the form of interviews
with businessmen, prepared reports about trends in job oppor-
tunities, and panel discussions on national trends and
automation.

Typewriting.--Typewriting teachers of slow students
stress the importance of teacher attitudes, understanding,
patience, and repetition as import components of success. The
stress on speed, accuracy, and volume of job production seem
to be secondary to and follow other objectives. Dobbs (1966)
mentions specifically to allow students time to study proce-
dures, time to practice, and an absolute minimum of variables
in assigned problems. To these Blake (1968) adds close super-
vision and individual guidance, the learning-by-doing method,
resourcefulness of the teacher, avoidance of analysis and
outlines, and execution rather than planning.

Mongo (1967) enumerates several recommendations:
(1) conduct a systematic, objective analysis of students en-
rolled; then select methods and materials; (2) adopt appro-
priate methods and activities that harmonize with their needs;
(3) adjust the intensity of the subject matter; (4) expect
modest, continuous long-term growth; (5) teach for objectives
that are meaningful to all--teachers, students, and adminis-
trators; (6) use frequent, carefully executed demonstrations;
(7) teach them how to analyze their own weaknesses and select

drills according to their needs; and (8) evaluate them frequently, as behavior evaluation is vital.

Guidelines for very slow learners during the first semester of typewriting as presented by Rothchild include mastery of the keyboard through drills, races, and other motivational games, followed by daily work, with emphasis on vocabulary during the first six weeks. Straight copy, cards, envelopes, erasing and correcting errors, and typing on lines would follow the keyboard mastery drills. In the second semester, more difficult matter, such as variety of letter styles, centering, tables, and the use of the dictionary for word division would be introduced and skills developed (Roth-child, 1965).

In a unique analogy to safe driving, Stinson (1968) states that some means for teaching typewriting to slow learners is through concentration on a few major objectives, realistic to the student. She suggests the student-help-student method for reinforcement of information acquired.

The instructor meets serious instructional problems in teaching slow learners, but, in the words of Mongo (1967), there

. . . are many stimulating challenges to professional power and acumen; exceeding the problems are rewards of satisfaction and fulfillment resulting from the obser-vation of less capable students demonstrating satisfactory achievement in the use of the typewriter for varied, meaningful purposes.

Shorthand.--Slow students are usually excluded from shorthand because of the level of difficulty in memorizing outlines, taking shorthand, and transcribing mailable letters,

which requires proficiency in spelling, grammar, punctuation, and ability to set up the letter without assistance.

Office Practice.--General clerical office training covers a wide variety of duties--those of typewriting, general office procedures, forms typing, mailing and messenger service, telephoning, filing, preparing a payroll, etc. Articles under the classification of clerical practice for slow learners were the most numerous for this research paper.

In teaching clerical office practice, sometimes teachers make it a practice to move to a new unit when students appear bogged down; to skip the more difficult lessons; or to progress slowly and cover whatever units can be conveniently covered. Archer (1967) cautions teachers against these practices without investigation. He feels that sometimes the teacher's reasons for adopting any of these decisive factors for the rate of teaching and/or learning must be re-evaluated. Discovery of "why" students bog down or fail to learn at a faster rate should be the reasons for setting a pace. Intensity of difficulty, he says, may be in the mind of the teacher rather than in the interests of the students.

Individualization in the form of well-prepared student-coaches, carefully selected assignments, and directed work experience for the development of self-interest and built-in motivation leads to confidence and proficiency in the learner. The careful selection of audio-visual aids is important since those which illustrate concepts for the student should be simple enough for his comprehension of the idea expressed.

In most cases, teachers have been advised to give extra time to slow learners; however, Archer (1967) cautions the teacher to use discretion about lessons to be prolonged. For instance, he says to allow time to learn skills within one's ability, but not time for intricate details of machine manipulation. He further believes that expended time ought to be spent on such interests as developing an entry-job skill to a level of on-the-job competence.

Hodges (1969) follows through with this concept; for example, she says that the clerical-skill development can take place as a natural outgrowth of instruction and practice in comparing, copying, computing, and compiling information. She further stresses the improvement of legibility in writing and printing and the use of realistic business papers.

In the instructional unit of filing, a practical proficiency in alphabetic, numeric, geographic, and subject filing is preferred to rote memory, and should be attained through practice with realistic business papers (Hodges, 1969).

The model simulated office, currently designed to lead the student through the employment processes, provides an opportunity for development of self-confidence in the slow learner. The cycle of interview, acceptance for employment, and simulated job experience show the student what will be expected of him in a business office. The experience teaches him the job through training that progresses from simple to complex tasks.

Ellenbogen (1964) presents a simplified enriched clerical office course for slow learners, from the beginning

background in general business to perfectly executed jobs at the end of the second year. His first recommendation to the teacher is to set up his framework, to know his outline, and to understand the content. Homework and reading will be simple.

Ellenbogen's (1964) first term would include simple lessons from communications to mailing services, from taxes to banking, from character traits to good grooming, from job application to social security, from simple office routines to a filing project, and even a demonstration on business machines. With the help of teaching aids, the teacher ought to arouse curiosity and answer questions.

