



Research in Brief

Adolescents and the Effect of Family Life Education

A study of family life education was carried out to determine if the attitudes held by adolescents, especially toward themselves and toward their families, could be changed in a positive direction as a result of participation in a one-semester course in family life education. Three directional hypotheses were tested. The experimental groups and the control groups were tested at the beginning and at the end of the semester. The results of the study suggest that an adolescent's feelings about himself can be improved, thus contributing to increased self-acceptance and a more positive self-image.

Sample, Design, and Procedures

Three experimental groups were used: public school girls, public school boys, and private school boys. The first two of these were enrolled in a combined male-female class.

There was no randomization in the selection of the subjects. This was due to the position of the school administration regarding the subject matter. Neither school was willing to assign students to the special class. The public school required signed parental permission. The final sizes of the groups were: public experimental girls, 8; public control girls, 8; public experimental boys, 9; public control boys, 9; private experimental boys, 12; private control boys, 12. Therefore, a total of 29 experimental students and 29 control students were involved in the total experiment, making a total sample size of 58 subjects.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis one stated that students who have taken a family life education course achieve a significantly greater increase in knowledge of the concepts covered in the course curriculum than do students who haven't taken such a course.

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Hypothesis two stated that students who have taken a family life education course achieve a significantly greater positive gain in attitude toward themselves than do students who haven't taken such a course.

Hypothesis three stated that students who have taken a family life education course achieve a significantly greater positive gain in their attitude toward family life than do students who haven't taken such a course.

Results

Hypothesis one and hypothesis two were supported, while three was not.

The foremost implication of the study, suggested by the results of both the experimental research and the subjective data, is that family life education at the secondary level acquaints students with the developmental aspects of human growth and development, sexual functioning, dating, mate selection, marital interaction, and familial relationships. In addition, it may serve as a means whereby the student acquires a more realistic and positive self-image.

Experiences related to this study, including the parental responses to the evaluative questionnaires, suggest that the issue of "domestic privacy" recedes into the background when the parents, the community, and the school authorities join together in planning, implementing, and evaluating the course. Several meetings of the teacher with the parents of the public school experimental students

produced productive thought and mutual understandings.

This study indicates that while there's a discernible need for the student to gain more information and knowledge regarding family life, there's, in addition, an effect need which may be met partially through participation in such a course. Increased degrees of self-acceptance and self-esteem may be the most important result of such courses. The results of this study would further suggest that such courses would benefit from continual rigorous evaluation, both empirical and subjective.

Finally, the rationale for the inclusion of family life courses within the secondary school curriculum may be strengthened when the advantages to the adolescent and his parents are seen in the light of personal development, self-acceptance, and positive feelings of self-worth.

"The Effect of Family Life Education on the Values and Attitudes of Adolescents." John F. Crosby, *The Family Coordinator*, XX (April, 1971), 137-40.

V. McGaugh

4-H Boy-Girl Ratio

The purpose of this study was to identify possible causes of the desparity in 4-H enrollment between boys and girls. The states involved in the study were Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming, and Utah. Four rural and four urban counties were studied in each state. The data collection involved a staff interview in all counties and two written instruments:

one a county data document and the second an agent attitude questionnaire.

The author compared the male-female ratio in membership and leadership. He found little difference between the rural and urban counties in the boy-man, girl-woman relationship. When he compared the boy-girl ratio with the man-woman ratio, he found a nearly perfect correlation.

The author checked the rates of re-enrollment for boys and girls. He found that boys tend to drop out in greater numbers, proportionally, than girls. He also found that increases in total membership are based almost entirely on increased recruitment of first-year members rather than by improvement in re-enrollments.

Davis developed a weighted ranking for the projects taken by boys and girls. The top three projects for boys were beef, horse, and sheep. For girls, they were clothing, food preparation, and horse. The projects of most interest to boys, livestock, attracted most of the farm and rural boys. The same projects, by virtue of their space requirements, aren't open to a majority of urban boys. Apparently, none of the project areas that are *available* to boys are very attractive to large percentages of urban boys. The author makes a point of the word "available." He feels projects such as small engines, electronics, rocketry, and others of similar nature are given a minimal amount of attention by the professional staff compared to the traditional projects.

Davis concludes that boys don't join 4-H in the same numbers as girls

because the programs offered don't meet the needs of nonfarm boys. The only counties in the study having even proportions of boys were in very rural situations with strong livestock programs.

