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THE PROBLEM OF THE SLOW LEARNER
WITH APPLICATION TO FOUR ARMENIAN SCHOOLS IN BEIRUT

A T H E S I S

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF BEIRUT COLLEGE FOR WOMEN
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BY

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TO MY FATHER AND SPECIALLY MOTHER

WHO HAVE OPENED MY EYES TO THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE

BIOGRAPHY

The writer, a Lebanese citizen, was born of Armenian parentage. She received her elementary and part of her secondary education in a French school. Her secondary education was continued in the Beirut Armenian Evangelical High School, from which she graduated in June, 1949. In October of the same year, she was admitted to the Beirut College for Women and she received her degree in Associate in Arts in 1951. After several years of business and part-time study, she discovered that her main interests were in Education and English. Therefore, she decided to continue in the same College for two more years, majoring in Education and English.

In June of this year, 1956-1957, the writer hopes to receive her degree of Bachelor of Arts from the Beirut College for Women.

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to Four Armenian Schools in Beirut.

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THE PROBLEM OF THE SLOW LEARNER
WITH APPLICATION TO FOUR ARMENIAN SCHOOLS IN BEIRUT

INTRODUCTION

In all communities children are found who are unable to profit equally from the same education without some kind of special or individualized instruction. Fortunately, my research has shown that in the United States a number of communities are developing special educational programs for the physically, mentally and socially defective or retarded children. They have succeeded in doing so because of available finances, of public school system with its requirements of attendance, of improvements in psychology and its applications, of a testing program, and of interest in the under privileged. These factors helped schools in the United States to diagnose and remedy problem cases.

Unfortunately the case has been different in this part of the world. Because of lack of intelligence and other types of tests, the school administrators have been unable to ascertain the difference in degree between the mental ages of individual children and consequently generation after generation the back seats of most classrooms are being occupied by retarded or slow children. Because of required

government examination (started by the French) the school administrators have to follow rigid and overloaded curricula full of subject matter only. Because of lack of specialists and of insufficient number of trained teachers the needs of the individual child have been completely neglected.

Education at the present time has more significance and a different interpretation than that of the past. Therefore, teaching at present should be more than just imparting knowledge. It should help each child to the best of his capacities. To do this, the school administrator or the responsible staff member should try all possible means to find out individual differences, to look for their underlying causes and only then adjust the curriculum or devise special methods.

As slow learning has become one of the most insistent of present school problems, I shall attempt, in this study, to show how important it is to understand the whole child, his physical, mental, social and emotional needs, to be interested in each one individually, to recognize fully his social, educational, occupational potentialities, his capacities and limitations, his likes and dislikes so that appropriate instruction to each individual be given.

Second, I shall attempt to show how the cooperation of school physician, psychologist and parents is essential for the understanding and treatment of a problem child.

Third, I shall try to show some of the possible causes of slow learning and some possible ways to handle these cases so that they may make progress through school.

Last, I shall try to indicate the present status of slow learners in four Armenian schools in Beirut. The information has been gathered from an investigation made for this study. I shall then draw my conclusions.

II. Definition of the problem

Featherstone, of Teachers College, Columbia University, in his book, the Slow Learner, defines slow-learningness as follows: "Ordinarily, slow-learningness or slow learner refers to the capacity of an individual to learn intellectual things -the kind of capacity that is measured by verbal intelligence tests"¹. There is no fixed standard or level of ability below which a pupil must be called a slow learner, but in common practice² pupils with an I.Q. below 91 and above 74 are so labeled".

Harry J. Baker, of Psychological Clinic, Detroit Public Schools, in his book, Introduction to Exceptional Children, defines slow learning as follows: "Generally, slow-learning children are somewhat below average in school achievements and general mental ability. In terms of intelligence tests they range in I.Q. from 70 to 75 up to 90, but mental limits should not be too definite. Many of them have limitations in factors such as physical conditions, personality and other areas. In spite of these minor deviations they pass for normal children, since such differences are comparatively small. However, the cumulative effects of these deviations over a period of years create problems of extreme maladjustment³ for the schools as well as for the pupils themselves".

(1) W.B. Featherstone, The Slow Learner, p. 2.

(2) Ibid., p. 2

(3) Harry J. Baker, Introduction to Exceptional Children, p. 244.

From the above definitions, we can deduce and say that the slow learners are pupils whose I.Q.'s range from 70 to 91 on individual intelligence tests and who cannot meet average grade academic standards year by year.

we must differentiate between the temporarily slow and permanently slow child. The former's slowness may be due to causes which may be cured in the course of time. The child may make more rapid progress if appropriate measures are taken by both educators and parents. In the latter case, the slowness is inborn and all measures taken to help him may lead him only to perform a job at his own limited level of achievement.

The educator is faced with the problem of how to distinguish scientifically between different degrees of slowness. This problem may be solved by finding the three ages of the child, namely: the chronological age (C.A.), measured from his date of birth; the mental age (M.A.), found by intelligence tests on condition that they are administered properly by specialists to avoid all possible errors or misinterpretation; the educational age (E.A.), measured from scholastic tests. The latter is made by different school subjects and administered to groups of children at each age. Then the average of the child's performance is taken on different scholastic tests. In this way it is possible to discern an educational age for each child. From these three measures we have ratios which may help the educator in knowing a child's status.

The assumption that the slow learner is slow in all activities is wrong for he may be very normal or even bright in certain

activities, mechanical, social, artistic, which do not require intellectual capacity. It is equally unfair to assume that the slow learner is slow in all activities requiring intellectual capacity such as simple arithmetic, spelling, handwriting.

Now let us turn to the differences between the slow and the average child. When we compare the slow with other children, we find it hard to find much difference between them for they seem to have the same basic needs-food, clothing, shelter, affection, belonging, guidance, self-direction, self-realization, self-confidence, courage to face failure. They have more or less the same ways of learning -imitation, from experience, drawing conclusions, generalization-, the same uneven abilities etc.

However there do exist some differences. In mental capacity,⁵ the slow learning child is retarded as compared to the average. The difference in rate exists from birth and the gap gradually widens as the child grows in age.

In physical development, the slow learning child may not be as well developed as the average. He is a bit less tall and heavy, a bit less strong and less well proportioned. He is also retarded⁶ in motor skill and muscular coordination.

In matters of health, greater number of slow learners have been found with defective hearing, sight, speech, glands, etc.

(5) Featherstone, op. cit., p. 7.

(6) Ibid., p. 4.

On the basis of his studies of a great many slow learners, Cyril Burt concluded that "the most common condition appears to be a child who is suffering or has suffered during his preschool life not from any single well-defined complaints but from a plurality of minor troubles, all contriving to manifest and maintain a lowered state of bodily vitality. The outstanding condition is what is often vaguely termed as general debility, partly no doubt innate and partly due to various post natal and environmental conditions -poor feeding in early years, a series of minor infections, lack of proper food and sleep, all aggravated by excessive fatigue and the countless petty evils that obstruct the child's growth and undermine his energy in an unwholesome and unsanitary environment".⁷

In matters of social adjustment, it has been found that in general the slow learners lack desirable personal and social qualities and consequently are not as well adjusted as the average. This may be due in some cases to unfavorable economic or social backgrounds.

Slow learners also tend to be a little more lazy and inattentive⁸ than the average. Laziness may not be true for all slow learners for the underlying causes may be different. The same is true for inattentiveness which may be caused by subject matter which is not interesting or meaningful to the child.

(7) Ibid., p. 5.

(8) Ibid., p. 6.

The slow learners also differ from the average in the quality of their intelligence. They tend to learn by a great amount of drill and repetition; they prefer the concrete and the practical to the abstract; they act on impulse rather than reasoning; they prefer short and objective assignments to long ones. Lacking self-criticism they tend not to check their work for possible errors.

Finally the slow learners differ from the average in mental processes, namely: defining a problem, distinguishing, comparing, analyzing and above all reasoning. We emphasize reasoning because it is through this process that one can recognize fully a problem at hand; that one can have judgment in discovering all alternate solutions, choose the most suitable and reject all unsuitable ones that one can foresee the consequences of an action and reach conclusions with much reflection; that one can have a critical mind to criticize himself as well as others. We can assume therefore that all these steps require reasoning. Because the slow learner is a poor reasoner he has to be diagnosed as early as possible so that remedial measures can be taken.

(9) Baker, op. cit., p. 248.

(10) Featherstone, op. cit., p.7.

III. Means of identifying the slow learner

All aid given to the slow learner depends first of all upon his identification in the school group. This discovery or identification is seldom made by agencies outside the school. Although the family may recognize personality or learning problems of a child, they do not often inform the school of the special needs or problems of that child.

When a student does not meet his grade level academic requirements, we should not accuse him of being lazy but we should try to find out the cause of his falling behind. To perform this job fully the assistance of many agencies is needed: parents, all school agencies, tests of various types, medical aid.

A. Parents

Parents, being closest to the problem student, are in a strategic position to notice all changes within their child. The changes may be physical, social, educational, or behavioral. Unfortunately many parents do not relate these changes to the problems being discussed. Parents may be the first to notice physical changes such as poor health in their child - Does he bring his eyes too close to the work at hand? Does he read with his books at the regular distance? Does he hear with difficulty? Does he breathe through his nose or mouth? Does he stutter while talking? Does he have good dietary habits? Are his teeth effected by hot or cold foods? Does he sleep sufficiently and at regular intervals?

Although the class teacher may have more opportunity to notice the social changes of the problem student, nevertheless parents can be of great assistance. Does their child welcome a guest or prefer to stay alone in his room? Does he like to play with other children or to be in seclusion and imagine or dream? Does he feel inferior or superior in other children's presence? Does he visit friends when his assignments are over? Does he engage in wholesome activities when he has nothing to do specially?

Parents can notice also some educational changes in their child? Is he able to concentrate under favorable conditions? Is he able to give sufficient attention to his lessons? Is he doing his assignments daily and conscientiously or postponing them? Is he able to finish his studies within the regular study hours or has he a short span of attention? Does he have good study habits or a daily schedule? Does he go regularly to school? if not what are the underlying causes of his absences -unnoticed physical defects or ill health, unwholesome companions, other interests of the student beside school works poor method of teaching, undesirable personality of the teacher or classmates-?

Parents may also notice changes in their child's behavior or conduct. Does he accept his parents' advice or prefers working on his own? Does he admit his faults and try not to repeat them? Does he respect other's opinions or rights, or does he insist on what he says?

School records

A study of a student's record from former grades or schools may point out developing problems or unsatisfactory adjustments. Many schools keep records which should be available to all legitimate inquiries. These records should include information on the following subjects:

(1) Student's grades in different classes. These grades are of great help to the new teacher or administrator in knowing whether a particular student achievement has been poor all through his previous school years or during special years; poor in all subject matter or in some.

(2) Personality records show a student's industry, cooperation, initiative, creativeness, loyalty, honesty, during his past school years.

(3) Family background records include parents' nationality, language, standard of education, social status, occupation, financial conditions, special interests.

(4) Health records include number and description of diseases, physical defects and their treatment, number and kind of vaccination, height and weight, and number of operations.

Some schools have records which show the date and the cause of a student leaving school.

Thus the school records may help in knowing more about a problem student before identifying him as a slow learner.

B. Present teachers

Present teachers have a strategic position in noticing any changes in their students.