The second term, according to Ellenbogen (1964), would be devoted to striving for proficiency certificates in filing, appearance, excellence of notebook, and leadership. This term would be arranged as a laboratory program, with jobs shifting every twelve days and with perfection as the goal in completion of projects.

Bookkeeping.--Bookkeeping requires a minimum knowledge of general mathematics, but is designed primarily for average students; however, sometimes slow learners are placed in bookkeeping courses.

McMillan (1969) suggests five general guidelines to follow when working with students whose skills are poorly developed and whose capacities for self-direction are limited:

1. Develop a regular daily routine, giving the aims, purpose, and objectives of each new routine.

2. Use methodical, repetitive, and visual aspects of bookkeeping in developing work patterns. Flow-charts of procedures are especially useful.

3. Respond equally to all students--regardless of race or social standing. Show empathy.

4. Be positive in your approach. Tell the student that success is possible; remind him of this often.

5. Learn to understand the disadvantaged student. Develop a self-concept within him that is desirable.

In a bookkeeping research project, Johnson (1966) separated the slow learners from the regular class and found that students in the slow class lacked the leadership of the average and above-average students; they could not perform simple addition and subtraction problems. The students had a short attention span coupled with reading problems; they had experienced failure in other subjects and took it for granted they would fail bookkeeping also and were apathetic toward learning in general. When facing failure and frustration they don't seem to care one way or the other, he says.

Humphrey (1967) explains his procedure in teaching a low-ability class. Students were in the thirtieth percentile in ITED tests; C, D, and F were their predominant grades. He followed a regular procedure, the only difference being in length of time and the amount of help given to his students. His explanation of the chapter was followed by working an application problem with the class and assignment of an application problem which was begun in class and finished as homework. After checking the assignment the next day, another problem was assigned. Drills were assigned, discussed, and

checked before the chapter was assigned for reading or the study guide was checked. After the study guide was checked, a new chapter was introduced. His assessment of this plan was that there were no discipline problems and most of all, the students were doing something worthwhile.

Haga (1961) simplified bookkeeping lessons by adopting the exclusive use of two-column journals and two-column ledgers, three-column general ledgers and subsidiary accounts and statements, and the ten-column worksheet. His advice to teachers is, "Don't be afraid to depart from your textbook if you feel that your students' needs demand it."

Recordkeeping.--A personal-use, or simplified method of bookkeeping, has been developed for the slow students in recent years. Johnson (1966) offered recordkeeping instead of bookkeeping for low-ability students, and he found that the problems and exercises are easy to read and follow. Interest, initiative, and motivation are increased; frustration is reduced; and arithmetic and reading ability are improved. Students learn business vocabulary and procedures without experiencing performance difficulties and complex problems. They are better prepared for business employment to do simple office tasks of a clerical nature.

Johnson (1966) makes the following recommendations for recordkeeping teachers: (1) select students carefully; (2) use regular recordkeeping textbook with workbook oriented to the level of slow learners; (3) gear exercises and problems for personal use and keep on a clerical level that requires

little or no complicated procedures; (4) stress simple arithmetic problems in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division; (5) keep homework at a minimum, as directed teacher supervision is best; (6) give praise and encouragement; (7) devise simple supplementary units stressing banking, credit, taxes, and social security, correlating them with the problems in the text; (8) use visual aids; (9) institute variety to retain interest; and (10) use a practice set.

Textbooks and Instructional Materials

Once the objectives of the curriculum and course content have been reviewed, the methods and means for instruction of slow learners have been studied, and the audio-visual and other supplementary instructional materials have been secured, the textbook selection should be considered.

Sparks (1967a) lists ten criteria for the selection of instructional materials for disadvantaged youth. He says that they should:

1. be in agreement with the objectives of the school, the program, and the course in which they will be used.

2. be adaptable to varying ability levels and individual learning rates, yet provide for learning in depth.

3. provide for further development in the basic skills of reading, arithmetic, and oral communication.

4. remove the communication barrier between the teacher and the student and help carry the burden of instruction.

5. provide for personal and social development in the areas of self-confidence, self-evaluation,

self-motivation, school skills, and behavior patterns appropriate to business and office occupations.

6. add meaning to the course by providing short-range goals, and characters with whom the students can identify.

7. provide for occupational study and skill in finding, keeping, and advancing in a job.

8. provide knowledge about social services, group relations, the economics of community life, the value of work, the impact of technology on employment opportunities, opportunities for work available locally, health care, and legal responsibilities.

9. be multisensory in nature, show that ideas and theories are practical through audiovisual and manipulative methods, and stress the "how to" rather than the "what to" method.

10. be explicitly and simply stated and well illustrated.

Sparks (1967a) suggests that materials to meet these criteria may be obtained from commercial publishers, professional societies, government agencies, instructional materials laboratories, teacher educators, business, and industry. Additional materials may be prepared by the teacher to meet the needs of his students and the requirements of the business community in which they will be employed.

As educational systems change and vary, so do instructional materials. Byers (1968) has prepared a list of characteristics to meet the demands of "instructional materials . . . designed and developed in relation to preinstructional behavior and desired performance by the learner":

1. Short units of learning that vary in length from 32 to 192 pages--manageable for students who have limited attention spans or who have word recognition difficulty.