Other factors contributing to a large girl-boy despairity include: program rigidity, inadequate and uninteresting project materials, lack of staff training and experience in new project areas, lack of administrative and staff support for urban programs, difficulty in finding and recruiting male leaders in urban areas, and the prevailing "farm boy" image of 4-H.

A Study of Boy-Girl Ratio in 4-H in Seven Western States. Robert F. Davis. Berkeley, California: University of California, 1970.

D. Stormer

Profile of Missouri Youth Agent

All Missouri youth agents received a questionnaire to collect background information and to determine how they spend their time and how they'd prefer to distribute their time between 4-H and youth programs other than 4-H. Fifty-three of the 56 youth agents returned the questionnaire.

Some of the findings include:

1. Seventy percent of the youth agents spend more than half their time working on 4-H programs, 17 percent divide their time equally between 4-H and youth programs, and 13 percent spend less than half their time on 4-H programs.
2. A frustration index was devel-

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oped by determining the difference between the amount of time actually devoted to youth and 4-H and the amount of time an agent preferred to spend on youth and 4-H programs. The index calculated from this difference yields the following average frustration levels: 10 for agents conducting youth programs primarily, 14 for agents dividing their time between 4-H and youth, and 28 for agents devoting the majority of their time to 4-H. According to this index, agents doing primarily 4-H were the most frustrated.

The investigator conducted personal interviews with 15 agents who had tenure of 4 years or longer. Some conclusions from the interviews were:

1. Seventy-three percent of the interviewed agents said they perceived a conflict between what the personnel office sees as a youth agent role and what the youth agent actually finds in his permanent assignment. The youth agent is hired to develop innovative youth programs, but when he gets on the job, he finds local pressure to work on 4-H events and activities.
2. All youth agents stated there were no steps to advance in youth work other than to change locations. Seven of the 15 agents viewed their careers in youth work with uncertainty. They plan to move toward a subject-matter specialty within Extension or leave altogether.

3. Eight youth agents would prefer to be attached to a campus academic department. Others would prefer a campus home base that is interdisciplinary in nature. The academic disciplines of education and family relations were preferred as most closely identified with youth programs by 11 youth agents. Three chose sociology and one selected youth work. Thirteen agents considered the educational professions as closely related to the job of the youth agent.
4. Youth agents perceive that the University of Missouri-Columbia youth staff should perform the following roles: develop specific objectives for youth programs, assist in determining needs and methods of conducting programs, train agents, develop new programs and techniques, and provide backup for new agents.

Profile of a Missouri Youth Agent. Harold S. Smith. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri, Department of Extension Education, 1970.

D. Stormer

Commitments of Leaders As Predictors of Attitudes Toward New Social Issues in a Rural Community Social System. Laverne B. Forest. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin, 1970. [Available from University Microfilms, 300 N.

Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106. Order number: 70-24,691. Price: MF \$4.00, Xerox \$10.15.]

The study aimed at developing and testing a social system model that would predict the attitudes of rural community leaders during newly proposed social changes. Specifically, the study described and analyzed a small, rural, Wisconsin community while 29 proposed community improvement recommendations from The University of Wisconsin Landscape Architecture Department were being debated.

The study supported the hypothesis that socioeconomic commitments, such as education, organizational memberships, leadership status, property investments, and tenure are more predictive of attitudinal commitments toward new, proposed social changes than are social-psychological commitments, such as organizational participation, social interactions, personal influence, and contacts outside the community.

In studying respondents' attitudes toward what they judged to be the 6 most important of their 29 recommendations, attitude intensity or the strength of their feelings was found to be reflected more in the socioeconomic variables.

Thus, change agents must consider the interrelationship of social system commitments and commitments to proposed social changes. Further studies are needed on how change agents can enhance commitments to proposed changes.

P. Boyle

A Community Approach to Youth Work in East London.

Derek Cox. London, England: YWCA, 1970. [Available from Young Women's Christian Association, 16-22 Great Russell Street, London W.C. 1, England.]

Instituted as part of "Avenues Unlimited," a community development approach to youth services was tried in the cosmopolitan inner-city slum district of Spitalfields, East London. Efforts began in 1966 with a clean-up campaign, a neighborhood club for parents and youth, and other activities by the Residents' Association of Spitalfields. Meanwhile, the Spitalfields Advisory Group, consisting of workers from local agencies, studied local needs and produced such practical achievements as the Christchurch Gardens Playground, a summer vacation program for children and youth, and youth training camps.