The teacher is most likely to use her classmarks in judging the slow student. Entire judgment should not be placed upon marks for students' difficulties differ. For instance a pupil may be unable to distinguish clearly between the sounds p and b or s and z; another may be confused between the script letters b and d; still another may be careless due to failure in grasping some fundamental principles. Second, all subjects do not equally tell the slowness of a student. "Thus the relatively more mechanical aspects, such as writing, drawing, oral reading, and mechanical addition are not as significant as the more thoughtful sides represented by silent reading for content, composition and problem solving in arithmetic". Third, there may be capable students with low marks. The student may not be trained to give importance to marks. He may not be trained to use his memory in a recitation period or he may have considered his hobbies or other interests far more important than his classworks. A trained teacher uses criteria in addition to grades, which may be more subjective in the case of some students than others.

He may also gather much information about a particular student by observing him in different situations in the classroom: How ~~ent~~

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- (1) Norma V. Scheidemann, The Psychology Of Exceptional Children, p. 10
(2) Kennedy-Fraser, op. cit., p. 41.
(3) Ibid., p. 41.
(4) Ruth Strang, Counseling Technics In College and Secondary Schools, p. 49.

fast he reads and understands? Is he energetic in answering many questions or tries to escape the teacher's attention? Are his answers to the point? Do they add something to the discussion? Does he respect other's opinions?

Do his examinations and homeworks show memorization or understanding of the material? Is he inclined to ask for help or does he prefer independent work?

What are his study habits -Does he start studying as soon as he ought to? Does he do all his assignments in time? Does he concentrate under favorable conditions? Does he take good notes? Does he have a good outline to guide him while studying? Does he leave any homework half done to do something else? Does he use the library for further reference?

Does he read, hear and speak without difficulty or show special defects? Does he appear dull, sleepy and tired?

Does he seem hungry or underfed?

Is he submissive or aggressive? Does he have feelings of inferiority or superiority? Is he self-confident or hesitant in his decisions? Is he courageous or withdrawn? Is he cooperative or selfish?

Besides observing a pupil in the class, the teacher may observe him in the playground or in any other informal situation. Does the pupil like to play with others? Does he prefer to play with pupils younger or older than he? Is he initiative, creative or just a blind follower? Does he have a good boy-girl relationship?

Does he accept suggestions? Does he face criticisms and remarks? Does he show courage when confronting difficulties? Does he have a critical mind and is he able to criticize himself before criticizing others? Is he able to admit his faults? Does he accept opinions contrary to his own?

Such observation as described above becomes accurate if it is carried over a period of time, for the same person may act differently at different times.⁶ This may be due to some underlying factors such as observation following academic failure, unwholesome conversation, undesirable experience such as fear, worry and anxiety. Second, such observation must also be made in different situations for the same person may show different behavior in different situations.⁷ For instance, in one particular situation a person may be aggressive or show tendencies of aggressiveness, whereas in another situation, the same person might be submissive. This may be due to the varying atmosphere of different situations.

The observation also becomes more reliable and valid if it is carried on by several administrators or teachers and followed by a discussion. The correlating of different observations is very important for it eliminates, as far as possible, all kinds of bias, wrong recordings, wrong impressions, misinterpretations, wrong analysis and generalization. As Burt concludes "Observation in lifelike situations was the best method for the assessment of children's personality, and that another estimate by an independent observer increased both the reliability and validity".⁸

(6) *Ibid.*, p. 57.

(7) *Ibid.*, p. 53.

(8) Quoted in Strang, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

C. Physical examination

Every school should have a school physician for routine medical examination and treatment, as well as for special needs. Here in the school medical center a child who seems to be a slow learner may be found to be suffering from a physical handicap which can be remedied with special treatment. A student may have a normal or even bright intelligence and yet he may be unable to meet his grade requirements. He may have various kinds of unnoticed physical deficiencies, such as defective eyes, teeth, enlarged and inflamed tonsils or adenoids. These disabilities may not only hinder a student's educational progress through school work, but also have a great effect upon his social and emotional adjustment.

Even before consulting the doctor, there are some signs of deficiencies which the teacher may notice in the classroom. Does the pupil read from the regular distance? Does he have any difficulties in hearing, seeing? Does he breathe from the mouth or nose? Does he show defective signs in his speech? Does he seem sleepy and dull? Does he show signs of defective teeth and headache? Does he easily get angry? etc.

In all these cases and in many others, the student may not progress at his own level of achievement unless physical defects are diagnosed and remedied as far as possible. An interesting study on the relation of physical and mental health to school performance has been made by K. Heaton and V. Weedon in their book, The Failing Student, which deals with college students.

The same factors operate at all school levels. They discuss the following aspects of student health:

- "1. Illness, which might cause absences.
2. Illness and defects which would cause reduced effectiveness in work (acute and chronic illnesses, sensory defects, glandular disturbances, etc.)
3. Physical factors which might cause undesirable mental attitudes.
4. Extended illness during previous years which might account for poor preparation for current work".

The same authors conclude, after intensive study, that investigators were led to give attention to the student's own opinion of his health status. "If a student thinks he is in poor health, and is, it is important. If he thinks he is in poor health, and is not, it is possibly even more important. If his difficulty comes from a disorder such as poor eyesight, infected tonsils, or adenoids and constipation, the chances are that his difficulty will be diagnosed and cured. If his difficulty has its origin in such basic organic disturbances as may, for example, have a glandular origin, it is less likely to be diagnosed and corrected although the chances of its being corrected are increasing daily. If, however, the difficulty is not organic but comes from a deep-seated psychological disturbance the chances of diagnosis and correction are very much less".

(9) Kenneth L. Heaton and Vivian Weedon, The Failing Student, p. 139.
(10) Ibid., p. 144.

D. Intelligence tests

A valuable aid in identifying the slow learner is the use of certain well established tests. To find the correct measurement of a person's intelligence, most psychologists agree that it is wise and even necessary to give and compare the results of a few intelligence tests, such as verbal and performance, individual and group intelligence tests, achievement tests, performance tests.

Although there are many kinds and types of tests, this discussion takes briefly only those most commonly used, namely: verbal intelligence tests, performance tests, group intelligence tests, achievement tests and social intelligence tests.

Verbal intelligence tests- " The 1937 revision of the Stanford Binet is the most commonly used of the verbal individual intelligence tests ". Psychologists to day agree that intelligence tests alone do not reveal all about a problem student. In the past such tests were used for general diagnosis.

Performance tests - like verbal intelligence tests measure the intellectual capacity of a person. They differ only in their use of a minimum number of words. This makes the test useful to students who are defective in sight, hearing or speech, or for those who have difficulty in understanding the directions, or the language of the tests.

The performance test uses material which can be handled or with which the child has first-hand experience. Items used may be blocks painted in different colors and having different sizes. The child is asked to insert the right size block in its

Proper place. He may also be asked to construct a pattern after a model by using blocks.

Group Intelligence Tests attempt to measure the mental capacity of a person, as measured by individual tests, but in group situation.

Achievement Tests determine a student's academic level. S. Kirk and G. Johnson divide this type of test, in their book Educating the Retarded Child, into "two relatively large subgroups, power tests and speed tests".¹² The first refers to the ability of the child to do something, whereas the latter show how fast a student can perform a given task.

Social Intelligence Tests measure the ability of the individual to understand his fellow men and be understood by them. Here observation for long periods of time is desirable. Among the most commonly used social intelligence tests are Projective Tests. The most commonly used are the Rorschach Test and the Thematic Appreciation Test. In the Rorschach test, the items consist of ink blots in different shades to which the subject makes designated responses. The Thematic Appreciation test consists of a series of pictures given to the subject in two successive days. His responses to these pictures are used by the psychologist who may come to know the subject's inner conflicts feelings, thoughts, attitudes.

E. Counselor

Many of the above mentioned methods used in the identification of the slow learner will be used by the school counselor,

(12) Ibid., p. 49.

when a school has incorporated such a staff member in its administration. Miss Strang defines counseling as "a face to face relationship in which the counselor helps a person to gain insight, a new orientation, a more acceptable self-concept, better ways of thinking about life's problems and relationships, new techniques of living".¹³

In many schools the counselor is the coordinator of all results and techniques used in the study of the individual student. In addition to the methods already discussed, the counselor takes advantage of every opening to the discovery of the individual problem. A discussion of some possible techniques follow.

Observation during interviews and tests. The counselor makes opportunity to have several interviews with a problem case. Consequently he can observe him during these interviews, observe his facial expressions, movements, manners, feelings of fear, inferiority, anxiety, shyness, seclusiveness. It is necessary to observe him during several interviews so as to be able to check any wrong impressions or misinterpretations. During tests the counselor may also observe his expressions when facing any kind of difficulty in trying to answer the questions. Does he appear anxious or discouraged; sleepy or alert; conscientious or eager to finish it soon? Does he look around for help or is self-confident? Does he follow or proceed on his own? Is he disturbed in presence of examiners and strangers or is he self-confident?

(13) Strang, op. cit., p. 7.

F. Autobiography

The autobiography written by the student is of great help to the counselor or teacher in identifying a problem pupil or a slow pupil. The autobiography gives opportunity for much personal data and attitudes. The following information may be obtained from an autobiography:

Personal - His birth place and date, places visited, people met and their influence upon him, his likes and dislikes, interests hobbies, needs, special difficulties or problems.

Family - Social standard, financial condition, religion, culture, education, attitude of the members of the family towards each other.

Scholastic - Number and types of schools attended, outstanding experiences or adventures during school life, types of teachers and friends met, their influence upon him, achievement in school, future plans.

Besides being a good clue to the identification of the slow learner or to the understanding of the whole child, the unique contribution of the autobiography, according to Miss Strang, "lies in its description of the ways in which an individual perceives certain situations, and of the ways in which these perceptions influence his attitude and adjustment. It also helps the student to understand himself and his world; it is a form of self-analysis; it directs the student's attention to himself in a new way and causes him to organize past, present, and future experiences in such a fashion as to see their personal significance!

{14} Ibid., p. 85.

{15} Ibid., p. 87.

G. Cumulative Personal Record

Whether a school has a special^{counselor} or works through teachers and the principal, an essential element in the understanding of all students is the cumulative personal record which should be available to properly qualified persons. This record should include all information gathered by the preceding techniques. "It is a unified developmental picture of the individual, showing personality patterns and trends".¹⁶ Such a record is invaluable in the identifying of the slow learner.

In her book, Counseling Technics in College and Secondary School, Miss Strang suggests what should be included in the cumulative personal record:

1. Personal data
2. Home and community background
3. Scholarship
4. Tests scores and ratings
5. School attendance
6. Anecdotal records, personality ratings, autobiographical sketches, reports of interviews and conferences with parents
7. Health
8. Employment during school year
9. Vocational and educational plans
10. The student's own statement, year by year, of his changing values, goals and purposes.
11. Extra curricular activities, hobbies, and special habits.

12. Follow up record after the student has left school.
13. Record of the accomplishments of the class group to which the student belongs.
14. Report of faculty conferences about the student".¹⁷

Explicitly the cumulative personal record, if available at all, is one of the best means to identify a problem student for it gives all possible clues to the conditions underlying or contributing to the slowness or failure of a student.

Thus by gathering all information available about a student through parental, former and present teachers, physician, psychologist, and counselor's cooperation, the school is in a position to compare, analyze, and interpret. With such material the identification of the slow learner can be made.

(17) Ibid., p. 183.

IV. Factors Responsible for the Slow Learner

This section discusses briefly some of the possible causes of slow learners, namely: physical defects, mental defects, social defects, poor study habits, and undernourishment.

