

AN INTERVENTION PROGRAM USING ALTERABLE VARIABLES  
TO IMPROVE SCHOOL SUCCESS OF UNDERACHIEVERS

By

BILLY TRAVIS WILSON

Bachelor of Science in Education  
Southwestern Oklahoma State University  
Weatherford, Oklahoma  
1967

Master of Education  
Southwestern Oklahoma State University  
Weatherford, Oklahoma  
1970

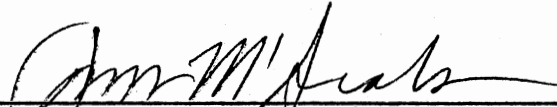
Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College  
of the Oklahoma State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the Degree of  
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION  
May, 1982

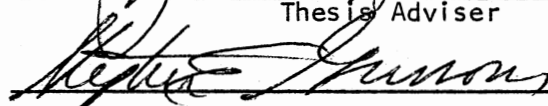
Thesis  
1982 D  
W746i  
Cop. 2

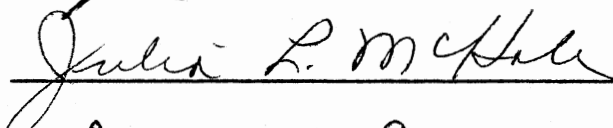


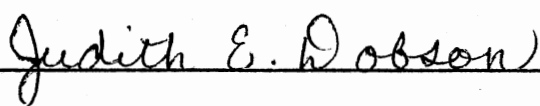
AN INTERVENTION PROGRAM USING ALTERABLE VARIABLES  
TO IMPROVE SCHOOL SUCCESS OF UNDERACHIEVERS

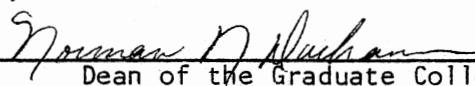
Thesis Approved:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Thesis Adviser

  
\_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean of the Graduate College

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Worthwhile goals are achieved through one's hard work, discipline, and drive. Yet help and encouragement are oftentimes needed to see the dreams of a goal become reality.

There are several significant individuals to whom I owe a debt of gratitude in helping me to attain this goal.

I wish to thank Mr. Robert Parr, my co-worker and friend, who, through his encouragement, started this endeavor. Appreciation goes to Mr. Doug Rundle, Forgan Public Schools, Mr. Wiley Hinton, Beaver Public Schools, and Mr. Lester Janzen, Garrett Public Schools, and their respective school boards, who, in a professional manner, supported my work toward this goal.

A special thanks goes to my chairman, Dr. James Seals, who supported me so positively during this experience. His help was invaluable each step of the way. Dr. Steve Grissom's, Dr. Judy Dobson's, and Dr. Julia McHale's input and guidance was crucial--thanks!

The very special "thank you" is given to my wife, Cheryl, who not only supported and encourage me, but also typed my rough draft.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
✓ I. GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE AREA OF STUDY . . . . .	1
Introduction . . . . .	1
Statement of the Problem . . . . .	3
Significance of the Study . . . . .	3
Purpose of the Study . . . . .	4
Research Questions . . . . .	4
Definition of Terms . . . . .	5
Limitations . . . . .	6
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE . . . . .	7
Summary . . . . .	15
✓ III. DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY . . . . .	16
Subjects . . . . .	16
Design . . . . .	17
Method and Procedure . . . . .	17
Instrumentation . . . . .	19
Statistical Treatment . . . . .	20
IV. RESULTS . . . . .	22
Introduction . . . . .	22
Tests of the Research Question . . . . .	23
Summary . . . . .	28
Discussion . . . . .	33
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . .	37
Summary . . . . .	37
Conclusions . . . . .	38
Recommendations . . . . .	40
A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	43
APPENDIX A - DETAILED PARENT TREATMENT OUTLINE . . . . .	46
APPENDIX B - SAMPLE QUESTIONS OF THE TESTING INSTRUMENTS . . . . .	51

## LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
I.	Comparison of Home Factors . . . . .	11
II.	Summary Table for the Analysis of Variance: Grade Point Average . . . . .	23
III.	Summary Table for the Analysis of Variance: School Absences . . . . .	24
IV.	Means and Standard Deviations of the Dependent Variables at the Assessment Periods . . . . .	25
V.	Summary Table for the Analysis of Variance: Self Concept Adjective Checklist . . . . .	26
VI.	Summary Table for the Analysis of Variance: Self Acceptance . . . . .	27
VII.	Summary Table for the Analysis of Variance: Self Security . . . . .	27
VIII.	Summary Table for the Analysis of Variance: Peer Affiliation . . . . .	29
IX.	Summary Table for the Analysis of Variance: Teacher Affiliation . . . . .	29
X.	Summary Table for the Analysis of Variance: Social Maturity . . . . .	30
XI.	Summary Table for the Analysis of Variance: Social Confidence . . . . .	30
XII.	Summary Table for the Analysis of Variance: School Affiliation . . . . .	31
XIII.	Summary Table for the Measure of Simple Effect: Peer Affiliation . . . . .	32
XIV.	Summary Table for the Measure of Simple Effect: Peer Affiliation . . . . .	32

## CHAPTER I

### GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE AREA OF STUDY

#### Introduction

The underachiever has posed one of the unresolved problems in education. This situation has continued to be a major concern of modern education. School and home are mutually responsible for educating the child and must work together in ways that are understood and accepted by both. However, the school's track record shows few constructive steps in achieving this goal. As is pointed out by Goodlad (1979), many of the changes and adaptations schools could have initiated are now being forced upon them by court and legislative action. While limited parental involvement has been mandated by PL 94-142 and Oklahoma's Gifted and Talented Act, these acts serve only a small percentage of the individual students' needs, leaving out the larger population of underachievers. The needs of any student, no matter what his level of academic functioning, can only be met at a local level. We have moved one step closer in returning power to the local schools with the passage of the Educational Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981. The National School Boards Association (1981) pamphlet states that this act is a landmark educational decision because:

It heralds the passing of some cherished notions--that the country's resources are endless, that distant governments can solve all local problems. But it promises the return of others --that people can wisely manage limited resources, that locally controlled schools are most responsive to local educational needs (p. 25).

This author believes local schools can now be more responsive to local needs, which prompted this study to attempt to influence variables within the home that can be affected through counselor-parent interaction to improve underachieving children's success in school.

To better understand the underachieving child, we can organize his world into a triangle: school, family, and community. By involving the family and school together, it will allow us to indirectly affect the other area, the community. Shelton and Dobson (1974) pointed out a tendency to overlook the dynamics of family life and the relationships among parents, children, and teachers as a functional social-emotional unit. Some of the dynamics within a family are further explained by Bloom (1980) as alterable variables. These variables include:

1. Contribution of the home to development of the mother language.
2. Encouragement of the children to learn well.
3. Aspirations of the parents for their children.
4. Provision of help in learning when the child most needs it.
5. Ways in which time and space are organized in the home (p. 385).

Parents want their children to do well in school, but do not always know how to help them. It is the school's function to identify variables they can affect. Bloom (1980) stated schools need to search for alterable variables that can make a difference in learning of children and adults in or out of school. Shea (1976) explained that schooling may be construed as an intervening process between family of origin and later occupational and economic attainments. Although Kephart (1971) was not specifically talking about underachievers, he inadvertently explained the dilemma of the underachiever when he wrote:



The infant's task, which will take a lifetime, is to discover the laws of the universe which surrounds him, and how to control his own behavior so that it will conform to the lawful complex of which it is a part. When such learning is successful, behavior, shaped by the same laws which control the whole of the environment, becomes appropriate when it is carried out in that environment. When learning is incomplete or erroneous, behavior is inappropriate or unsatisfactory (pp. 3-4).