A Drug Dependency Group carried on leadership training and drug addict research and counseling. It also helped form a treatment center in a local hospital and undertook preventive field work. Project successes and failures are discussed in detail, with emphasis on the author's experiences.

The report includes descriptions of the treatment center's work, intensive field work with a registered addict, the author's work with unattached and delinquent youth, and the Spitalfields Youth Action Group, as well as opinions on the roles of consultants, youth officers, and man-

agement committees in experimental youth work.

J. P. Leagans

Life Skills: A Course in Applied Problem Solving. Prince Albert, Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan NewStart, Inc., 1971. [Available from Saskatchewan NewStart, Inc., 1st Avenue and River Street, East, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.]

The Life Skills course of Saskatchewan NewStart is a serious attempt to integrate educational and psychotherapeutic principles and techniques to develop personal competence in basic aspects of life—self-concept, family life, leisure, community participation, employment. It's offered, therefore, not only as a promising technique for training and counseling, but as a new model for human and social development.

Effectively implementing the course requires that the sponsoring agency (educational, welfare, or otherwise) integrate social science concepts with those of organizational management in its own operation. Instead of treating clients as dependents, the course is designed to teach people mature, effective, autonomous behavior. Preceded by two versions based on sensitivity training and skill objectives, the course described here stresses the problem-solving process.

Three modifications of the course are now being tested in the Saskatchewan NewStart Laboratory at Prince Albert. This document includes training content and methods, provisions for recruiting and training Life Skills

coaches, models of skill development and application, and elements in lesson planning, together with extensive bibliographies.

J. P. Leagans

C.D.C.'s: New Hope for the Inner City. Report of the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on Community Development Corporations. Geoffrey Faux. New York, New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1971.

This report and accompanying paper examine the community development corporations in the urban environment. The major focus of these corporations isn't profit to the shareholders, but providing jobs and services in the urban ghetto.

The background paper points out the strong and weak points of such undertakings, especially the length of time it takes for the corporations to become self-sufficient.

It's a most useful report for those interested in work in the urban environment, especially in the area of management and participation.

D. Littrell

A Three County Planning Program. John A. Croll. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri-Columbia, University Extension Division, 1971. [Available from: Department of Regional and Community Affairs, University of Missouri-Columbia, Clark Hall. Order number: MP 199. Single copies free, bulk rate on request.]

The objectives of the case study

are to provide a narrative account of: (1) how the community development process can contribute to the solution of the micro-macro integration problem and (2) the rich opportunities such an activity can provide for planned learning experiences using many teaching methods and techniques.

The planning effort grew out of a concern for orderly development because a large corps of engineers dam was going to be constructed in the area. It was felt that growth would occur and to be of most benefit it should be controlled.

D. Littrell

“Toward the Prevention of Incompetence.” J. McVicker Hunt. In his book *The Challenge of Incompetence and Poverty: Papers on the Role of Early Education*. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1969, pp. 142-89.

Research indicates that trying to modify the child-rearing practices of poor parents by professional talk only fails. These same parents can learn by observing approaches of expert teachers and the effects these approaches have on their children's behavior, especially when these effects are explained in language the parents can understand. Moreover, the parents are able to communicate these practices to their neighbors.

Such findings suggest a way of intervening in community organization that fits well with the tradition of the Public Health Service and what is now called Community Mental

Health. This would take the form of Parent and Child Centers. These centers should provide a facility where the families in a region, numbering perhaps 2,000 to 3,000, could get the full range of services available within their communities, either directly or through informed and skilled referral. Centers should provide the leadership required to develop day-care facilities within the more limited neighborhoods, and to get the fathers, older siblings, and older children to participate in the programs by taking their turns as teachers' aides.

V. McGaugh

Use of the Mass Media by the Urban Poor. Bradley S. Greenberg and Brenda Dervin. New York, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970.

Studied children, teens, and adults. Fourth and fifth graders from low-income families preferred television over the other mass media. Their families averaged two working TV sets per home—the same as with children from other classes. They spent six to seven hours a day watching TV, compared with four to five for those from middle-class homes. They also were more likely to say that TV was true-to-life than were the middle-income children, and black children more than white.

Findings from ghetto and suburban teens — representing low-income blacks and whites, and middle-income whites—yielded similar findings.

For low-income adults, one-fourth spent eight hours a day watch-

ing TV, compared with five percent for those in the general population. Also, 70 percent of the low-income adults indicated that most of their news of the world was obtained from TV. A large majority said that they would put more credence in the news they received on TV than news they read in the newspapers.