A. Physical defects

1. Sight. Vision is one of the most important senses because of its relation to communication. Some school parents do not give much importance to their children's vision. They may be ignorant, or they may be economically incapable of providing eye examinations or glasses.

A thorough medical examination may diagnose the following eye defects in children: Nearsightedness, Farsightedness, Astigmatism, Cross eyes, Fusion. In these conditions objects seem blurred, or doubled which results in loss of interest, eye strain and nervousness. Such defects have very harmful effects upon school work".

Besides the common eye defects just mentioned there are also many eye diseases such as trachoma, glaucoma, cataract, which if not diagnosed by an oculist and treated as soon as possible may have very serious results.

Parents and classroom teachers have the best opportunity to discover the common signs of eye trouble. Does the child have red or watery eyes? Are his eye lids redrimmed or encrusted? Does he appear to have cross eyes? Does he often take away blurr? Does he often rub his eyes, frown or blink? Does he look nervous while doing close work? Does he read from too far or too close

a distance? Does he close one eye while looking at an object? Does he move his head or body forward and backward while reading? Does he participate in all class activities requiring either close or distant vision? Does he distinguish all colors? Is he sensitive to light?

These and other signs such as dizziness, headaches, nervousness, may also be symptoms of eye defects which should be diagnosed and remedied as far as possible so that the child may progress normally in his school work.

In addition to medical aid, the teacher should have a sense of sympathy, and provide all available classroom facilities. She should arrange seats and necessary equipments to aid the child. She should write large and clearly, provide rest periods, avoid long reading periods.

3. Hearing. Unfortunately, children having defective ears are not as easily noticed as those having defective eyes. Wrong conclusions are drawn sometimes for children with undiagnosed defective ears as being careless, impolite, indifferent, disrespectful and not having good manners. Some symptoms may be detected and lead to referral to the school physician. Is the child unable to respond instantly to a question? Does he ask the same questions over and over again? Does he bring his head or body to get better sounds? Do his ears run? Does he have earaches? Does he have any defects in his speech? Does he like talking much or avoids it as far as possible? Does he participate in class discussion? Is his

oral works accurate? Is he able to take down all words dictated? Does he have any missing points in his dictations or any kind of work requiring good hearing?

Besides diagnosis, the teacher should help the deaf child by arranging the seats so that children with defective ears may read her lips, and by speaking in a moderate and distinct voice.

3. Speech. Pintner, Eisenson, and Stanton define defective speech as follows: "Speech may be considered defective when it is not audible and intelligible to the listener. Speech is defective if it is vocally or visibly unpleasant or laboured in production; Finally, speech is defective if it is inappropriate to individuals in regard to his mental and chronological age, sex, and physical development". "Speech has three main aspects: (1) the voice or the phonation, (2) articulation which is affected by the organs of the mouth and nose, and (3) linguistic or a code of meanings, primarily concerned with verbal thought". If these three do not function well separately as well as harmoniously with each other defects in speech occur. Some major defects are: stuttering and lispng.

Stuttering is an intermittent inability to produce voiced sounds accompanied by severe cramps of the diaphragm, larynx, tongue".

Lispng occurs when sibilants such as s, z, sh, and zh are not produced properly. There are two kinds of lispng, namely, the "infatle" and the "lateral". The former occurs mostly in children when, because of lack of some front teeth the tongue

(2) Quoted in Baker, *op.cit.*, p. 126.

(3) *Ibid.*, p. 126.

(4) *Sheidemann, op.cit.*, p. 76

protrudes. Instead of the sound sh, the child says th, instead of s, th etc, The latter is caused when the teeth meet in the front and not at the sides and as in the former two sibilant sounds are wrongly produced.

Some minor speech disorders are baby-talk, cluttering, nasality.

Baby talk "is usually the result of faulty interpretation and production of sounds"⁵. Some parents encourage baby-talk thinking mistakenly that when the child grows older he can overcome it. Many children have become adults with deeprooted faulty habits formed in infancy and childhood.

Cluttering, In lisping some sounds are mispronounced. In cluttering all sounds are mispronounced. The clutterer usually hurries in speech, which causes him to combine sounds incorrectly. The clutterer is often nervous and it is this nervousness which makes him hurry in speech.

Nasality. When the air cannot pass through the nose or when the air passage is obstructed, some sounds like m, n, ng, are mispronounced or not correctly enunciated. Some causes of obstructions are colds, influenza, enlarged adenoids, inflammation of the mucuous membrane of the air passages.

The defective in speech may be diagnosed by observing some symptoms: Is the child having difficulties in attempting to start a sentence? Does he repeat syllables or phrases while

(5) Ibid., p. 111.

trying to answer questions? Does he show bodily tension and movements? Is the student's tongue protruded while speaking? Does he emit the sounds over the sides of the mouth or nose? Speech defects may require diagnosis beyond the teacher level in which case students may need to be referred to the physician or psychologist.

In most cases, the teacher may teach correct speech sounds to the student by demonstration. She can also help him in developing and forming automatic and unconscious control of the tongue muscles by exercises and drill. She may also convince him that correct speech is accepted and appreciated by every culture. After this wholesome mental attitude is established the student may be able to acquire correct habits by practice.

The second area of diagnosis is the medical one where physiological conditions causing defects in speech are removed as far as possible. We have to mention here that the teacher should not attempt to correct the defective in speech before medical diagnosis since some major speech defects may start during severe illnesses such as whooping cough, influenza, measles, nervous instability.

The third area of diagnosis is the psychological one. Many defects in speech are caused by inner fears, anxieties, terrifying experiences, insecurity, submissiveness, home conditions in which the child is rejected or cruelly treated. We see here that the social worker has a great role in diagnosis since social and family backgrounds contribute a great deal to the emotional status of the defective in speech.

4. Teeth. Defective teeth may affect the health of the entire body. They are the cause of incomplete mastication which is associated with incomplete digestion, unhealthy development of the jaw, decayed teeth, mouth bacteria. Decayed teeth may cause serious illnesses. Germs developed in dental cavities pass through the body causing serious results, may affect tonsils and other glands and cause instability.

Investigators and psychologists agree that children with bad teeth are likely to be below normal. Johnson and other psychologists have also found "Children with good teeth to average one half year ahead of children of the same age whose teeth were bad. Wallis says that he has found children with severe oral sepsis (discharge of pus) nearly always under weight and frequently below grade. Henneburg found that children with good teeth gained 5 per cent more in weight and nearly 10 per cent more in height during one school year than children with bad teeth".

As in the case of hearing the symptoms of decayed teeth are not easy to observe. Does the child have clean and sound teeth? Does he have healthy gums? Does he have crooked teeth? Does his breath smell? Does the child complain of his teeth? Does he have frequent headaches or eyeaches? Does he brush his teeth daily? Does he have enlarged tonsils? Does he complain of indigestion or malnutrition? Does he have proper dietary habits? If the above symptoms are observed the student should be referred to the school clinic for diagnosis and treatment.

5. Tonsils and adenoids. The germs of many infectious diseases pass into the body through the nose or throat. These passages should be healthy so as to be able to perform their functions well.

Consequences of diseased tonsils and adenoids are numerous. "Diseased tonsils may harbor germs and their poisonous products. This illustrated by the hemolytic streptococci infections of which severe cases of septic sore throat are examples".⁷ Diseased tonsils and adenoids may also force the individual to breathe from the mouth. This has many disadvantages. Mouth breathing prevents the cleaning, the heating, and the moistening of the inspired air before going into the lungs. The individual who breathes from his mouth may also have a nasal voice and be deprived of the sense of smell. He may also be dull and retarded in school progress. Burpit found that "adenoids, tonsillar disease, and deafness are more prevalent among dull and backward children than among children in general when inherent mental deficiency is not considered. He found adenoids present among 26 per cent of retardants (150 in number), in whom no other defects could be detected".⁸ Earaches, ear discharges and deafness are often caused by an unhealthy nose or throat.

Diseased tonsils and adenoids have to be diagnosed and removed as soon as possible. On the other hand, the teacher or the parent should know that diseased tonsils and adenoids are not the only cause of school retardation and their removal may not be of great help to the slow student for he may have other underlying causes.

B. Mentally Defective Students

What is intelligence? Understanding the answer of this question is necessary to solve any kind of educational problem. In every phase or problem of education, one must take into account the factor of variability of intelligence. What is then intelligence? Binet defines it as follows: "Intelligence is the ability to take and maintain a definite direction, as adaptability to new situations, and as ability to criticize one's own acts".⁹ Woodworth defines it as "the ability to use facts and activities already known to novel situations, by curiosity, interest and desire to know about things, and by persistence, or the trait of sticking to what is begun".¹⁰ We may deduce from these definitions that intelligence has not only a great role to play in tasks requiring intellectual capacity but in adapting oneself to different environments and cultures.

Thorndike speaks of three areas of intelligence. The first is the ability to understand and manage ideas and symbols such as words, numbers, scientific principles. The second is the ability to learn, understand and manage things and mechanisms. The third is the ability to manage people and to act wisely in human relations.¹¹

(9) Baker, op. cit., p. 227

(10) Ibid., p. 227

(11) Ibid., p. 227

2. Difference in Degree, Growth, and Quality of Intelligence between the Average and the Slow Learner

According to Thorndike "differences between individuals in intelligence may be expressed in at least three ways, namely, level, area, ¹² speed". An individual whose intelligence develop into higher levels is said to be normal. Otherwise he may be considered slow, mentally defective, retarded in school work, or unable to adjust to different circumstances. There are also individuals who may be normal or even bright in some areas and not in others. They may also be bright in difficult things and not in simpler ones. They may be interested in activities of some particular age and not in ideas. They may also be individuals who may be quick in some activities requiring intelligence and not in others. They react with different speed to different situations. So the above facts show that the slow differ from the average student in "area", "level", and "speed" of intelligence.

Many psychologists have agreed that intelligence increases from birth until adolescence. Then it remains constant until maturity. Some think that motivation, stimulating environment or education increase the intelligence and may render slow or dull children bright. This assumption is repudiated by many specialists for different intelligence tests seem to prove that

(12) Ibid., p. 228.

the I.Q. is quite constant from year to year. A slight increase occurs when the child is removed from very unfavorable conditions or after any kind of defect has been completely remedied.

The rate of mental growth and development is based on intelligence with which the child is born. The more bright the child, the faster and the longer his intelligence grows and the more dull is the child, slower and shorter is the growth of his intelligence.

Consequently, the difference in rate between the average and the slow child exists from birth and the gap gradually widens as the child grows in age. For example, in each year of chronological age the slow learner may progress ten months in mental age. And naturally, as the chronological age increases the difference between his chronological and mental age widens.

As previously mentioned the degree of intelligence is expressed by intelligence quotient (I.Q.) multiplied by 100 (this is to avoid decimals). I.Q. is obtained by dividing the mental age by chronological age: $\frac{M.A.}{C.A.} = I.Q.$ Those, whose C.A. is exactly the same as their M.A. have an I.Q. of 100. Those, whose C.A. is less than their M.A. have an I.Q. over 100. And those whose C.A. is more than their M.A. have an I.Q. below 100. These measurements are determined by different intelligence tests, some of which have been discussed.

To give an idea of different intellectual capacity we make use of Terman's Table which classifies children on the basis of I.Q.