This author believes behavior is learned--and can be changed through parent-counselor interaction, for the purpose of increasing the under-achiever's school success.

#### Statement of the Problem

The major objective of this investigation was to determine if it is possible to affect a change in academic success of underachieving children through increasing the school's involvement with their parents.

#### Significance of the Study

If the process variables (interactions between home and child are family self-esteem, parent encouragement, parent aspirations, home study help, and home time and space organization) can be altered by educational training and involvement, and if the home and school can work together to solve a common problem, then underachieving children would be helped toward reaching a higher level of potential. The school counselor's role would then expand to that of a social-change agent. This would be done with a systematic approach that would be acceptable to the individual patron as well as the educational community at the local, state, and national level. This process would include teaching such parental skills as problem solving, parent encouragement and feelings, communication, parent aspirations, home time, space and study helps, and family-self-esteem. The counselor's involvement with families could then simultaneously

affect all three legs of the triangle--family, school, and community-- for the betterment of the child.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of parental intervention on underachieving students' school success. The present research centered on the improvement of the selected alterable variables. These variables were family self-esteem, parent encouragement, parent aspirations, home study help, and home time and space organization in grades two through eight. Previous research by Bloom (1980) set the stage for the present study. A major goal was to look for new ways to improve student success.

#### Research Questions

The training program for parents was based on the following five areas:

1. Family self-esteem
2. Parent encouragement
3. Parent aspirations
4. Home study help.
5. Home time and space organization.

The extent of parent-student involvement after treatment was measured by (1) Self Concept Adjective Checklist (SCAC), (2) Self Observation Scale (SOS) (consisting of seven subtest scales which are: self acceptance, self security, peer affiliation, teacher affiliation, social maturity, social confidence, and school affiliation), (3) grade point average, and (4) school absences. The following research questions were used for this study:

1. What differences exist between control and experimental groups on self-concept as measured by the SCAC?
2. What differences exist between control and experimental groups on self acceptance, self security, peer affiliation, teacher affiliation, social maturity, social confidence, and school affiliation as measured by the SOS?
3. What differences exist between control and experimental groups on school absences?
4. What differences exist between control and experimental groups on grade point average?

#### Definition of Terms

Underachieving child: The underachieving child is the pupil who scores above 90 on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, as a measure of intelligence, and who scores below the 40th percentile on either the Metropolitan Achievement Test (math section) or the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test, as a measure of achievement, but does not have a primary learning or emotional problem.

Counselor: Counselor is defined as a trained individual capable of helping another person achieve a change in behavior, facilitating another's personal growth, or guiding another towards the solution of personal problems.

Parent: Parent is described as being either the natural parent or other significant adult.

Status variables: These are the variables that are parents' education and occupation, social class and socioeconomic status, and ethnic group and race. These characteristics are not alterable by a counselor.

Process variables: These are the interactions between home and children. They are family self-esteem, parent encouragement, parent aspirations, home study help, and home time and space organization.

#### Limitations

Even though the most appropriate design will be utilized in the present study, any application of the conclusions drawn from this study to other populations and situations must be done with much care. Strict interpretation should be limited to those students and parent volunteers in this investigation subjected to the same treatment procedures. Interpretation should further be limited to the dependent variables in the present study as measured by the various scales of the Self Concept Adjective Checklist and the Self Observation Scales.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The child's world can be organized into a triangle: school, family, and community. By involving the family and school together to affect variables, it will allow us to influence two-thirds of the triangle, helping to indirectly affect the other third area, the community. More and more research has attempted to identify those variables outside of the school contributing to school success. Only recently have attempts been made to influence those variables within the family (Bloom, 1980).

We are just beginning to understand and measure the specific characteristics that affect the acquisition of ability (Walberg & Marjoribanks, 1976). Shea (1976) made the following observations about schooling as an intervening process between family and later occupational and economic attainments:

Family background explains more inequality in verbal achievement--a good predictor of schooling attainment, and a fairly good predictor of occupational status--than schooling itself explains. Yet most of the influence of socioeconomic status on schooling attainment is interpreted by aspirations, grades, and significant other's influence, and this may create the impression of equal opportunity (p. 514).

A successful child's needs are assumed to be met within the school, family, and community, while the needs of underachieving children have only been partially met. While the school and community are doing their best to meet the underachiever's needs, past research (Bloom, 1980) suggests it is best to involve the home and family as a cooperating partner

in this change process. To accomplish this we must first identify the underachiever.

An underachieving student is best defined as a student who appears to possess ability to achieve considerably higher grades than his actual present record shows (Wellington, 1966). While this definition is probably the most workable, it is not specific enough to identify the less than obvious student. The Lexington Study (Wellington, 1966) of high school students combined two factors: intelligence and combined class grade stanine. The underachievers were identified by having an average intelligence with low grades or having high intelligence with average grades. This was a workable classification for high school students, but it was not for elementary students because of the method variables between elementary and high school letter-grade assignment.

In 1960, the war on poverty brought about several government programs represented by Head Start, Parent and Child Centers, and Title I programs. These programs were founded on central themes and can be summed up by: (1) the home is important and basic for human development; (2) parents need help in creating the most effective home environment for the development; and (3) the early years of life are important for life-long development (Gordon, 1977). In the 1970's, the push was still to maintain and strengthen the family unit by the government programs started in the 1960's. Still another bigger push from the Office of Education requires for Title I and PL 94-142 to involve parents on the local level.

Parent influence and the underachieving child have been studied to find out to what extent relationships exist. Granlund and Knowles (1968) classified 48 male subjects as either underachievers or achievers based on the ratio of the prior year's cumulative grade point average to their

California Test of Mental Maturity intelligence score. The underachievers' and achievers' masculinity-femininity scores derived from the Bell Adjustment Inventory were significantly different. Differences were not found between intelligence levels or the interaction of intelligence X achievement. These findings suggest that male sex role identification is characteristic of achievers but not of underachievers.

Hilliard and Roth (1969) further studied the parent-child relationship by classifying 45 male subjects as either underachievers or achievers based on the ratio of the cumulative grade point average to the California Test of Mental Maturity intelligence score. The Mother-Child Relationship Evaluation found that mothers of achievers were more accepting and less rejecting of their children than were mothers of underachievers and the underachiever perceived their mother's attitudes toward them while the achievers were not aware of their mother's attitudes toward them.

Thiel and Thiel (1977) identified three families whose male children had been certified as Mentally Gifted Minors according to the California State Education Code's criteria. The underachieving male children were given a battery of ten separate measures and seven of which were separately given to each parent. In addition, in-depth case studies and anecdotal records were obtained. Although reliable statistical data were not available on the small sample size, the authors reported that an examination of all the data suggested that perceptions between child and mother were closer than were between father and son on the properties of personality variables and self-esteem.

The parent-child relationship and home environment has been recognized as a strong contributing factor in the research of underachievement.

Kifer (1976) allowed research to attack a new dimension by identifying functional status and process variables. The status variable is "home background"--father's occupation, father's education, and mother's education--measures which reflect the social and economic "status" of families. Process variables are what parents do to encourage and support either directly or indirectly the educational achievements and related attitudes of their children. The process variables are:

1. Verbal dimension (Gordon, 1973; Kifer, 1975).
2. Activities congruent with the expectations and demands school (Dave, 1963; Crandall & Battle, 1970).
3. General cultural level of the home (Getzels, 1963; Harrison, 1971).

Student achievement is a complex result of many interrelated factors, of which ability is only one. In order to raise students' cognitive development, educators must consider noncognitive student variables such as preschool experience, home, environment, geographic transience, individual personality, parental involvement, socioeconomic status, race, sex, family size and birth order and spacing (Shapiro and Bloom, 1977).