2. Self-direction and self-correction format.

3. Learner participation that permits response and use of information received.

4. Printed media supported by sound-sight components. . . .

5. Visually "slick"-looking and frequent illustrations.

6. Anecdotal writing style that encourages student self-involvement, with an entertaining and informative content.

7. Content that is multi-ethnic.

8. Constant reinforcement of learning through puzzles, games, projects, models, and small-group activity.

9. Variety of learning styles within the same material.

Business and Community's Role in Employment of Slow Learners

The community business firms will hire the graduates of the high schools who are prepared for employment opportunities available. Some businesses are willing to hire slow learning graduates for occupations within their abilities.

Wells (1967) found in her research study that many business firms did not wish to hire (or did not have jobs available for)slow learning graduates, but that some do hire these graduates to their satisfaction. In another case, Perry (1960) received three negative opinions of businessmen: (1) there is little interest in the business world for hiring substandard workers; (2) office work is becoming more specialized and requires more intelligent people than ever before; and (3) retailing is becoming more competitive--does not want ineffective, slow, unimaginative individuals.

However, Perry (1960) also obtained some constructive suggestions from businessmen about what slow learners could

do: duplicating and related work, stock work, general office

menial tasks, reception duties, clerical typing work, and

sales work.

Perhaps it is the duty of teachers to acquaint busi-

nessmen with the idea that some office work can be accomplished

by those of lower ability and persuade them to hire and help

these people. An example of successful employment of slow

learning graduates is cited here. Henderson (1963) analyzed

and compared the vocational experience of a group of former

high school business students who had bookkeeping with a

similar group who had not had bookkeeping. He concluded from

his study that students of low ability may be expected to

perform routine duties as part of other business jobs; book-

keeping may serve them to prepare them for bookkeeping

duties which they might otherwise not be able to learn on

the job; and that such duties being performed were satis-

factory to the employer.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to identify from the
literature between 1960 and 1970 the capabilities of the slow
learner in business education. From the examination of the
literature relative to slow learners in business education,
the writer found that the mental age of the slow learner is
up to two years below their chronological age. They are
unable to maintain the learning pace of their peers with
average and above-average intellect.

The environment often has a negative influence on the
education progress of the slow learner whose lack of oppor-
tunities fails to improve his desire to learn. He needs more
affection, encouragement, and feeling of acceptance than the
average student; he can perform simple tasks satisfactorily,
even repeatedly without boredom. Some businessmen have found
that slow learning graduates are productive workers.

Business educators must constantly revise and improve
their curriculum and methods in order to maintain the interest
of the low achievers. Methods which allow for student activity,
multisensory media, a variety of lesson presentations, and
plenty of repetition will be most satisfactory.

The fruit of business education's preparation is in actual office employment after graduation. It is the responsibility of the business education teachers to acquaint business firms with the capabilities of the slow learner.

Conclusions

Low ability students are receiving more attention from educators today than ever before. Business education teachers are making a substantial contribution toward boosting the morale of slow learners and showing them how to achieve and become successful wage earners in office occupations.

Accomplishment in business education means accomplishment on the job. Success for slow learners depends somewhat on the teacher's encouragement; the self-esteem of the low achiever is built through compliments on jobs performed well and guidance toward realistic goals.

Businessmen will react favorably when they become convinced that slow-learning graduates can be productive employees in their business firms.

Very little in the way of conclusive research has been conducted to determine the satisfaction of slow learning graduates in business, their progress, or their promotions.

Recommendations

Because current legislation requires that American children attend school until age sixteen, the schools of America have an obligation to teach them. As slow learners comprise almost 20 per cent of the total school population,

provisions should be made to help them to reach their maximum capacity for learning so they will be prepared to become productive, self-supporting citizens.

It is recommended that the public and private educational systems of the United States change their requirements for graduation so that slow learners can achieve in accordance with their ability and graduate on that status. The diploma could indicate to the prospective employer that the student graduated under the plan adopted for slow learners.

Until school requirements are adapted to suit the needs of the slow learners, business education teachers should set realistic standards that can be achieved by low achievers. Slow learners need assignments that are more general, more time to complete their assignments with accuracy, and individualized instruction that will encourage as well as motivate them to strive for success.

That business education department chairmen and/or supervisors provide in-service workshops for teachers of slow students seems essential if teachers are to become aware of the needs and desires of those pupils. This could be accomplished through sharing sessions, development of instructional materials, and demonstrations of methods that have proved successful.

Business teachers prepare students for office occupations; therefore, they can act as liaison persons between school administration and business administration. They can

initiate human relations programs, dialogue, and arrange for
on-the-job cooperative training programs between school and
community.

A realistic means for learning about and developing
wholesome attitudes of business and the community toward low
achievers is through research. Research is recommended to
study the success of slow learning graduates in office employ-
ment. This would mean not merely follow-up surveys of those
in employment, but some measurement of their success in terms
of employment, satisfaction, self-improvement, progress, and
promotion.

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