Genius or near genius - - - - -	above	140
Very superior - - - - -		120-140
Superior - - - - -		110-120
Average - - - - -		90-110
Dull normal (backward) - - - - -		80- 90
Dull (borderline) - - - - -		-70- 80
Feeble minded - - - - -	below	70

13

Besides the difference in the quantity of the intelligence between the average and the slow, there exists also a difference in the quality of their intelligence. The slow student prefers the practical learning to the abstract. While attempting to solve a problem, he is more interested in solving and being through with it than reasoning, generalizing, drawing conclusions, and applying the same methods in trying to solve other similar problems. In attempting to learn something, he prefers drill and repetition to the finding relationships and relating the parts to the whole or vice versa. He prefers short and objective assignments to long and subjective ones where he may use his reason.

Although intelligence is considered an important factor in the diagnosis of the slow learner, there are many other factors which are not measured by intelligence tests alone. Some of these factors have already been discussed and some follow.

(13) Sheidemann, op. cit., p. 35.

C. Socially Defective Students

1. Personality factors.

Personality problems not only hinder the progress of the school child, but also disturb him and his home.

As this study deals largely with the student in the secondary schools, we shall attempt to discuss some of the most common problems of adolescents which may cause them to be socially maladjusted. Adolescence is the most crucial period from childhood into adulthood. It is also during adolescence that many problems, conflicts, and behaviors arise or reawaken disturbing the emotional life of the adolescent. Some of these problems are discussed below.

¹⁴
"Neurotic behavior".

The neurotic adolescent is never self-confident. He feels nervous, restless, sleepless. He thinks that all the people irritate him. He complains of his health, (although assured and reassured by a physician that he has no signs of ill health) of his environment, of his home conditions, of his many unsatisfied desires, of his failures. He tries to find reasons for his real and imagined failures. He never likes to be treated inferior to others. Consequently, he withdraws from all social contact.

Neurotic behavior may be caused by different factors:

(a) "Feeling of insecurity"¹⁵

When the adolescent is not satisfied with his abilities or achievement, when he is unable to compete with others, when he is doubtful of his success, abilities, prestige. Thus he is always in a state of worry and anxiety which result in neurosis. Psychologists have agreed upon the fact that one of the major causes of neurosis among adolescents is the disturbance of their emotional life.

(b) "Sex conflicts"¹⁶

Sex conflicts are very common among adolescents. Most parents are often guilty in this respect for they do not answer properly and frankly all questions related to sex. Thus the curious adolescent is forced to resort to other sources, sometimes harmful and disapproved, which not only do not satisfy his aroused curiosity but increase his confusion and conflicts. As a result, the adolescent may develop neurotic behavior which causes him to withdraw from his studies.

(c) "Economic insecurity"¹⁷

Economic insecurity is also common among adolescents. Upon the approach of adolescence, the student feels that he has to be economically independent of his parents. As result, he finds it necessary to formulate immediately his future plans. He starts to worry about his future profession, support of his future family, old age. He also worries about his social status for he believes that the first criteria for social success is economic security.

(15) Ibid., p. 204.

(16) Ibid., p. 207.

(17) Ibid., p. 215.

(d) Dependence on parents

Most parents treat their adolescents like children. They overprotect them. The parents make the decisions, deny the experiences and responsibilities necessary for good adulthood. But the adolescent, as he develops physically and intellectually desires more and more to take his place in society, free of parents' restrictions, taboos, or indulgence. If these outlets are denied to the young adolescent, all his emotional life may be upset.

Untreated neurotic behavior may result in mental abnormalities. Parents and teachers are in a strategic position to observe symptoms of emotional disturbances. Does the child resort to daydreams as a flight from reality? Is he confident in himself? Is he able to stand criticism? Is he able to concentrate upon his studies? Does he withdraw from competence? Is he confused when asked the reason of his restlessness? Does he use defense mechanism and how much?

When these and many other symptoms are observed, the responsible person has to discuss frankly with the adolescent all problems giving rise to the emotional disturbance. He may help the adolescent to face his problems objectively and squarely and then help to solve them.

2. Home conditions

Home factors of the slow learner affect greatly his scholastic achievement. Some of the factors causing slowness are;

(a) Problem of language

When we first think of a home where two or more languages are used, we immediately assume that children growing in that home are lucky for they are able to master both languages in their childhood. But scientific researches have discovered that such children may be confused. It has been found that not all children in the same family are slow or backward in one or both languages spoken at home. This may be due to the native intelligence of the child. A child whose I.Q. is average or above may speak both languages fluently whereas a child with an I.Q. below average may be confused between the two.

(b) Economic status of the family

Economic status of the family has a great effect upon scholastic achievement for financial limitations may prevent proper nourishment, wholesome neighborhood, recreational facilities, pocket money, further education. Sometimes the child has to work after school. Thus, being overloaded, he is unable to perform well his school or outside work. As a result, he loses interest and concentration in his school work and is ranked among the slow learners.

There are also families where both parents work and the children are left to themselves. Even if the mother is sometimes at home, she is too busy to give the necessary affection to the child. The case is also the same when one parent is dead and all the responsibilities of the family are left upon the other parent.

(c) Health of the parents

When parents are sick either physically or mentally, there is much restlessness and confusion in the family. Sometimes in a poor family, all responsibilities of nursing are left upon the child. As result, the child is under such a burden that he is unable to stand and sometimes he gives up.

(d) Maladjusted parents

There are parents who due to different nationalities, religions, ideas, are unable to live in peace and harmony. This will be reflected in their family life. There may be families where each parent tries to persuade the child to accept his belief or ideas and side with him against the other. Under these circumstances, the child may become confused and nervous. This disturbed emotional life of the child will sooner or later have its influence upon his school progress.

There are also homes where parents praise the brighter child in the presence of the slow; where no importance is given to routine medical examination; where the right kind of attitude does not exist between both parents or parent-child; where the child is given too much help in his homework, too much praise for a small success, too much sympathy for a scolding or threat; where parents push children beyond their capacity or speed their development regardless of other factors. I think every one agrees that such home conditions affect greatly the scholastic achievement of the child.

Since the child needs understanding, affection, sympathy, guidance, home relations are very important. Unless the right kind of attitude exists between parents themselves, between parents and children and between children and children, the child will start to show some signs of maladjustment, some of which are briefly discussed below:

(a) Egocentricity - The egocentric child is maladjusted because of his inability to adapt to the teachers and other children. He wants to be the center of attention, and if he fails to do so, he adopts more serious forms of misbehavior.

(b) Timidity - may also be caused by parents' overprotection. They want to do everything for him and do not provide a rich environment where the child is challenged and developed to the fullest of his potentialities. Consequently, he loses self-confidence and always feels himself inferior to others.

(c) Aggressiveness - is closely related with emotional maladjustment of school children. Different studies came to prove that some failing students are suffering from emotional problems which give rise to an unhealthy type of aggressiveness and which probably limit their activeness to instructors and fellow-students.¹⁹

(d) Submissiveness - is closely related with emotional maladjustment of school children and which has a direct effect upon their scholastic achievement.

(19) Heston and Weedon, op. cit., p. 173.

b 3. Antagonisms between the home and the community

Besides the conditions within the home, the difference between the home and the community in matters of culture, religion, and social customs has a great effect upon the school progress of the child.

Usually parents cling to and are sometimes fanatic in the religious and social culture into which they are born. They expect their children to follow the same customs. This seems more true in our conservative Eastern World. Children are seldom left free to make their decisions. If the child is forced to accept his parents' beliefs and customs, he may be at a loss when confronting those different to his own either in the community or in school. The wisest way would be to inform the child about the different cultures, and customs prevailing in that community so as to enable the child to live cooperatively with his fellows.

4. Neighborhood conditions

The neighborhood is one of the important factors influencing the physical, emotional, and social life of school children. An unwholesome neighborhood will cause the child to have undesirable playmates. They may form gangs leading to delinquency. The same may be true for an unstimulating neighborhood. A neighborhood which does not have libraries, recreational resources and facilities such as parks, playgrounds may lead the child to undesirable

disapproved and unwholesome activities which in turn, may detract his attention from school work.

5. School situations

Many problem cases arise from the poor organization of school activities. Two of the most common cases are the "isolate" and the "insecure". "Isolation and withdrawal from the activities of the classroom, school, and neighborhood may be evidence of persisting feelings of insecurity and inferiority, based upon real or fancied inability to cope with the situation in which most of the pupils are involved. A history of failure, rejection, frustration and condemnation by teachers, parents or other pupils often convinces a pupil that he is no good".²⁰

Investigations have shown that the slow pupil is often an "isolate"; He is alone in the playground, recess, halls. If by any chance he is found in a social group, he is either a follower or a silent member.

Causes of insecurity are various. These may be previous rejection by a group, family attitude, neighborhood conditions or the child may fail to know some of the simple ways to make friends. By careful observation in different situations, either in or out of school, the teacher may come to know the insecure child and plan activities or methods to help him. A child may

(20) Featherstone, op. cit., p. 95

be isolated in a classroom where he is much shorter than his classmates. If he is larger or smaller than the group, the teacher may help him by suitable activities. For all types of security, the teacher may be of great help in changing the physical arrangement of the school or the classroom, in organizing homeroom facilities and extracurricular activities such as matches, picnics, parties, clubs, dances.

Here too, the teacher ought to have a sympathetic and encouraging attitude and plan activities where the child may cooperate and feel self-confident. He may also ask the suggestions and help of the insecure pupil in planning those activities. In this way the pupil may feel responsible and participate to the fullest of his potentialities which may give him a sense of achievement and render him self-confident.

D. Poor study habits

"Success in mastering knowledge requires the practice of right principles in study periods".²¹ Besides poor mastery of knowledge, poor study habits may cause slowness in school children. Unfortunately, this is not easily diagnosed by teachers or parents through mere observation. Studies have shown that one of the best methods of diagnosis is to prepare a set of questionnaire including "organization of work, note-taking, asking for help, keeping work up to date, caring for eyes, concentration of attention, attempts to improve study habits, and environmental factors."²²

(21) Kenneth and Vivian, op. cit., p. 60.
(22) Charles Bird, Effective Study Habits, p. 63.

Is the student able to know what is asked of him before starting his assignments? Does he waste time in starting his assignments? Does he have a study schedule to avoid waste of time? Does he save time for review? Does he start with the easy assignments first before spending time on the difficult ones? Does he take notes while listening in the classroom or studying? Do his notes cover all the important points? Does he ask for help when unable to do something? Does he keep his assignments or school work up to date? After finishing studying does he ask questions to himself or participate in class discussion to check his work? Does he relate his studies with practical life experiences? Does he stop studying when he feels exhausted, nervous or restless? Is he able to concentrate by trying to forget all kinds of worries? Does he use reference books when vague about something? Does he have a special quiet room or place with proper equipments to study? Does he often check his study habits? Does he compare them with other's to improve it?

If these and many similar questions are answered frankly by the students, the teacher may know where the difficulty lies and may remedy the situation.

E. Undernourishment

Undernourishment may also slow scholastic achievement. Questionnaire given to "successful" and "failing" students

showed that of 67 successful students only 3 per cent, while of 23
60 failing students, 9 per cent indicated a deficiency in food".

Some comments made by the pupils are:

"I am boarding myself and cannot afford to buy the best though
I try to buy the necessities for health; variety too, is impossible."

"Can only afford about 15¢ each noon."

"Often I could eat more or would like more palatable food that is
more expensive but I try to hold down the budget."

"I have less food because to buy a meal that would fill me up
would cost too much and I would exceed my budget;"

Causes of undernourishment are various. Some are financial
limitations of the family, poor living conditions, careless and
irresponsible parents, unemployment of parents, sickness of parents.
The last but not the least is the poor selection of food or poor
dietary habits.