While there is little that can be done to improve socioeconomic status or birth order, Gordon (1970), in his own research and in reviewing the research of others, identified 19 parent behavioral factors as they relate to child performance. Of the 19 factors, the first 9 are cognitive or intellectual and the last 10 are emotional or affective. Hess (1971), in his research as well as in the review of others, identified 9 variables that support Gordon's 19 parental behavior variables. Shea and Hanes (1977), in their significant study, agree with Gordon's 19, differing only by group classification. Shea and Hanes agreed with Grotberg's observations of home variables (see Table 1).



TABLE I  
COMPARISON OF HOME FACTORS

---

(Gordon, 1970) (Grotberg, 1972)

1. Academic guidance
2. Cognitive operational level and style
3. Cultural activities planned
4. Direct instruction of the child
5. Educational aspirations
6. Use of external resources
7. Intellectuality of the home
8. Verbal facility
9. Verbal frequency
10. Consistency of management
11. Differentiation of self
12. Disciplinary pattern
13. Emotional security, self-esteem
14. Impulsivity
15. Belief in internal control
16. Protectiveness, babying of child
17. Trusting attitude
18. Willingness to devote time to children
19. Work habits

(Hess, 1971) (Grotberg, 1972)

1. Independence training
2. Warmth and high emotional involvement
3. Consistency of discipline
4. Explanatory control
5. Expectation for success
6. Parent sense control
7. Verbalness in the home
8. Parents direct teaching
9. Parent self-esteem

(Shea and Hanes, 1977)

1. Expectations for child's schooling
  2. Awareness of child's development
  3. Rewards for intellectual attainment
  4. Press for language development
  5. Availability and use of supplies for language development
  6. Outside learning opportunities
  7. Materials for learning in the home
  8. Reading press
  9. Trust in school
-

The home process variables can be grouped into the following areas as listed by Bloom (1980):

1. Contribution of the home to development of the mother language.
2. Encouragement of the children to learn well.
3. Aspirations of the parents for their children.
4. Provision of help in learning when the child most needs it.
5. Ways in which time and space are organized in the home (p. 382).

Researchers have found that parental involvement in the child's developmental process can positively influence school achievement (Hammond & Schutz, 1980; Hays, Cunningham & Robinson, 1977; Shea & Hanes, 1977; Muth, 1973; Duncan & Fitzgerald, 1969). Gurman (1970) suggested influencing the family of underachievers by involving both the child and parents in group process to better understand the parent-child interaction.

Parent encounter-type group counseling was successfully accomplished by Wechsler (1971) to improve the underachieving child's self-concept by using the mother's influence. Perkins and Wicas (1971) also had success working with mothers of underachieving children, but more important, they found no difference between counseling the mother with or without the child present. One attempt (Easterson, Feldman, Krigsman & Warshaw, 1975) was to work with parents in marital group sessions to work through marriage problems which affect the child's achievement. Educational research indicates that children's achievement tends to increase when their parents, or other significant adults, are actively involved in the process of education. Dobson and Dobson (1975) suggest the improved achievement might be accomplished through better communication between home and school.

Consider the effects of the family on the intellectual and personal development of the child. Gordon (1970) identified some selected program approaches which encourage a variety of efforts on the local level, which can be grouped together as ways to gain better communication between home, school, and community. Communications as a method of intervention was used by Hayes, Cunningham, and Robinson (1977) to show success while working with parents. Parent involvement was explained by Shelton and Dobson (1973) using The Family Involvement Communication System (FICS) model. This model allowed the counselor to function as a trainer, coordinator, and resource person. The FICS model was used in a later study to show a counselor can function as change agent in facilitating positive home-school communication (Shelton & Dobson, 1974).

Following is a brief overview of the current trends in parent training as outlined by Wilson (1979):

1. Behavioral programs for parents. This is a program designed to teach parents the use and practice of selected behavioral skills (Duehn & Mayados, 1975) through audio-visual methods (videotapes). A drawback is that little developmental understanding of the child or motivation for his behavior is presented.
2. Discussion groups for parents. Films were used by Hereford (1963) to stimulate nondirected discussion. Success has been shown with this method.
3. Communication and psychological insight. Parent Effectiveness Training (Gordon, 1970) is the most popular program around. It teaches communications and some developmental understanding.
4. Dinkmeyer's (1973) "C" Group. Uses collaboration, consultation, clarification, confrontation, concern, confidentiality, and commitment. The focus is on an incident in parenting.
5. F. P. Piercy's (1973) Adlerian approach. The focus is on the child's environment. Emphasis is placed on parent's understanding of the child's behavior.

6. Transactional Analysis Model (Whittlesey, 1967). It serves as an aid in helping the counselor organize data and in illustrating desirable parental responses.
7. Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP) (Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1976). This is a systematic program easy to present. It emphasizes understanding, communication, and family decision making.
8. The Peanut Butter and Jelly School (Grodner & Grodner, 1975). This school is located in Albuquerque, New Mexico. It has attempted a complete integration of parents into their program through parental self-concepts, parenting skills, classroom involvement, structured home program, parent organization, parental representation at staff meetings, combined staff-parent office, library resource room, kitchen, lounge, and a course offered at the local university (pp. 49-50).

While there are other groups not discussed by Wilson and not as popular at this time, they are still worth mentioning. Lamb and Lamb (1978) mention the following:

1. Rational Emotive Therapy Model
2. Psychoanalytic
3. Child Study Association of America
4. Transactional Analysis
5. Reality Therapy
6. Pre-School Programs
7. Haim Ginott
8. Eclectic Parent Education.

In reviewing the different types of parent groups, the involvement of parents currently falls into one of three categories. These are:

1. Therapy and discussion groups
2. Behavioral training
3. Teaching and/or other supportive training.

### Summary

The selected research of underachievers can be grouped into two large areas: between and within family variables. Between family variables are those traits held more or less static or constant by the parents' socioeconomic or educational attainment suggesting more or less the parents' home background. The within family variables are traits that can vary (are not constant), what parents do to encourage and support attitudes toward education. The within family variables that are subject to change can be grouped into six areas which are problem solving, parent encouragement and feelings, communication, parent aspirations, home time, space and study help, and family self-esteem. The more recent parent training programs tend to accent only one or two within family variables. Parent programs that are the most popular combine several within family variables.

## CHAPTER III

### DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### Subjects

The subjects of study were underachieving students in grades two through eight in a rural Oklahoma public school. The community is basically a middle-class, rural, agricultural region with a population of approximately 2,000 people. The semiarid climate varies greatly from season to season. Droughts are so frequent that local residents have accepted them as a way of life. Severe weather conditions occasionally occur. In recent years gas and oil production has increasingly played a more important role in the economic development of the county.

The active participants of the experimental group were eight sets of parents of underachieving students. Eight underachieving students and their eight sets of parents were assigned to the control group. The experimental group was comprised of eight male subjects. Included in this group was one second grader, one third grader, four fourth graders, one fifth grader, and one seventh grader. The control group members were one female and seven male subjects. Their grade placement was one second grader, one third grader, four fourth graders, one fifth grader, and one eighth grade female student. The investigator personally interviewed those parents whose grade two through grade eight child had been identified and randomly assigned to the experimental group by using the table of random numbers as suggested by Gay (1976). Their support was requested

to intervene to help their child make positive gains in school work. At that time the parent-program was discussed in detail, explaining dates of the scheduled meetings, topics, and their participation.

#### Design

Eighty underachievers were identified in grades two through eight. Forty students were assigned to the experimental group and forty students were assigned to the control group. The homeroom teacher, in a regularly scheduled teacher-parent conference, informed the parents of their child's present level of achievement and that the school counselor would be contacting them. The counselor then visited with the parents of the experimental group to explain the scope and sequence of the parent training. Parent training was six evening meetings arranged so that both parents could be involved, including baby sitting service that was coordinated with the high school home economics classes. The first post-test was administered in December after the last parent meeting. The second post-test was administered in April to both the experimental and control groups of underachieving students.