M. Miller

Do Extension Newsletters Really Work? Leighton Watson. Morgantown, West Virginia: West Virginia University, Cooperative Extension Service, 1970.

This study surveyed opinion leaders in the state's eastern panhandle on the communication efficiency of an Extension newsletter to these people. Opinion leaders read the newsletter, but there was less evidence that they used the information to influence public opinion toward the university's extension programs.

M. Miller

Studies on the Efficiency of Learning by Listening to Time-Compressed Speech. Thomas G. Sticht. Alexandria, Virginia: Human Resources Research Organization, 1970. [Order number: ED 041 225. Price: MF 65¢, HC \$3.29.]*

The time-compression process makes it possible to shorten a verbal presentation. If you use the time saved to repeat or extend the information presented, will the listener learn more? Not clearly so, according to this research. Neither repeat-

ing nor extending information improved learning over that obtained by listening to uncompressed information for an equal amount of time. This was true for both high and low mental aptitude subjects. Sticht feels that the implication that more information can be learned in a unit of time with moderate compression remains to be substantiated.

M. Miller

"Laboratory Versus Lecture in Training Executives." Lee Bolman. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, VI (July-August-September, 1970), 323-35.

This study looked at the differences between laboratory human relations (T-group) training and a lecture-discussion approach to interpersonal relations in organizations. The programs produced equal change in participants' stated beliefs about effective interpersonal behavior. Lab training showed greater effects on participants' perceptions of themselves and on their behavior as analyzed from tape recordings of case discussion meetings. There was evidence that participants had trouble transferring T-group learnings to other parts of the program. Also, there was considerable fade-out of the effects of training.

M. Miller

"Occupation Qualifications and Success of On-the-Job Trainees." John Stephen Chilson. Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, Columbus, no date. Looked at occupational qualifi-

cations of trainees in a pre-employment program by the Center for Adult Education at OSU and the Columbus Urban League. Compared these qualifications with successful completion of on-the-job training. A total of 75 inner-city residents (majority black) were chosen. They had records of occupational and educational failures. Those found most likely to complete the on-the-job training were: women, trainees scoring higher on spatial aptitude, those with less work experience, and those with vocational interests related to the actual training positions.

M. Miller

"The Comparative Effectiveness of the Educational Network and Face-to-Face Lectures for University Extension In-Service Training." Vernon Llano Pellett. Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1970.

Compared an Educational Telephone Network (ETN) with face-to-face, in-service training of county Extension agents—both with a control group. On all measures, neither method was significantly different from the other. But both, in knowledge-gain measures, were better than the control. Those using ETN expressed favorable attitudes toward it.

M. Miller

Some Problems in the Behavioral Science Education of Managers and Management Instructors in Developing Nations. K. M. Thiagarajan and C. K. Prahalad. New York, N.Y.:

Rochester University, Management Research Center, 1969. [Available from: Clearinghouse for Federal Scientific and Technical Information, Springfield, Virginia 22151. Order number: AD-700-285. Price: MF 65¢, HC \$3.00.]

This paper discusses some of the problems encountered in conducting behaviorally oriented programs, using a small group laboratory approach, in developing nations. The organizational and social contexts in developing nations that might contribute to issues in management training are briefly outlined. Specific problems relating to training executives and trainers are discussed and some suggestions are offered based on experiences in India. The document contains 33 references.

C. Trent

Some Aptitudes and Abilities of Vietnamese Technicians: Implications for Training. G. M. Guthrie *et al.* Arlington, Virginia: Institute for Defense Analyses, Science and Technology Division, 1970. [Available from: National Technical Information Service, Operations Division, Springfield, Virginia 22151. Order number: AD-716-783. Price: MF 95¢, HC \$3.00].

This document reflects the premise that complex equipment can't be used and maintained effectively without the ability to understand technical manuals. In addition to text, such manuals contain line drawings, photographs, engineering diagrams, and

other kinds of information in graphic form.

In the context of transferring American military equipment to the armed forces of the Republic of Vietnam, certain abilities relating to interpreting technical graphic material were investigated. A sample of 82 Vietnamese Air Force technicians served as subjects in several experiments. The men performed less effectively than American controls on tool knowledge and on several measures of spatial aptitude involving the ability to comprehend graphic conventions (mainly visual in perspective). Deficiencies in these areas were attributed to experience and background factors.

Recommendations were made that include the development of special training methods to overcome de-

ficiencies in interpreting technical illustrations. Fifteen references and sample test materials are included.

C. Trent



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