Here again, first the cooperation of the physician is needed
to ascertain whether the slowness is due to undernourishment or
other defects; second, of the social worker to come into close
contact with the home conditions and provide sufficient food for
the needy; and of the teacher who may arouse the student's interests
in good dietary habits.

V. Ways of Helping the Slow Learner

Having identified the slow learner by means of the techniques already discussed, and having presented some factors which may be responsible for the slow learner, the next step is to discover the most effective ways to help him.

A. Prevention of the problem

"One gram of prevention is worth one thousand grams of cure." This famous proverb may be applied to our problem. Preventing slow-learningness as much as possible is far more important than securing ways of remedy.

Prevention is usually done by education. The school has to teach through different agencies, -Parent-Teacher Associations, public lectures, educational movies, pamphlets, magazines, newspapers, radio-that slow-learningness is an important problem which should attract the attention of parents, community, state. The education of the parents is primary, for unless they realize the importance of the problem, their children will suffer greatly and their parents will suffer with them. We included community and state for unless they realize the importance of dealing with the problem, they may not only lose a number of its future efficient citizens but be responsible for ill-adjusted citizens. The public needs to be informed of the extent of the problem, the ways that slow learners are being helped in other places or could be helped

in general, the cost of slow learners' special education. They must be informed of the different agencies such as benevolent unions, schools, clinics, social welfare departments, churches, Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., which would cooperate in helping the slow learner. They must understand that the school must take the chief responsibility for slow learners.

B. Importance of the teacher's role and personality

Whatever school methods may be adopted to deal with the slow learner, the teacher herself is more important than the system. No one is so close to the slow child all-day long. The class teacher comes to know what the pupil's educational, physical, social needs are and the factors involved. To understand wholly her pupils and be able to guide them properly Miss Strang suggests, in her book, the Role of the Teacher in Personnel Work, that the teacher must be able to work well with others in the school system: Principal, school nurse, doctor, social workers, visiting teacher, guidance experts, psychologist, psychiatrist.¹ She must have satisfactory relations with the community, to know community needs and resources in order to adjust the curriculum to those needs. Her relations with parents must be sympathetic and effective for parents of slow learners are often submerged in their own problems and lack the necessary knowledge regarding the best care of their slow children. The teacher who is faced with the problems of preparing the slow child for life must visit the homes and the neighborhood of such children for it is by such informal visits that she comes to

(1) Ruth. Strang, the Role of the Teacher in Personnel Work, p. 68-105

know the home conditions -economic, educational, psychological, social -of the child which cause him to be a slow learner. Visits must be sufficiently frequent for a thorough study leads to proper diagnosis.

It is also important to organize parent-teacher association so that friendly relations are established. On the foundation of trust and cooperation, the visiting teacher with the assistance of the indicated specialists may be able to give to parents the help and the education leading to proper medical examinations, good health, dietary and clothing habits and proper attitude in the family.

How can the school adjust its class work to the needs of the slow learner? How can they best be helped - in special classrooms, or adapting the curriculum within a mixed classrooms. There is no unanimity of opinion on this question.

C. Organization of special classrooms.

Those favoring the special class hold first, that it is not possible to provide opportunities to slow learners in a mixed class, for the teacher will find it very hard to plan and carry on activities that satisfy the interests of the slow, the average, as well as the bright child. Second, that it is not possible to avoid competition in a mixed class; there the child may lose self-confidence, for here again the teacher will find it hard to plan such activities so as to encourage the slow, promote the average and keep within limits the bright one in the same

classroom. Third, as most school budgets are limited, it is not possible to provide for all classrooms the necessary equipments and materials. Lastly, it is not easy to plan the same activities -trips, excursions, social gatherings, matches, and the like- for the slow, average and bright students because of the difference in their interests and abilities.

Those opposing the organization of a special classroom for the slow learner hold first, that separating the slow learners on the basis of intelligence is not justifiable for there are many other factors underlying slowness. These factors should be taken into consideration and removed whenever possible. Second, small enrollment would not permit the administrators to maintain separate classes for slow learners. Third, there are not enough trained and sympathetic teachers to take care of separate groups. Forth, the community point of view should also be taken into consideration. Communities, especially in this part of the world, do not favor such groupings. They are prejudiced and look down upon such students by calling them dull or dumb pupils. Finally, slow pupils in mixed classes have opportunity in being part of a successful group.

D. Adeptation of the curriculum within mixed classrooms.

On the whole it seems better to try all possible means to help the slow learners in a mixed classroom before separating them. I think that the slow pupil tries to do his best in presence of other pupils and develops self-confidence when his

teacher is needed to teach the same particular class. This has disadvantages: it prevents the teacher from understanding the student as a whole and it tends to formal and routine instruction. Moreover, changing teachers does not give the feeling of security which is one of the major necessities for successful achievement of slow pupils.³

E. Adaptation of some methods within mixed classrooms

A better method for teaching within the mixed classroom would be to adopt some changes and to organize activities based upon slow pupils' interests. This would include scholastic works as well as procedures designed for social adjustment and behavior. The advantage of such a program would be its usefulness to all the students and not only to the slow learners.

1. The teaching of health

As already mentioned the percentage of physical and other defects is much higher among the slow than among the average pupil. Therefore, all schools should provide for routine as well as special medical examinations and include in the curriculum health education. The aims of health education expressed in the summary of Terman and Almack, in their book, the Hygiene of the School Child, apply directly to the problems which face the slow learner. However, all pupils will benefit from such a

(3) Featherstone, op. cit., pp. 99-102.

success is accepted or appreciated by others rather than being classed with pupils of same mental ability or being underestimated by the public.

After reaching this conclusion, what are some of the best methods by means of which slow learners can achieve success in secondary schools?

One method would be the adaptation of the curriculum. This method was not greatly approved by high school administrators because high schools have to fulfill college entrance requirements, give prerequisite courses of majors, follow the rules and the regulations of the accrediting agencies. If a pupil intends to go into higher studies, he has to take all the subject matter such as languages, science, history, geography, mathematics. He also has to be examined on the content of these courses. Therefore, a certain standard must be met. Second, if the curriculum has to be changed, then the requirements for graduation or for higher studies would also be changed. But as already mentioned colleges or universities do not have different sets of requirements for pupils of different mental abilities. Third, it is not possible to reorganize a curriculum on subject matter alone; it should also be of interest. Experiences within the classroom have to be in relation with those outside school so that the pupil may transfer and generalize his school experiences to solve his every day living problems. Finally, if the curriculum is reorganized then more than one

health program aimed at:

1. Greater freedom from defects and diseases and for a higher level of health both now and for the future.
2. More complete growth and better physical development.
3. More effective physical and mental working efficiency.
4. Establishing a good system of health habits governing the daily life.
5. Longer, happier and more successful lives.
6. To satisfy natural curiosity about bodily structure and functions.
7. To create an interest in and a responsibility for health-ful conditions in the home, community and industry.⁴

Particularly with the slow learner, teaching should go hand in hand with habit and the student must be taught to relate his information with daily life experiences in the hygiene of the school and the home.

2. Procedures affecting the grasp of subject matter.

In working with the slow learner, method may be more important than subject matter. Several methods which will lead to successful teaching are discussed.

a. Assignments should be short and clear, either written on the blackboard or typed and distributed to pupils. Necessary hints and directions to arouse interest and prevent discouragement are valuable.

b. Discussion should be used to assist the slow pupil

(4) Terman and Almack, op. cit., p.473.

in expressing himself in the presence of others, thus gaining self esteem, confidence and a sense of achievement. Discussion in question form should be developed by either teacher or students. The questions should be asked in a way to develop the pupils' imagination and reasoning.

c. Audio-Visual materials. The advantages of audio-visual materials are numerous. The important ones are suggested by Dr. Edgar Dale in his book, Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching: (1) Make things more concrete real and interesting, (2) make learning more permanent, (3) reduce verbalism, (4) develop creativity and thought, (5) make things simple, (6) it is a good device for cooperative work. It may include motion picture, maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, posters, demonstrations.

d. Firsthand experience makes the slow pupils' learning experience meaningful, purposeful and concrete. The student himself uses the community resources such as going on to excursions, journeys, having interviews with people and participating in community activities.

e. Simplicity of activities and instruction requires that materials, language, directions should all be within the pupils' grasp, so that they may not lose interest resulting from lack of understanding of the material. In this connection, it is also wise to start a school day with familiar materials which is meaningful to the pupils. Such a start makes the slow learners concentrate on further unfamiliar materials.

(5) Edgar Dale, Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching, p. 65;

(6) Featherstone, op. cit., p. 52.

(7) Ibid., p. 64.

f. Well planned activities. Activities should be planned to enable the slow pupil to think and transfer his experiences into more difficult situations. John Dewey said, "all that the schools can or need do for the child is to develop his ability to think." All the slow pupil learns has no value to him unless he thinks and reasons with it. To teach him to think for himself is to give him opportunity to collect information on the problem at hand and try to solve it by himself by being able to choose the best solution.

If the teacher wishes to train the slow pupil to think she must set appropriate difficulties in his way. The activities should neither be too easy nor too difficult so that he may be able to transfer his experiences into other situations.

g. Much drill and repetition. One of the most conspicuous differences in methods of teaching the slow and the average pupil is the use of much drill and repetition. This helps to fix learning by habit rather than insight. This, of course, does not mean memory or rote learning in all subjects but in such as the fundamental processes in arithmetic, pronunciation of words, some patterns of language structure and the like. A pupil has to grasp fully scientific principles before rote memory.

h. Evaluation of slow pupil's work. Finally, slow pupils need more evaluation of their work than the average so as to give them a sense of achievement, success, self-confidence, adequacy and acceptability.

(8) Featherstone, op. cit., p. 68.

(9) Ibid., p. 68.

3. Procedures affecting social adjustment and behavior.

To help the slow pupil to adjust socially, the class should have a democratic spirit so that each pupil is given an opportunity to make the most of his capabilities and to enjoy all facilities and resources that his community can provide. A democratic teacher does not plan every thing for the student but helps him to plan ~~activities~~ activities and programs and encourages him to make the rule and the regulations of the classroom conduct. In this way, the slow pupil tends to abide by these rules which prevent misbehavior and regard his teacher as a friend. This procedure can best be done in the homeroom unit, which will be discussed later.

The teacher should keep in mind that a maladjusted pupil tries to compensate by his misbehavior. Therefore, knowing the underlying causes of his misbehavior is the first important step in helping him. The teacher may eliminate misbehavior in a classroom where all activities are well planned and pupils are kept busy and interested. For example, tardiness may be eliminated by starting the day's work with interesting activities. Disorder and disobedience may be eliminated by planning all activities before hand, and having the students understand the routine procedures.

She may also eliminate misbehavior by not oversimplifying the pupil's tasks or overhelping him, but by letting him face his problems objectively and try to solve them.

She may too eliminate misbehavior in the classroom by basing

classroom activities on pupils' interests for pupils succeed in activities in which they are interested, are familiar and capable of doing μ . This will enable them to be motivated in other activities. The teacher should not introduce unfamiliar materials before the pupil is ready for them for unreadiness may cause the child to be disinterested and inattentive.

Psychologists agree that reward and encouragement give better results with all kinds of people than punishment or discouragement. Praising the slow learner for something well done is far better than scolding him for a thing wrongly done.