When the analysis of data was completed, the parents were notified of the results of the testing and progress of their child. The child's grade point average was compared with his previous grade point average.

#### Method and Procedure

The counselor and parents met after the teacher referral. Although all forty of the identified experimental group parents were invited, only eight completed all six sessions. The counselor visited with the parents about their important role in the child's educational development and how

they can help their child indirectly to prevent him from repeating the same grade.

The following points were made in the treatment group to accent the parent's important role in their child's lifelong development (Schaefer, 1972):

1. Priority--Parents influence the early development of relationships, language, interest, task-oriented behaviors.
2. Duration--The parents' interactions with the child usually extend from birth to maturity.
3. Continuity--The parent-child interaction is usually not interrupted, particularly in early childhood, apart from brief separations.
4. Amount--The total amount of time spent in parent-child interaction is usually greater than with other adults.
5. Extensity--The parent shares more different situations and experiences with the child than do other adults.
6. Intensity--The degree of involvement between parent and child, whether hostile or loving, is usually greater than between the child and other adults.
7. Pervasiveness--Parents influence the child's use of the mass media, social relationships, and exposure to social institutions and professions, both inside and outside the home (p. 185).

The counselor gave a brief explanation of the six night meetings to the parents of the underachieving pupils. While nine hours of actual didactic orientation constituted the treatment process, several additional hours were included. For example, homework assignments were made that included the following:

1. Hug your child.
2. Practice active listening.
3. Practice the Solution Oriented Approach to Problems (SOAP) (Lamb & Lamb, 1978).
4. Practice "I messages" and "owning the problem."



5. Family coat of arms.
6. Self-planned activity of time and space organization.
7. Encouragement of parents with specific problems to make appointments with the counselor for follow-up.

The topics covered at the six meetings were: (1) problem solving, (2) parent encouragement and feelings, (3) communication, (4) parent aspirations, (5) home time, space and study help, and (6) family self-esteem. An overview of these sessions is presented in Appendix A.

### Instrumentation

The Self Observation Scale and the Self Concept Adjective Checklist were used to evaluate the underachieving students' success rates for the parent group. The manual that accompanies the SCAC reports the following concerning reliability and validity:

A reliability check was made on public school students (N = 120) ranging in age from 5 to 14 over a four year period. These were on students who did not receive professional counseling in the interim between tests. The reliability coefficient was .83 for a test-retest format, with an interval of six months.

The SCAC is developed upon a face validity format. This seems to be adequate for the expressed purposes of the scale. Since the primary purpose of the SCAC is to be a counseling aid and not that of "predicting" self-concept phenomena per se, this type of validity is functional. Cross-validated studies are currently in progress and will be reported in a planned Manual revision (p. 2).

Examination of the SOS technical manual reports validity in the primary scales of self acceptance, social maturity, self security, and school affiliation is satisfactorily replicable and invariant. The intermediate scales of self acceptance, self security, social maturity, and social confidence are also satisfactorily replicable and invariant. The peer

affiliation, school affiliation, and teacher affiliation scales evidence adequate replicability, invariance, and constancy, although a notable exception is evidenced with the peer affiliation scale being weaker in definition at different grade levels. Both school affiliation and teacher affiliation appear to have inadequate ceilings.

The technical manual describes each scale separately and denotes some weaknesses with cultural or ethnic groups, although the scores were consistent and reliable across all scales. The reported weakness would not affect this study because no ethnic groups were involved.

The counselor followed the instructions for administering the SOS and SCAC in a group as outlined in the manuals. Sample questions from both tests can be found in Appendix B.

#### Statistical Treatment

Before parents started the parent sessions, every child was administered the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Gates MacGinitie Reading Test, and the Metropolitan Achievement Test (math section). After parent sessions were finished, the SOS and SCAC were administered. The child's grade point average and school absences were monitored until the end of the school year to check gains. Only the solid classes (reading, spelling, mathematics, English, and science) were used in computing the grade point average on a four point scale. Eight response variables were measured: student self concept, self acceptance, self security, peer affiliation, teacher affiliation, social maturity, social confidence, and school affiliation.

Factorial analyses of variance were used to statistically interpret differences that occurred between the experimental and control student

groups. A one-way ANOVA was computed on the significant differences of the dependent variables.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

The statistical analysis of this study was accomplished through a variety of processes. The main emphasis of the study was to examine the effects of parent training upon the school performance of school children who were identified as underachieving. However, other related information was gleaned from the data.

Attendance is sometimes found to be a problem among underachieving children (Hayes, Cunningham & Robinson, 1977) and was considered as a possible influence. The one-way ANOVA was used to study the influence of grade point as well as school absences.

The split plot factorial design was used to examine those dependent variables which were considered important areas within the study. One of the most critical of these is self-concept, as well as self-acceptance. Other areas involved the child's peer affiliation and teacher affiliation. Both of these are dynamic and can be influenced by changes in the other areas. Social maturity, social confidence, and school affiliation complete the study using this design. In addition to the split plot factorial design, the means were also computed for eight of the dependent variables. A 2 X 2 ANOVA was computed on the significant differences of each of the dependent variables.

### Tests of the Research Question

The primary question used in this study was to determine the influence of the treatment upon the changes in student performance as measured by the grade point average. Only the solid classes' grades were used in computing grade point average on a four-point scale. The results of the analysis of variance for this phase of the study are shown in Table II. According to the information shown, the main effect for the experimental group experienced a positive and significant influence which resulted in increased grade point averages ( $F_{1,14} = 4.94$ ,  $p = .043$ ).

TABLE II  
SUMMARY TABLE FOR THE ANALYSIS OF  
VARIANCE: GRADE POINT AVERAGE

Source	df	SS	MS	F	P
GPA	1	1.61	1.61	4.94	.043
Within (error)	14	4.57	0.33		
Total	15	6.18			

Another question explored by this study asks what will be the effect of intervention on school absences exposing the alterable variables to underachieving students? The total school absences for the experimental group was  $27\frac{1}{2}$  days, while the control group had  $46\frac{1}{2}$  days absent. As shown in Table III, the main effect for the experimental group showed no

significant difference ( $F_{1,14} = 3.35, p = .088$ ). Specifically, the effects of intervention did not alter school absences between the experimental and control groups.

TABLE III  
SUMMARY TABLE FOR THE ANALYSIS OF  
VARIANCE: SCHOOL ABSENCES

Source	df	SS	MS	F	P
Absences	1	34.52	34.52	3.35	.088
Within (error)	14	144.34	10.31		
Total	15	178.86			

The dependent variable means and standard deviation are presented in Table IV. Although the differences between the experimental and control groups are not significant, the experimental group experienced an upward trend on the social maturity scale. The self-acceptance, peer affiliation, and teacher affiliation experienced a downward trend.

The Self Concept Adjective Checklist was used in this study to determine the influence of the treatment upon self-concept using a self-reporting measure. The results of the analysis of variance for this phase of the study shown in Table V indicated a nonsignificant difference between groups ( $F_{1,14} = 1.02, p = .329$ ). The Post-delayed Post difference (Time) was nonsignificant ( $F_{1,14} = 1.20, p = 2.96$ ), as well as the Group by Time interaction ( $F_{1,14} = .53, p = .482$ ).

TABLE IV  
 MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE DEPENDENT  
 VARIABLES AT THE ASSESSMENT PERIODS

Variable	Group	Post		Post Delayed	
		$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD
SCAC	E	2.07	0.13	2.06	0.11
	C	2.05	0.16	1.97	0.20
SA	E	52.00	7.39	48.00	10.24
	C	45.00	11.70	44.87	11.68
SS	E	53.13	9.17	51.63	10.72
	C	44.75	11.57	46.00	11.64
PA	E	54.75	9.38	49.75	10.55
	C	48.75	11.27	49.75	10.39
TA	E	49.63	9.35	44.13	13.75
	C	48.25	6.94	43.75	13.09
AF	E	49.75	12.28	49.38	12.61
	C	46.13	11.32	46.25	8.10
SM	E	47.75	9.10	51.38	5.73
	C	49.00	6.46	50.38	6.48
SC	E	51.63	7.52	51.63	2.88
	C	52.13	6.92	50.75	8.36
GPA	E	2.27	.63		
	C	1.56	1.11		
Absences	E	3.44	2.57		
	C	5.81	3.67		

TABLE V  
SUMMARY TABLE FOR THE ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:  
SELF CONCEPT ADJECTIVE CHECKLIST

Source	df	SS	MS	F	P
Between Subjects	15	5.779			.329
Groups	1	.394	.394	1.02	
Subj w. groups	14	5.385	.385		
Within Subjects	16	.476			
Time	1	.036	.036	1.20	.296
Group x Time	1	.016	.016	.53	.482
Time x Subj w. groups	14	.424	.030		
Total	31	6.225			

The Self Observation Scales were used in this study to measure the influence of the treatment upon changes in self acceptance, self security, peer affiliation, teacher affiliation, social maturity, social confidence, and school affiliation. The results of the analysis of variance on the self acceptance shown in Table VI show a nonsignificant difference between groups ( $F_{1,14} = .39, p = .545$ ). The Post-delayed Post difference (Time) was significant ( $F_{1,14} = 4.44, p = .054$ ) showing a decrease in the experimental group. Group by Time interaction was nonsignificant ( $F_{1,14} = 2.36, p = .147$ ).

Self security shown in Table VII indicates a nonsignificant F value in groups ( $F_{1,14} = 1.14, p = .303$ ). The Post-delayed Post difference (Time) was nonsignificant ( $F_{1,14} = .005, p = .945$ ), as well as Group by Time interaction ( $F_{1,14} = .60, p = .450$ ).

Table VIII shows a nonsignificant F value in peer affiliation between groups ( $F_{1,14} = .014, p = .409$ ). The Post-delayed Post difference



TABLE VI  
SUMMARY TABLE FOR THE ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:  
SELF ACCEPTANCE

Source	df	SS	MS	F	P
Between Subjects	15	23679.281			
Groups	1	634.504	634.504	.39	.545
Subj. w. Groups	14	23044.777	1646.056		
Within Subjects	16	372.356			
Time	1	79.450	79.450	4.44	.054
Group x Time	1	42.308	72.308	2.36	.147
Time x Subj. w. Groups	14	250.598	17.900		
Total	31	24051.638			

TABLE VII  
SUMMARY TABLE FOR THE ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:  
SELF SECURITY

Source	df	SS	MS	F	P
Between Subjects	15	21798.979			
Groups	1	1645.021	1645.021	1.14	.303
Subj. w. Groups	14	20153.958	1439.568		
Within Subjects	16	671.000			
Time	1	.229	.229	.005	.945
Group x Time	1	27.729	27.729	.60	.450
Time x Subj. w. Groups	14	643.042	45.931		
Total	31	22469.979			

(Time) was nonsignificant ( $F_{1,14} = 1.73$ ,  $p = .210$ ), as well as Groups by Time interaction ( $F_{1,14} = 3.89$ ,  $p = .069$ ).

Teacher affiliation shown in Table IX shows a nonsignificant difference between groups ( $F_{1,14} = .01$ ,  $p = .938$ ). The Post-delayed Post difference (Time) was nonsignificant ( $F_{1,14} = .08$ ,  $p = .784$ ). A significant change was noted in Groups by Time ( $F_{1,14} = 7.84$ ,  $p = .014$ ).

Table X notes a nonsignificant difference between groups social maturity ( $F_{1,14} = .02$ ,  $p = .876$ ). The Post-delayed Post difference (Time) was nonsignificant ( $F_{1,14} = 1.45$ ,  $p = .248$ ), as well as Groups by Time ( $F_{1,14} = .29$ ,  $p = .596$ ).

Social confidence, Table XI, shows a nonsignificant difference between groups ( $F_{1,14} = .003$ ,  $p = .953$ ). The Post-delayed Post difference (Time) was nonsignificant ( $F_{1,14} = .34$ ,  $p = .566$ ), as well as Groups by Time ( $F_{1,14} = .34$ ,  $p = .566$ ).

Nonsignificance was noted for school affiliation in Table XII. The F scores between groups show ( $F_{1,14} = .41$ ,  $p = .534$ ). The Post-delayed Post (Time) difference was nonsignificant ( $F_{1,14} = .002$ ,  $p = .963$ ), as well as Group by Time ( $F_{1,14} = .01$ ,  $p = .927$ ).

Peer affiliation shown in Table XIII indicates a nonsignificant measure of simple effect over time 1 ( $F_{1,14} = .14 < 4.60$ ) and time 2 ( $F_{1,14} = 0$ ). Table XIV notes a nonsignificant difference effect for mean square time for the control group ( $F_{1,14} = .12 < 4.60$ ) and mean square time for the experimental group ( $F_{1,14} = 3.00 < 4.60$ ).

#### Summary

According to the analysis of variance, the experimental group's grade point average was significantly increased over the control group,

TABLE VIII  
SUMMARY TABLE FOR THE ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:  
PEER AFFILIATION

Source	df	SS	MS	F	P
Between Subjects	15	14868.200			
Groups	1	14.400	14.400	.014	.909
Subj. w. Groups	14	14853.800	1060.986		
Within Subjects	16	653.400			
Time	1	57.600	57.600	1.73	.210
Group x Time	1	129.600	129.600	3.89	.069
Time x Subj. w. Groups	14	466.200	33.300		
Total	31	15521.600			

TABLE IX  
SUMMARY TABLE FOR THE ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:  
TEACHER AFFILIATION

Source	df	SS	MS	F	P
Between Subjects	15	17989.250			
Groups	1	8.000	8.000	.01	.938
Subj. w. Groups	14	17981.250	1284.375		
Within Subjects	16	978.25			
Time	1	350.000	350.000	7.84	.014
Group x Time	1	3.500	3.500	.08	.784
Time x Subj. w. Groups	14	624.750	44.625		
Total	31	18967.500			

TABLE X  
SUMMARY TABLE FOR THE ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:  
SOCIAL MATURITY

Source	df	SS	MS	F	P
Between Subjects	15	1721.501			
Groups	1	3.063	3.063	.02	.876
Subj. w. Groups	14	1718.438	122.745		
Within Subjects	16	814.501			
Time	1	75.000	75.000	1.45	.248
Group x Time	1	15.188	15.188	.29	.596
Time x Subj. w. Groups	14	724.313			
Total	31	2536.000			

TABLE XI  
SUMMARY TABLE FOR THE ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:  
SOCIAL CONFIDENCE

Source	df	SS	MS	F	P
Between Subjects	15	1124.469			
Groups	1	.281	.281	.003	.953
Subj. w. groups	14	1124.188	80.299		
Within Subjects	16	161.500			
Time	1	3.781	3.781	.340	.566
Group x Time	1	3.781	3.781	.340	.566
Time x Subj. w. Groups	14	153.938	10.995		
Total	31	1285.969			

TABLE XII  
SUMMARY TABLE FOR THE ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:  
SCHOOL AFFILIATION

Source	df	SS	MS	F	P
Between Subjects	15	8737.332			
Groups	1	247.042	247.042	.410	.534
Subj. w. Groups	14	8490.291	606.449		
Within Subjects	16	1329.999			
Time	1	.208	.208	.002	.963
Group x Time	1	.833	.833	.010	.927
Time x Subj. w. Groups	14	1328.958	94.926		
Total	31	10067.333			

TABLE XIII  
SUMMARY TABLE FOR THE MEASURE OF SIMPLE  
EFFECT: PEER AFFILIATION

Source	df	SS	MS	F
Mean Sq. Time 1	1	144.00	144.00	.135
Mean Sq. Time 2	1	0.00	0.00	.000
Error	14	14853.80	1060.99	
Total	15	14997.80		

p > .05

TABLE XIV  
SUMMARY TABLE FOR THE MEASURE OF SIMPLE  
EFFECT: PEER AFFILIATION

Source	df	SS	MS	F
Mean Sq. Time for Control	1	4.00	4.00	.120
Mean Sq. Time for Experimental	1	100.00	100.00	3.003
Error	14	466.20	33.30	
Total	15	570.20		

p > .05

which was measured five months after the treatment had been completed. The school absences for the same period of time did not show a significant difference between the experimental and control groups.