In this connection Kirk and Johnson suggest the following points for management of misbehavior in the classroom.

"Use positive rather than negative statements."⁴ The teacher who uses positive statements obtain better results than negative statements. The teacher who says, "may we put our books away", may see all books away in a very short time than the teacher who says, "all books should be put away", for the emphasis in the former is more agreeable.

"Use encouraging rather than discouraging statements."⁵ Here again, the teacher who uses encouraging statements obtains better results than the one using discouraging statements. A teacher who tries to find and approve an act correctly done by a student may find misbehavior decreasing in the classroom.

"Use pleasant requests rather than scoldings."⁶ A teacher

(4) Kirk and Johnson, op. cit., p. 331

(5) Ibid., p. 332.

(6) Ibid., p. 332.

who says, "may we shut the windows before going out for lunch", gets better results than scolding the pupil who has forgotten or failed to close the windows.

"Use substitute suggestions rather than negative comments."⁷

When a teacher sees a pupil doing something which she does not approve, she may suggest other things to do rather than preventing him from doing that thing for all pupils do something and like to do it.

"Give the pupil a choice of activities."⁸ The teacher may ask the pupil's help, suggestion, or opinion in planning an activity. This may give the pupil an opportunity to express his interests, a sense of freedom, security, self-confidence and a feeling of success, rather than giving orders to the pupil to do certain already planned activities.

"Keep the teacher verbalism to a minimum."⁹ When a teacher keeps on talking with a loud voice in the classroom, the pupil may become restless and inattentive. Directions should only be given when the pupil is in need and a loud voice should be used when necessary.

"Avoid issues with children."¹⁰ When a pupil misbehaves in the classroom it is much wiser, on the part of the teacher, neither to show any signs of anger, threaten, nor call the attention of the whole class. The intellectually, socially, and emotionally mature teacher discusses in privacy problems of misconduct or signs of misbehavior in the classroom. This procedure seems

(7) Ibid., p. 332.

(8) Ibid., p. 332.

(9) Ibid., p. 332

(10) Ibid., p. 333

to have two advantages: In the first place, the pupil may be calmed down and can better discuss the causes of his misbehavior; In the second place, he does not develop inferiority complex in the presence of other pupils.

"Stimulate shy and withdrawn pupils".¹¹ This may be done by providing opportunities for pupils so as they succeed in doing something in the presence of other pupils. It is also wise to praise the pupil in the presence of others for this may give him courage and initiative.

F. Provision of a homeroom.

A homeroom is a residence in the school -a working, guidance room -in which much of pupils' activity is carried on. A teacher, being in charge of the homeroom, is always ready to guide and to help. A homeroom is more attractive than a classroom. It is well lighted, warmed, clean, well decorated, with tables and chairs, models, exhibits, flowers, books, magazines, a radio, and a motion picture.¹¹

Provision of such a homeroom in a school is of great assistance to the slow as well as to all pupils. It is an excellent opportunity for both teacher and pupil to know each other. It provides opportunity to inform pupils what resources their community has and ways to use them. It helps them to plan activities by themselves and carry them out. It may give

(11) Featherstone, op. cit., pp. 32-33

give pupils an opportunity to organize and govern their own classrooms by making their own rules and regulations, assigning punishments for any kind of disobedience, and by discussing problem cases and problems pertaining their own classrooms and school. Moreover, it gives to the slow pupil a feeling of self-confidence for he comes to realize that he is not the only person having problems and that his suggestions are being accepted by the whole group.

Thus when pupils work cooperatively under the teacher's guidance, their personal problems may be clarified and solved, their personality, initiative and creativeness may be developed, their tensions may be released, and they may gain a sense of worth and belongingness.

Such a privilege may be the basis of higher scholastic achievement for the slow pupil.

G. Provision of a free activity period.

Besides the homeroom facilities the teacher can also provide a free activity period at least weekly during which the slow pupil may learn a great deal for himself if he is given suitable materials, conditions and encouragement. Freudian psychology suggests that it is through play, no matter how silly and useless, that the child may come to express his unconscious wishes. The same way may be applied to slow learners who during such a free activity period may come to know their interests, solve their problems, and may develop ability of thinking and reason.

H. Provision for occupational training.

In addition to the free activity period, the school may also provide some occupational training.

When the slow learner reaches high school, he becomes to know his own capacities, limitations, interests, likes and dislikes and he tends to base his occupation upon his interests.

There are few schools who can afford giving specific occupational training but any school can give information about different jobs, about the rules and the regulations under which all workers work. They can also give information about the qualifications, personal qualities required in different professions, and salaries.

Schools are often unable to provide training for different occupations. Nevertheless, in most cases, they can give a little specific or technical training. Thus the student can develop skills and insight in different arts -manual, industrial, commercial, agriculture- to help him in choosing his future profession. By means of such experiences he comes to be familiar with actual instruments and equipment necessary for a particular job. He can also transfer his actual experiences to similar jobs and choose one for which he is best fitted.

In addition, the school may provide practice work for those pupils who plan to work right after their graduation. To do this the schools can come to an agreement with some stores and industries so that the pupil may do actual work by working as a salesman, or

worker in industry. By this experience the student gains first hand experience, comes to know the rules and public opinion of certain occupations, the personal satisfaction gained, the advantages and the disadvantages. Under the teacher's or school's supervision the pupil may develop a sense of responsibility, honesty, independence, promptness, courage, respect, and obedience. 12

The chief difficulty in carrying out such a program lies in an insufficient number of trained staff in personnel work, of experienced teachers who can act as counselors and supervisors, of parent's cooperation.

Up to this point the thesis has dealt with the general subject of the slow learner. It has been seen that this is one of the most serious and widespread problems of education, because it concerns the individual, the family, the school, and the community. The problem does not end with the school life of the slow learner, but continues as long as he lives and often makes itself felt in the next generation.

(12) Featherstone, op. cit., p.114.

VI. A study of the Slow Learner in four Armenian
Schools in Beirut.

In order to bring this study into practical application, it was decided to make a study of the slow learner in four Beirut Armenian schools. These schools were chosen because the schools themselves present certain unified characteristics in background, teaching staff, and student body. These characteristics will be presented at the appropriate places.

A questionnaire was prepared,¹ which was answered by a responsible person in each school, after the object of the study was explained by the writer. A follow-up conference was held with each school in order to clarify points upon which further information was desired. The author met with a sympathetic response in each school.

The topics in the questionnaire follow closely the main body of the thesis, namely the identification of the slow learner, possible factors producing the slow learner, and methods used in helping the slow learner in each school. After an analysis of the answers received from the schools, the writer draws conclusions from the study and the questionnaire.

(1) Questionnaire is given in the Appendix.

Analysis of Questionnaire

The answers received from the four schools show that we are dealing with a unified group with certain points of strength, and with some characteristics which make for personal problems. Therefore, in the answers we should find a high correlation in the factors responsible for the slow learner and the methods used in helping him.

Schools concerned:

1. Armenian College of Beirut

Grades: Kindergarten to High School

Age of students: 4 - 18

Sex: Boys 272, Girls 221, Total 500.

2. Armenian Evangelical College

Grades: Kindergarten to High School

Age of Students: 4 - 18

Sex: Boys 276, Girls 237, Total 513.

3. A.G.B.U. (Armenian General Benevolent Union) Movagimian-Manougian Secondary School for Boys.

Grades: Two prep. and five secondary classes

Age of students: 11 - 20

Sex: Boys 224

4. Central High School

Grades: Kindergarten to High School

Age of students: 4 - 18

Sex: Boys 198, Girls 225, Total 423.

In the following analysis the four schools will be described as the first, second, third and fourth, as given above.

A. Origin of the schools

The first school was founded in 1923 by the Armenian Cultural Association whose purpose was to educate Armenians by founding schools, publishing books, sponsoring exhibits and the like.

The second school was founded in 1923 by the Armenian Evangelical Church in Beirut and until the present time it is under its protection.

The third school was founded by the Armenian General Benevolent Union. The school started in Zareh-Nubar club with a small number of students. The school moved and became a secondary school when Sarkis Hovagimian and his daughter Manougian gave their fortune to Armenian General Benevolent Union for secondary school purposes. The school is named after them.

The fourth school started in an Armenian refugee camp after World War I with a small number of students. Later the school changed its place and reached high school level through the efforts of the Reverent Yervant Hadidian who is until the present time the owner and the head.

Location of schools

- Two in central part of the city
- One in Ashrafieh
- One in Ras Beirut

B. Background of the schools

The schools studied have a cultural and racial unity because their students are drawn largely from the Beirut Armenian population.

Two schools are boarding schools, Armenian College of Beirut and Armenian Evangelical College. The first has 63 boarders out of 500 students, the second only 5 out of 513. The two others are day schools. None of the schools is a profit making school.

Parents. The unified background of the students is found in the racial and cultural background of their parents.

In general, Armenian parents' ambition for their children is mainly scholastic. Being always subject to persecution, they make all necessary sacrifices to give the best training to their children. They also emphasize personality traits so that they may be efficient citizens and active members of society.

These are not free schools. Parents pay about half of the tuition and the rest is taken care of by overseas and local funds, such as: Armenian Benevolent Unions, Cultural Associations, Relief Societies, Compatriotic Unions, Missionary Associations, Churches and individual donations.

These students are in alien land and culture. Therefore, they tend to have more social problems and difficulties in mental

adjustments. Some of the causes may be: two languages in the home; different languages, religions, social customs in the home and out; differences between generations (old and new); differences in their backgrounds and that of parents and grandparents; flight, persecution, massacres; sense of insecurity.

C. The teaching staff

Because of these racial and cultural factors there is also a unified attitude on the part of the teachers. Their main purpose is to prepare students for colleges and universities, to make them aware of the Armenian culture and heritage and help them to be good and efficient citizens by emphasizing personality traits.

The teaching staff is mainly Armenian graduates of American University of Beirut and Beirut College for Women. There are also a few clergy, a few teachers without college degrees, and a few Arab speaking teachers sent by the Lebanese Government to teach Arabic.

D. Analysis of grades, ages, sex of students

<u>Grades</u>	<u>AGES</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
(1) Kindergarten to High School	(1) 4-18	(1) 500	279	221
(2) Kindergarten to High School	(2) 4-18	(2) 513	276	237
(3) 2 prep.; 5 second. classes	(3) 11-20	(3) 224	224	
(4) Kindergarten to High School	(4) 4-18	(4) 423	198	225

Correlation relating to

- a. Sex - The problems of boys seem to be about the same as girls except in personal problems, where the boys' school showed:
 - (1) Worry about future plans
 - (2) Inability to face realities
- b. Grades Three schools start from Kindergarten and take High school years. One has two preps beside High school years. In all four cases they have ample opportunity to know their students well.
- c. Age - The average age for graduation is 18 year. So adolescent problems are to be found in all schools.

Questionnaire analysis by sections.

In analyzing the returns on the questionnaire, the outstanding points for each section will be presented first. Second, the full returns for the four schools will be given.

I. Discovery of the slow learner

1. All join in emphasis on the role of the present teacher
 - A. Emphasis on
 - a. school marks.
 - b. administrative conferences
 - c. teacher counselor or student advisor

2. Other school procedures used:

The answers to the questionnaire show that

- A. Not sufficient use is being made of records of former teachers. Three of the schools use former grades and

- One each uses
- a. Personality records
 - b. Family background records
 - c. Health records

B. The testing program has made little headway. Only one school uses performance test.

Some of the possible reasons for test may be the following:

1. Inadequacy of existing tests in Armenian language
2. Insufficient trained teacher personnel
3. Lack of psychologists in Beirut
4. Insufficient funds
5. Ignorance of the patrons of schools

3. Discovery of the slow learner by the student himself.

Only one school uses autobiography and one school cumulative personal records.