The upward trend of the social maturity scale observed in Table IV was not statistically different when measured between groups over time as shown in Table X.

A downward trend was observed in Table IV for the self acceptance, peer affiliation, and teacher affiliation scales. The analysis of variance shown in Table VI confirmed a decreasing difference over the five-month treatment period of the experimental group's self acceptance. Teacher affiliation shown in Table IX further shows the decreasing trend as noted by the groups by time interaction. Although the decrease of peer affiliation shown in Table VIII is not statistically significant, the results suggest a peer group change. The statistical results of a 2 X 2 ANOVA did not suggest a significant difference between the experimental and control groups.

### Discussion

This study was designed to improve the family's capabilities to provide learning environments in the home that enhance children's success in school. This study was motivated by this author's personal counseling observations having had more success working directly with parents to indirectly affect counseling concerns with children. Statistically, improvement was demonstrated using an intervention process to increase underachieving children's school success. To further strengthen this counseling belief, a balance of working with parents and children at the same time could produce a more positive affect on the underachiever's

behavior. If the counselor (representing the school), can help parents understand how to help their children and if parents' (the home) expectations are communicated to their children, the third leg of the triangle (the community) could also be positively affected.

Parents were made aware of how their values are related to their children, which might explain the upward trend of the experimental group's grade point average and the downward trend of the self acceptance, peer affiliation, and teacher affiliation scales. One example of this is that parents often gauge success by good grades. Parents, even though they understood the home variables presented in the parenting sessions, stressed academic functions, but not specifically to have a better self acceptance, peer affiliation, and teacher affiliation. Parents should also be made aware of another possible problem. If one parent wants to try to affect the home variables and the other parent relies on parenting the way they were raised, a problem can arise between parents. This could best be handled in follow-up counseling sessions.

Children's school attendance is the parents' responsibility. Absenteeism is viewed not only as a child's problem, but as a reflection of the parents' attitude. The experimental group experienced fewer school absences than did the control group, but it was not a significant difference. Another measure that did not show a significant difference was the Self Concept Adjective Checklist. The experimental group mean scores remained about the same while the control group experienced a downward trend. This might confirm this author's feeling that teachers put pressure on all students. The improvement in the experimental group's self concept mean remained the same, but the individual scores improved.



The Self Observation Scale scores indicated several interesting trends. The first was the experimental group's decreasing scores on the self acceptance scale. This scale reports liking self and being seen as important to significant others. Pressure from home to do well in school could have had a jarring effect on the underachieving child's true self versus ideal self. Informed by the counselor, the parents now know their child has the ability to achieve but is not. The jarring effect, uncomfortable feelings or parent pressure on the child having to perform, might give meaning to the saying: Things have to get worse before they get better, which was confirmed by the improved grade point average. If the jarring effect is true, it did not affect the child's self security scores as reported by the SOS. This scale relates to the child's control over his/her life and not being worried over possible troubles.

The experimental group's peer affiliation scale showed a downward trend, suggesting the underachiever did not see his/her peer relationships as an asset. Thus, new relationships will be established. If the counselor is aware of this change, he could then encourage positive peer relationships.

The teacher affiliation scale showed a significant change in both the experimental and control groups over time. The mean score's downward trend suggests that children see the teacher as arbitrary, inconsiderate, and a source of emotional pain. This could be because of the increased pressures from teachers to achieve at school and not flunk as several of their classmates did the previous year. This would suggest a need for the counselor and teachers to be very aware of the child's present self-image and self-esteem.

The social maturity scale showed the experimental group had an increasing trend and less variation in standard deviation which would suggest learning the importance of fair play, sharing, perseverance, helpfulness, and generosity. This could be viewed as the third leg of the triangle, the community. The direct intervention from home and school on the alterable variables would indirectly affect social maturity. Adults would see this as growing up and being less immature.

Another indirect influence from home and school on community could be social confidence. The experimental group experienced less variance in standard deviation on the social confidence scale. This suggests the increased ability to such traits as value-making and keeping friends.

Statistically this study shows a significant difference between the experimental and control groups' grade point average. The differences favoring the experimental group are strong enough to warrant continuation of this program, refining where needed, and to seek a larger sample to either statistically confirm or reject the reported trends. This study supports the author's theory and the findings of other research, which state that parents are an important key to their child's school success.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is presented in three sections. First, a general summary of the investigation will be given. The second section is concerned with the conclusions drawn from the study. The last section presents recommendations for future research.

#### Summary

The emphasis of this study was to examine the effects of parent training on change of school performance with underachieving children. The focus was with a school counselor training parents of underachieving children to improve the underachievers' school success by improvement of the identified alterable variables (family self-esteem, parent encouragement, parent aspirations, home study help, and home time and space organization).

Subjects for the study consisted of eight children in the experimental group and eight children in the control group who attend the Beaver Public Schools, Beaver, Oklahoma. The subjects were in grades two through eight. The population was randomly assigned to either an experimental or control group. Volunteer parents of the identified underachieving experimental group attended six parent training sessions.

The Self Observation Scales, Self Concept Adjective Checklist, grade point average, and absences were measures administered to the children

after the parent sessions and at the end of the school year. The statistical analysis of variance treatment used was a split-plot design, Post-delayed Post means, and standard deviation and a 2 X 2 ANOVA follow-up of possible significant dependent variables.

The research question asked if a counselor could affect a change within the family of underachieving children using alterable variables (family self-esteem, parent encouragement, parent aspirations, home study help, and home time and space organization), and what will be the effects of intervention using the alterable variables on underachieving students?

1. The variables that were measured by the Self Concept Adjective Checklist did not show a significant change.

2. The variables that were measured by the Self Observation Scale did not change significantly. The treatment group experienced a decreasing trend in self acceptance, peer affiliation, and teacher affiliation, but was not significant when tested with a 2 X 2 ANOVA.

3. The treatment group's absences were not significantly different from the control group's absences.

4. The treatment group's grade point average showed a significant increase over the control group's grade point average.

### Conclusions

The mean scores of self acceptance, peer affiliation, and teacher affiliation experienced a downward trend while the social maturity scores experienced an upward trend. The grade point average differences were positively significant. This may indicate:

1. Pressures from home and school could have had a negative effect on the child's self concept, but a more likely theory is that the self

concept did not drop but remained the same. The differences in the scores could then be explained by the fact that the self concept's ceiling was raised by home and school expectancy. Thus, the child experienced a need to improve that was not present before treatment. This theory coincides with research done by Rosenthal (1968) relating home and school expectancy having a self-fulfilling prophecy on the student.

2. The student's improved grade point average would suggest an attitude improvement toward school. This could be theorized as a parental attitude change toward both the child and the school, which was the goal of the treatment sessions. Parents are more knowledgeable about grades so they directly emphasized better grades and indirectly emphasized better attitudes.

3. It is also possible the underachievers were learning prescribed concepts at school, but were not performing as successful students to gain the grades that reflect acquired knowledge. An example of not performing in class could be negative peer group pressures like not participating in class discussions, raising their hands to answer questions, and not handing in assignments on time. This could explain why students who do not make good grades in elementary school do succeed in high school or college.

4. The six parent training sessions did not appear to have had a significant impact on the attitudes measured by the SCAC or the SOS measures. Since self concept is resistant to change, the five-month delayed measure may not have been a long enough time period for a significant measurable self concept change to occur.

5. It may be that the treatment did not have an effect on the significant differences of the experimental and control groups' grade point

average, but just the fact that the parents came to school and they they were interested and involved, may have had an important influence on the underachievers' improvement. Children's attitudes are affected more by what parents do as opposed to what parents say. If parents want their children to have good attitudes toward school, they must be willing to act out or perform their convictions before their children will accept their parents' attitudes as their own.

6. This research would not be complete without mentioning teacher bias. Although the most appropriate method of selection and referral was used, it was impossible to control this variable in a rural community. After the classroom teacher's referral of the experimental group, they were not aware of those parents who chose to participate in the six training sessions. If teacher bias was a factor, it would be this author's opinion that any teacher bias had a balancing effect on this treatment, in that some children were possibly negatively affected while other children might have been positively affected.

#### Recommendations

The present investigation has made a contribution to existing research by showing there is a correlation between parents' home contributions and their underachieving child's school success. However, additional research is needed to make existing programs more efficient and for creating new programs to further reduce underachievement in schools. Recommendations for further research based on the present study are as follows:

1. Additional research is needed in the area of measurement of self concept as it relates to the underachiever's school success.

2. A closer examination of correlation between peer group change and future levels of underachiever's success achievement would help to identify important variables.

3. More research is needed studying delivery systems and/or training procedures with parents that improve the underachiever's school success.

4. A study examining change with a person's self concept would be more productive with a larger sample to obtain more important statistical differences.

5. Using the SCAC and SOS may be too general a measurement to ascertain important specific differences of a person's self-concept as it relates to underachieving variables.

6. Another interesting follow-up would be to compare within the experimental group differences between volunteer parents versus parents who chose not to be involved in the training sessions.

7. The measure of attitudes did not reflect other reported family changes:

- a. Educational improvement of other children not in the study.
- b. Improvement of family systems.
- c. Improvement of parents' understanding of their child's educational system.
- d. Improvement of the family's communication.

Because of these reported changes, it is suggested that further research be directed toward measuring family interaction that affects underachievement in school.

This author recommends the parent treatment of alterable variables to positively affect the underachieving student's grade point average.

Parents and schools want parental school involvement in the decision-making process, but schools want parents who are knowledgeable about the educational process before such agreements can be reached. Parents need to become more actively involved in the educational process of their children. The parent sessions presented in this study are only one possible such way that parents can become involved in the educational process.



#### A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bloom, Benjamin S. The new direction in educational research: Alterable variables. Phi Delta Kappan, 1980, 61, 382-385.
- Bogner, C. Neale, & Brown, Arlene W. Mothers learn to teach their own children. Phi Delta Kappan, 1977, 58, 500-501.
- Dobson, Russell, & Dobson, Judith Shelton. Parental and community involvement in education and teacher education. Urbana, Ill.: ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education, 1975.
- Duncan, L. Wendell, & Fitzgerald, Paul W. Communication through counselor-parent conferences. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1969, 47, 514-517.
- Esterson, Harold, Feldman, Carol, Krigsman, Naomi, & Warshaw, Susan. Time-limited group counseling with parents of pre-adolescent under-achievers: A pilot program. Psychology in the Schools, 1975, 12, 79-84.
- Gay, L. R. Educational research: Competencies for analysis and application. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1976.
- Goodlad, John. Can our schools get better? Phi Delta Kappan, 1979, 60, 342-346.
- Gordon, Ira J. Parent education and parent involvement: Retrospect and prospect. Childhood Education, 1977, 46, 71-78.
- Gordon, Ira J. Parent involvement in compensatory education. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, ERIC Clearinghouse of Early Childhood Education, 1970.
- Gordon, Thomas. Parent effectiveness training. New York: Peter H. Wyden, Inc., 1970.
- Granlund, Elnore, & Knowles, Lois. Child-parent identification and academic underachievement. Journal of Counseling and Clinical Psychology, 1969, 33, 495-496.
- Grotberg, Edith H. Needed types of parental guidance and cooperation between home and school. Paper presented at Annual Convention of International Reading Association, Detroit, Michigan, May, 1972.
- Gurman, Alan S. The role of the family in underachievement. Journal of School Psychology, 1970, 8, 48-53.

- Hammond, Janice M., & Schutz, Dean S. A communication workshop that works for high school students and their parents. The School Counselor, 1980, 27, 300-304.
- Hayes, Edward J., Cunningham, George K., & Robinson, Joseph B. Counseling focus: Are parents necessary? Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, 1977, 14, 8-14.
- Hilliard, Thomas, & Roth, Robert M. Maternal attitudes and the non-achievement syndrome. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1969, 47, 424-428.
- Katzenmeyer, W. G., & Stenner, A. J. Self Observation Scales Manual. Washington, D.C.: National Testing Service, 1979.
- Kephart, Newell C. The slow learner in the classroom. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1971.
- Kifer, Edward. The relationship between the home and school in influencing the learning of children. Paper presented at the Pre-Convention Conference on Research of the National Council of Teachers of English, Chicago, Illinois, November, 1976.
- Lamb, Jackie, & Lamb, Wesley. Parent education and elementary counseling. In G. Walz and Libby Benjamin (Eds.), New Vistas in Counseling Series. New York: Human Sciences Press, 1978.
- Lewis, Paddy. Significant others, self-concept of ability and achievement. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, California, April, 1976.
- Muth, Patricia. New slant on achievement: Home makes a difference. Compact, 1973, 13-14.
- National School Boards Association. The Education Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981. Washington, D.C., 1981.
- Perkins, John A., & Wicas, Edward A. Group counseling bright under-achievers and their mothers. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 1971, 18, 273-278.
- Politee, Alan J. Psychologists and educators. Self Concept Adjective Checklist Manual, 1974, 2.
- Rosenthal, R., & Jacobson, R. Pygmalion in the classroom. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1968.
- Schroder, Carole A. The relationship of the home to under- or over-achievement. Toronto, Ontario: Research Department, Toronto Board of Education, 1971.

- Shapiro, Carol, & Bloom, Joel S. Home environment, self-concept and urban student achievement: A bibliography and review of research. Trenton, N.J.: New Jersey State Department of Education, 1977.
- Shea, Brent Mack. Schooling and its antecedents: Substantive and methodological issues in the status attainment process. Review of Educational Research, 1976, 46, 463-526.
- Shea, Joseph J., & Hanes, Michael L. The relationship between measures of home environment and school achievement of follow-through children. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, New York, April, 1977.
- Shelton, Judith E., & Dobson, Russell L. FICS: An expanded view of counselor consultation. Elementary School Guidance and Counseling Journal, 1973, 7, 210-215.
- Thiel, Ann, & Theil, Richard. A structural analysis of family interaction patterns and the underachieving gifted child. The Gifted Child Quarterly, 1977, 21, 267-275.
- Walberg, Herbert J., & Marjoribanks, Kevin. Family environment and cognitive development: Twelve analytic models. Review of Educational Research, 1976, 46, 527-551.
- Ware, William B., & Garber, Malcolm. The home environment as a predictor of school achievement. Theory Into Practice, 1975, 11, 190-195.
- Wechsler, Jill C. Improving the self-concepts of academic underachievers through maternal group counseling. California Journal of Educational Research, 1971, 22, 96-103.
- Wellington, C. Burleigh, & Wellington, Jean. The underachiever: Challenges and guidelines. Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1966.
- Wilson, Wade. Parent training: Some observations. Academic Therapy, 1979, 15, 45-51.