This field could be developed without financial burden by a program of enlightening teachers in professional faculty meetings, by teacher's use in language classes of assigned themes which will bring out the student's life and problems.

4. Parents reports to schools on their children's problems

As we would expect, since there is a very good parent-teacher relationships in the Armenian group, the slow learner is sometimes discovered by cooperation with parents.

5. It is a pleasure to note that the majority of the schools have regular physical examination through which they discover the slow learner.

Analyzed answers on topic I of questionnaire

- I. How do you discover a slow learner in your school?
- A. By parents' report on:
- | | | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| 1. Physical changes | 2 | 3 | | |
| 2. Social changes | 2 | | 4 | |
| 3. Educational changes | | 3 | | |
| 4. Behavioral changes | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
- B. By records of former teachers:
- | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| 1. Grades | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| 2. Personality records | | | 4 | |
| 3. Family background reports | 2 | | | |
| 4. Health record | 2 | | | |
- C. By present school teachers
- | | | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 1. School marks | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Physical changes | | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Educational changes | | | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Social changes | | | | |
| 5. Behavioral changes | | 2 | 3 | |
- D. By teachers' and administrative conferences. 1 2 3 4
- E. By regular physical examination in the school. 2 3 4
- F. By testing programs or psychologists
- | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| 1. Verbal intelligence test | | | | |
| 2. Performance test | | | 3 | |
| 3. Group intelligence test | | | | |
| 4. Achievement test | | | | |
| 5. Social intelligence test | | | | |
| 6. Rorschach test | | | | |
| 7. Thematic appreciation test | | | | |
| 8. Reference to psychologist or psychiatrist | | | | |
- G. By the teacher counselor or student advisor. 1 2 3 4
- H. By the pupil himself
- | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| 1. Autobiography | | | | 1 |
| 2. Cumulative personal records | | | | 2 |
- I. By other methods (please specify)

II. Causes of the slow learner

1. Social maladjustment - All returns emphasize social maladjustment as one of the chief factors responsible for the slow learner.

- A. Emphasis is on maladjustment parents

- B. As we would expect social maladjustment caused by personal problems is also common for these are mostly adolescent problems.

Three of the schools found sex conflict and economic insecurity, two reported dependence on parents and one each worry about future plans and inability to face realities as personal problems causing social maladjustment.

- C. Only one school found poor organization of school activities causing classroom problems.

2. Poor study habits as cause for the slow learner.

- A. All join to emphasize poor study habits as a second important factor causing the slow learner.

Emphasis is on: Lack of concentration during study periods. Three schools found poor organization of work; two schools report poor note taking method and a study room which distracts attention.

3. Differences in sex, age, school level

In free answers to the question "Do you find any differences in slow learners according to sex, age, school

level?" all of the three coeducational schools agree on the fact that girls are slower than boys in the upper grade.

This fact seems to prove that after puberty, girls try to attract the attention of the opposite sex, thus losing interest in class work. Boys, facing realities, try to formulate their future plans to be economically secure, thus concentrating more on their studies.

4. Mental problems as a cause of the slow learner.

As we would expect, in these Armenian schools, as in all others, mental problems are found to be among the causes of the slow learner.

5. Health problems as a cause of the slow learner.

Three schools found sight and stuttering to be physical problems causing slowness in school children.

It seems that Armenian parents in general are so anxious for their children to get ahead that they will do their best to keep up health conditions. Also there is a good spirit on part of Armenian doctors and there are free Armenian and non Armenian clinics available. Therefore, this may not be so pressing as social maladjustment which parents may not understand or be aware of.

Analyzed answers on topic II of questionnaire

- II. What do you find to be some of the causes which made the slow learner? Please be specific whenever possible.
- A. Physical problems

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 1. | Sight | | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. | Hearing | | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. | Speech | | 3 | | |
| | a. Stuttering | | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| | b. Lipping | | | | |
| | c. Babytalk | | | 3 | |
| | d. Cluttering | | | | |
| | e. Nasality | | 3 | 3 | |
| B. Health problems | | | | | |
| 1. | Teeth causing | | | | |
| | a. Poor mastication | | 2 | | |
| | b. Malnutrition | 1 | | | |
| | c. Undernourishment | 1 | | | |
| | d. Mouth bacteria | | | | |
| 2. | Tonsils and adenoids | 1 | | 4 | |
| | a. Enlarged tonsils and adenoids | | | | 2 |
| | b. Inflamed tonsils and adenoids | | | | 2 3 |
| 3. | Poor health habits | | | | |
| | a. Poor dietary habits | | | | 2 |
| | b. Cleanliness | | | | 3 |
| | c. Clothing | | | | |
| C. Mental problems | | | | | |
| | | 1 | 3 | 4 | |
| D. Social maladjustment caused by | | | | | |
| 1. | Personal problems | | | | |
| | a. Sex conflicts | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
| | b. Economic insecurity | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
| | c. Dependence on parents | 2 | 4 | | |
| | d. Worry about future plans | 3 | | | |
| | e. Inability to face realities | 3 | | | |
| 2. | Home problems | | | | |
| | a. Home where 2 or more languages are spoken | | | | 1 |
| | b. Unhealthy parents | 1 | | | |
| | c. Maladjusted parents | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | d. Working parents | 1 | 3 | | |
| 3. | Classroom problems | | | | |
| | a. Poor organization of school activities | | | | 2 |
| | b. Poor methods of teaching, resulting in | | | | |
| | 1) The insecure | | | | |
| | 2) The isolate | | | | |
| E. Poor study habits | | | | | |
| 1. | Poor organization of work | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
| 2. | Poor note taking method | | 2 | | 4 |
| 3. | Asking help when not needed | | 2 | | |
| 4. | Not keeping work up to date | 1 | | | |
| 5. | Lack of concentration | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. | Inability to relate his studies with life experiences | | | | 2 |
| 7. | Inability to use references | | | | |

8. A noisy room 3
9. A room not well lighted, ventilated, and clean
10. A room which distracts attention 1 2
11. A room with comfortable chairs and tables

- F. Do you find any differences in slow learners according to sex, age, school level?
1. In the upper grades girls experience hardships in subjects such as mathematics, physics and the like.
 2. In the elementary classes the boys are slower than the girls. In the high school the girls are slower.
 3. In age and school level.
 4. In general, girls are slower than boys in the upper grades. Towards the upper ages (16-18) both sexes are better learners than the lower ages.

III. Ways to help the slow learner

1. Reports show the use of concrete materials in the classrooms.

A. All of the four schools use:

- a. Maps b. Charts c. demonstrations

Three schools use motion pictures.

The Armenian community resources are small, nevertheless a good amount of Audio-Visual aids is used in the classrooms to help the slow learners.

2. All of the four schools try to give first hand experience to their students by taking them to the:

- a. Mountains b. industries c. Having a school library

The report show that students are not taken to banks, stores and Parliament. Some of the reasons given for the first two items were that such visits were mainly for children on elementary level. I think the possible reason for the last item would be the difficulty of interviewing such government officials and arranging

Such visits.

3. Work on social adjustment is carried on in the following ways:

A. All join in

1. Organizing the class for self-government

We are pleased to know this, for it is through such organization that the slow learner may learn to take responsibilities and feel self-confident.

2. Elimination of misbehavior in a classroom

a. Dealing with misbehavior in privacy

b. Stimulating shy and withdrawn pupils

3. Cooperation with parents

a. Conferences with parents

b. Sending reports to parents

B. Only one school provides homeroom facilities. This may be due to :

a. Lack of information on homeroom advantages

b. Insufficient funds

c. Insufficient amount of trained teachers

C. No school has a parent-teacher association. This may not be considered serious in these particular schools, for conferences with parents may replace parent-teacher associations.

The report shows that only one school has a visiting teacher. It is wise that the others too try to

have such teachers for it is through home visits (more than conferences) that the school may come to know the home conditions of the slow learner and accordingly secure parents' cooperation.

4. Health improvement

A. All join in:

1. Regular and special examination in the school
2. Health education or hygiene as a part of the school curriculum

B. All join in sending reports to parents

No school improves health through

1. Parent teacher association
2. Visiting teacher or social worker.
3. Health education to parents

The analysis of this section points out the need for definite work in this area. Explanation for this lack may be similar to that given for the previous point

5. Personal dealings

A. Three schools deal personally with slow learners on subject taught and two on social adjustment.

I might suggest here that as social maladjustment is one of the important factors causing slowness more personal dealing is needed.

B. All schools join in helping the slow learner to adjust emotionally. In all of the four schools

this is done only by the principal and the teacher counselor, and not by the social worker, doctor (one school only), nurse, psychologist(one only), counselor, psychiatrist. The possible reason may be due to insufficient number of trained staff and insufficient funds.

6. Free activity period

Only one school provides a free activity period for slow learners and orientation to different occupation. This also may due to insufficient funds, insufficient number of trained staff and ignorance about the advantages of a free activity period.

The only school which orients his students to commercial occupations is the one which has the privilege to receive exam questions on commercial courses from Oxford Chamber of Commerce through the British Consulate.

Analyzed answers on topic III of questionnaire

III. What ways do you use in your school to help the slow

learner? (Please check any you use or add others)
A. Use of more concrete materials in the classroom-

Audio-Visual Aids:

1. Motion picture	1	3	4
2. Film strips	1	3	
3. Maps	1	2	3 4
4. Charts	1	2	3 4
5. Graphs		2	4
6. Diagrams		2	4
7. Posters			3
8. Models	1		
9. Demonstrations	1	2	3 4

2. Provision of first-hand experience
 - a. Exhibits 1 2 3
 - b. Excursions to
 - 1) Sea Shore 1
 - 2) Mountains 1 2 3 4
 - 3) Banks
 - 4) Stores 1
 - 5) Industries 1 2 3 4
 - 6) Parliament
 - c. A classroom or school library
3. Adjustment of curriculum
 - a. Smaller content 1 2 3 4
 - b. Clear assignment 1 2 4
 - c. Simple assignment 1 2
 - d. Assignments and activities built around pupils' interests 1
 - e. Beforehand well planned activities and assignments :
 - f. Much drill and repetition 1 2 3 4
4. Work on social adjustment
 - a. Provision of a homeroom 2
 - 1) Well lighted 2
 - 2) Well warmed
 - 3) Well cleaned 2
 - 4) Proper chairs and tables
 - 5) Models
 - 6) Exhibits
 - 7) Flowers
 - 8) A book corner
 - 9) Magazines
 - 10) Radio
 - 11) Motion picture 4
 - b. Class organization for self-government 1 2 3 4
 - c. Elimination of misbehavior in the classroom by
 - 1) The use of positive rather than negative statements 1 2 3
 - 2) The use of encouraging rather than discouraging statements 1 2 3
 - 3) The use of pleasant request rather than scoldings 2
 - 4) The use of substitute suggestions rather than negative comments. 1 2
 - 5) Giving choice of activities to the pupils 1 2
 - 6) Dealing with misbehavior problems in privacy 1 2 3 4
 - 7) Stimulating shy and withdrawn pupils 1 2 3 4
 - d. Cooperation with parents
 - 1) Visiting teacher 1
 - 2) Conferences with parents 1 2 3 4
 - 3) Parent-Teacher Association
 - 4) Sending reports to parents 1 2 3 4

- 5. Health improvement
 - a. In school
 - 1) By provision of a regular and special exam in the school 1 2 3 4
 - 2) Health education or hygiene as a part of the school curriculum 1 2 3 4
 - b. Through parents
 - 1) Visiting teacher or social worker
 - 2) Parent-teacher association
 - 3) Sending reports 1 2 3 4
 - 4) Health education to parents 4
- 6. Personal dealings with slow learners on
 - a. Subject taught 1 2 4
 - b. Social adjustment 1 3
 - c. Emotional adjustment done by
 - 1) Principal 1 2 3 4
 - 2) Social worker
 - 3) Doctor 1
 - 4) Nurse
 - 5) Teacher counselor 1 2 3 4
 - 6) Psychologist 4
 - 7) Counselor
 - 8) Psychiatrist
- 7. Provision of a free activity period 1
- 8. Provision of orienting the pupil to different occupations
 - a. Manual 3
 - b. Industrial
 - c. Agricultural
 - d. Commercial 3

IV. In answer to the question, "An improvement in the present status of slow learners in our secondary schools may be brought about in Beirut", all school principals agree on need for cooperation with parents; implementation of plan through better trained staff and increase in the staff number. All reports seem to feel the value of particular schools fitted to the needs of the slow learner. Three schools show need for more funds and better school buildings and the need for educating the parents and the public to the problems of the slow learner.

Analyzed answers on topic IV of questionnaire

IV. An improvement in the present status of slow learners in our secondary schools may be brought about in Beirut. (Please check in order of importance and add if you further think of any)

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|-------|
| A. | Publicity - an understanding of the problem by | | | | |
| | 1. State | | | | |
| | 2. Community | | | | |
| | 3. Parent | 1 | 3 | 4 | |
| | 4. School | 1 | 3 | 4 | |
| B. | A plan | | | | |
| | 1. National | 1 | 2 | 4 | |
| | 2. City | | 2 | | |
| | 3. Individual schools | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| C. | Implementation of plan | | | | |
| | 1. More funds | 1 | 2 | 4 | |
| | 2. Better school buildings | 1 | 2 | 4 | |
| | 3. Better trained staff | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | 4. Increase in the staff number | | | 1 | 3 3 4 |
| D. | Cooperation with parents | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| E. | Cooperation with public | 1 | | | |

VII. Conclusion

Object of thesis:

(1) To make a survey of slow learners and of methods and procedures which have proved acceptable in other countries to discover and work with slow learners.

As this survey was to help learners in our secondary schools in Beirut, the teacher's role is emphasized throughout. Section V for our secondary schools suffer from lack of counselors, social workers, psychiatrists. Consequently, the class teacher in general replaces such agencies when need arises.

(2) To see how far those methods and procedures have been used in Armenian High Schools in Beirut. This work was carried on through the questionnaire which included the main points of the thesis. Returns were secured. In addition, interviews were held with some principals to clear up questionable points and to secure information where details were lacking.

Upon analysis of the returns we found a very favourable school, student, parent relationships through which slow learners are diagnosed and remedied as far as possible. We found a great lack of money. This has resulted in insufficient number of teachers, (resulting in overburdened teachers) inability to have more personal dealings with slow learners and in lack of extra equipment. However this lack is balanced by a devotion

Good will and cooperation of parents, teachers, doctors and other non-Armenian agencies such as American University of Beirut, United States Information Service, British Council, Beirut Museum, Lebanese Government and the like.

Following improvements can be made without extra cost.

1. Publicity - movies, public lectures, radios, pamphlets to make community and school aware of the importance of the problem so that all may work cooperatively.

2. Clean, well lighted, ventilated, arranged and equipped classrooms for these may prevent headache, drowsiness, dizziness and nervousness which may be a cause of slowness in school children

3. More use of concrete materials. Since the slow learner tends to grasp things better with the aid of concrete materials, it is wise to introduce handwork in the school curriculum. Handwork which does not require much extra cost could be introduced such as tailoring for boys, dressmaking for girls. Some of the advantages of handwork are: it gives the slow learner a sense of achievement; it makes him associate the name with the object by handling and shaping such objects; it gives him opportunity to think which further stimulates his thinking to grasp more abstract things in his lessons.

4. Organization of different clubs, such as art club, gardening club, glee club, home economics and book reading clubs.

The purpose of such clubs would be to cultivate already existing interests, experience, discovery, achievement, self-expression, and to help the slow learner to find for himself resources to cultivate his talents, to find new talents, and interests, thus deciding on his future vocation.

5. Participation in school wide activities. Let slow learners participate on the level of their interest and ability in all the school enterprises, assemblies, newspapers, games, sports, campaigns and the like.

6. More use of first-hand experience. Planning and carrying out excursions to industries, Parliament, Post office, Police department, hospitals, public libraries, airdromes, are much more meaningful to the slow pupil than having an imaginary journey through the world of books.

7. Finally, it is wise to inform the slow learner about the interrelationships within his community and between his community and the rest of the nation and the world; about his responsibilities to the government and those of the government to him so that he may become an efficient citizen and a good member of his community.

In school, at home or in community, we must always keep in mind that the slow learner is a person, an individual like any other human being. How much less are his talents and slight his

promises, he is a member of mankind. Therefore, he has the right to claim all necessary guidance and instruction so he may develop to the fullest of his capacities, stand on his own feet and face boldly the world.

- END-

APPENDIX

Senior Thesis
 Education Department
 Beirut College for Women
 Questionnaire

THE SLOW LEARNER

A study is being made to learn what certain schools in Beirut are doing to aid the "slow learner" in their schools. This study is part of a senior thesis being written by a student in the Education Department at the Beirut College for Women.

It would assist this study if you would answer fully the following questions.

Please check any which fit your practice, and write any additional information which would be useful.

Name of School: _____ Grades: _____

Age of Students: _____

Sex: Boys _____ Girls _____ Both sexes _____

I. How do you discover a slow learner in your school?

- A. By parents' report on:
1. Physical changes
 2. Social changes
 3. Educational changes
 4. Behavioral changes
- B. By records of former teachers:
1. Grades
 2. Personality records
 3. Family background reports
 4. Health record

II

- C. By present school teachers
 - 1. School marks
 - 2. Physical changes
 - 3. Educational changes
 - 4. Social changes
 - 5. Behavioral changes
- D. By teacher's and administrative conferences.
- E. By regular physical examination in the school.
- F. By testing programs or psychologists
 - 1. Verbal intelligence test
 - 2. Performance test
 - 3. Group intelligence test
 - 4. Achievement test
 - 5. Social intelligence test
 - 6. Rorschach test
 - 7. Thematic appreciation test
 - 8. Reference to psychologist or psychiatrist
- G. By the teacher counselor or student advisor.
- H. By the pupil himself
 - 1. Autobiography
 - 2. Cumulative personal records.
- I. By other methods (Please specify)

II. What do you find to be some of the causes which made the slow learner? Please be specific whenever possible.

- A. Physical problems
 - 1. Sight
 - 2. Hearing
 - 3. Speech
 - a. Stuttering
 - b. Lispng
 - c. Babytalk
 - d. Cluttering
 - e. Nasality

B. Health problems

1. Teeth causing
 - a. Poor mastication
 - b. Malnutrition
 - c. Undernourishment
 - d. Mouth bacteria
2. Tonsils and adenoids
 - a. Enlarged tonsils and adenoids
 - b. Inflamed tonsils and adenoids
3. Poor health habits
 - a. Poor dietary habits
 - b. Cleanliness
 - c. Clothing

C. Mental problems

D. Social maladjustment caused by

1. Personal problems
 - a. Sex conflict
 - b. Economic insecurity
 - c. Dependence on parents
 - d. Worry about future plans
 - e. Inability to face realities
2. Home problems
 - a. Home where two or more languages are spoken
 - b. Unhealthy parents
 - c. Maladjusted parents
 - d. Working parents
3. Classroom problems
 - a. Poor organization of school activities
 - b. Poor methods of teaching, resulting in
 - 1) The insecure
 - 2) The isolate

E. Poor study habits

1. Poor organization of work
2. Poor note-taking method
3. Asking help when not needed
4. Not keeping work up to date
5. Lack of concentration
6. Inability to relate his studies with life experiences
7. Inability to use references
8. A noisy room
9. A room not well lighted, ventilated, and clean
10. A room which distracts attention
11. A room with comfortable chairs and tables

F. Do you find any differences in slow learners according to sex, age, school level?

- III. What ways do you use in your school to help the slow learner? (Please check any you use or add others)
- A. Use of more concrete materials in the classroom -
 Audio-Visual Aids:
 1. Motion pictures
 2. Film strips
 3. Maps
 4. Charts
 5. Graphs
 6. Diagrams
 7. Posters
 8. Models
 9. Demonstrations
- B. Provision of first-hand experience
 1. Exhibits
 2. Excursions to
 a. Sea Shore
 b. Mountains
 c. Banks
 d. Stores
 e. Industries
 f. Parliament
 3. A classroom or school library
- C. Adjustment of curriculum
 1. Smaller content
 2. Clear assignment
 3. Simple assignment
 4. Assignments and activities built around pupils' interests
 5. Beforehand well planned activities and assignments
 6. Much drill and repetition
- D. Work on social adjustment
 1. Provision of a homeroom
 a. Well lighted
 b. Well warmed
 c. Well cleaned
 d. Proper chairs and tables
 e. Models
 f. Exhibits
 g. Flowers
 h. A book corner
 i. Magazines
 j. Radio
 k. Motion picture
 2. Class organization for self-government
 3. Elimination of misbehavior in the classroom by
 a. The use of positive rather than negative statements
 b. The use of encouraging rather than discouraging statements

- c. The use of pleasant requests rather than scolding;
- d. The use of substitute suggestions rather than negative comments
- e. Giving choice of activities to the pupils
- f. Dealing with misbehavior problems in privacy
- g. Stimulating shy and withdrawn pupils
- 4. Cooperation with parents
 - a. Visiting teacher
 - b. Conferences with parents
 - c. Parent-teacher association
 - d. Sending reports to parents
- E. Health improvement
 - 1. In school
 - a. By provision of a regular and special exam in the school
 - b. Health education or hygiene as a part of the school curriculum
 - 2. Through parents
 - a. Visiting teacher or social worker
 - b. Parent-teacher association
 - c. Sending reports
 - d. Health education to parents
- F. Personal dealings with slow learners on
 - 1. Subject taught
 - 2. Social adjustment
 - 3. Emotional adjustment done by
 - a. Principal
 - b. Social worker
 - c. Doctor
 - d. Nurse
 - e. Teacher counselor
 - f. Psychologist
 - g. Counselor
 - h. Psychiatrist
- G. Provision of a free activity period
- H. Provision of orienting the pupil to different occupations:
 - 1. Manual
 - 2. Industrial
 - 3. Agricultural
 - 4. Commercial

IV. An improvement in the present status of slow learners in our secondary schools may be brought about in Beirut: (Please check in order of importance and add if you further think of any)

- A. Publicity - an understanding of the problem by
 - 1. State
 - 2. Community
 - 3. Parent
 - 4. School
- B. A plan
 - 1. National
 - 2. City
 - 3. Individual schools
- C. Implementation of plan
 - 1. More funds
 - 2. Better school buildings
 - 3. Better trained staff
 - 4. Increase in the staff number
- D. Cooperation with parents
- E. Cooperation with public

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