**APPENDIX A**

**DETAILED PARENT TREATMENT OUTLINE**

## I. Session 1--Problem Solving

- A. The opening was conducted as directed by Hammond and Schutz (1980).
  - 1. As parents arrived, index cards were distributed with directions to write their name on the back. An instruction sheet was handed out telling each parent to pair up with an unfamiliar partner to talk about special interests, hobbies, and biographical data. Names were not revealed.
  - 2. Parents then met in a large group with partners introducing each other, using a fictitious name and including information obtained. (e.g., "I would like to introduce my new friend, Sam. He likes the outdoors, is outgoing, and is friendly.")
- B. Goals, as set by the counselor, were discussed, along with goals from the parents. The goals set forth were:
  - 1. To indirectly affect child's school success.
  - 2. To improve communication between parent and child.
  - 3. To learn problem-solving skills.
  - 4. To provide parents with a positive experience.
  - 5. To provide parents homework for practice.
- C. The group discussed blocks to communication and methods of dealing with them.
  - 1. Active listening was explained as a process of restating and reflecting feelings.
  - 2. The group practiced on paper then in groups of three. The members took turns discussing "the time I had the most fun" and "the time I felt the most alive."
- D. Talked about how behavior and the comments of others affects our perceptions of our personal worth.
- E. Showed the film "Cipher in the Snow" about the death of a boy who was ignored or criticized both at home and at school. Reactions and feelings were discussed.
- F. Homework--Each parent made up his own, which included such things as hugging their child and the practice of active listening.

## II. Session 2--Parent Encouragement and Feelings

- A. Explained the Solution Oriented Approach to Problems (SOAP) (Lamb and Lamb, 1978).
  - 1. Identification or definition of the problem.

2. Determination of ownership of the problem.
3. Generating several solutions to the problem.
4. Selection of the solution most likely to work.
5. Application of the solution.
6. Evaluation of the solution.

- B. Written examples were dealt with by the parents to work through the SOAP process. Parents were divided into groups of three to practice this process. The topic used was "I just can't read now. My favorite TV program is on." Participants returned to a large group and talked about what transpired in the small groups. Members were encouraged to remember to accept, love, and encourage, but not to harp.
- C. Homework--Practice the SOAP process with their own family.

### III. Session 3--Communication

- A. Discussed homework involving the SOAP process.
- B. "I messages" and "owning the problem" were dealt with. "I messages were practiced on paper." (I feel [the feeling] when [the event] and because [the reason]). A role playing session was held using groups of three. The purpose was to practice "I message" sentences with problems related to their own child. One participant at a time described their problem, while the other two members clarified the issue. The person who presented the problem said nothing, but did write down suggestions.
- C. The small groups looked over their lists and set goals for homework.

### IV. Session 4--Parent Aspirations

- A. A review of homework success was conducted.
- B. Values as they relate to the family were brought out by the counselor. Also included in this session was a sense of family and family pride and self-concept. Parents were made aware that responsibility is taught to children.
1. We guide as parents, but should let the child have direction over his own life (e.g., comment on how good the child's room looks when it is cleaned up. Help the child at first, then taper off gradually).
  2. The group practiced values clarification.
- C. Parent aspirations were dealt with by asking the questions:

1. What do you want for your child?
2. Have you visited about your aspirations with your child?
3. How can you transmit your feelings?

Parents were encouraged to use incomplete sentences, such as "I like it when you" and "I feel close to you when."

- D. Divided into groups of three to role play a family. Each family was given a coat of arms to which they did the following:
1. First box--parents drew something they like to do.
  2. Second box--child drew something he likes to do.
  3. Third box--parents and child drew something they like to do together.
  4. Fourth box--drew the best thing about the relationship between the parents and child.
  5. Fifth box--drew something about the relationship the parents and child would like to work on.
  6. Sixth box--wrote a family motto.
  7. The "family" coat of arms was shared with the large group.
- E. Homework--Sent home a coat of arms for the family to work on together.

#### V. Session 5--Home Time, Space and Study Help

- A. Reviewed homework.
- B. Conducted a large group discussion dealing with the effects of television and how it affects education.
- C. Discussed the questions: Do you control your environment or does it control you? and Do family activities involve interaction between family members? After the discussion, groups of three were organized to list activities that can be done as a family, plus the organization of them.
- D. Used a large group discussion to find ways to help organize with the child.
1. Set up study time (after school, after supper).
  2. Set up study place (quiet, desk in child's room).
  3. Set up bed time.
  4. Keep a routine. This builds security, however, occasional surprises should be used. Routine is not boredom but a sense of security.
  5. Check to see how your child is doing from time to time and review homework when completed.
  6. Have pencil and paper at home for home use.
  7. Have children's books to read and talk about them.

8. Read things yourself and talk about them with your child.
9. Take your child to the library, museum, park, etc.
10. Eat dinner together. Talk, share, and plan at this time.
11. Show pride in child's accomplishments by doing such things as displaying their work on the refrigerator.

E. Divided into groups of three and discussed an activity to plan with individual family.

F. Homework--the activity planned.

#### VI. Session 6--Family Self-Esteem

A. Reviewed homework.

B. This session was organized into a large group to cover the following areas:

1. Each member talked about an object in their pocket or purse.
2. Reviewed the topics presented in the previous sessions.
3. Parents talked about their own specific situations that they have had or have observed.
4. Talked about how behavior and the comments of others affect our perceptions of our personal worth.

C. Activity--Pinned a card on each person's back. The other members of the group wrote something on these cards. We then talked about experiences that have made us feel good.

D. Show the film "Rock-a-Bye-Baby" and talked about reactions.

E. Encouraged parents to make an appointment with the counselor to deal with their own specific problems involving their child. The importance of follow-up in dealing with their child was stressed.



**APPENDIX B**

**SAMPLE QUESTIONS OF THE TESTING INSTRUMENTS**

Sample questions from the Self Observation Scale are read as follows:

Primary Level

(Question) "Do you play games well?"

(Instruction) "If you think that the answer is 'yes' for you, then fill in the nose of the happy face over the word 'yes.' If you think that the answer to the question is 'no' for you, then fill in the nose of the sad face over the word 'no.'" (p. 7)

Intermediate Level

(Statement) "I feel good when I'm at school."

(Instructions) "If the statement is true for you, mark in the circle with the 'Y' for yes. If the statement is not true for you, mark in the circle with the 'N' for no." (p. 8)

Junior High Level

(Statement) "My teachers expect too much of me."

(Instructions) "Read each of the statements carefully to yourself and decide whether the statement is true for you or not true. If the statement is true for you, mark in the circle with the 'Y' for yes. If the statement is not true for you, mark in the circle with the 'N' for no." (p. 8)

An example of the Self-Concept Adjective Checklist is read as follows:

Grades K-3: Say, "I'm going to read some words. If these words tell about you, say 'yes,' if they do not describe you, say 'no.'" (You will find that some of the words will not be understood by the student. If so, say: "That's all right; let's try the next one." If the child says "yes," check the "I AM" blank; if he says "no," check the "I AM NOT" blank.

With some students (who have a short attention span and are easily distracted, e.g.) it is suggested that this list be administered on two or three different sessions in order to complete all of the items.

Grades 4-8: Say, "Here is a list of words called 'traits.' If they describe you, check the "I AM" blank; if not, check the "I AM NOT" blank. If a trait does not describe you, but you wish it would check the "I WOULD LIKE TO BE" blank. Leave the "CHANGE" blank empty; we may use it later." (Then, let the student

fill out the checklist by himself. Be sure to tell the student,) "If you do not know the meaning of a word, skip it and go on to the next word." The SCAC should be completed in one session with students ages 10 or over.

	I AM	I AM NOT	I WOULD LIKE TO BE	CHANGE
1. Restless	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Energetic	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Competitive	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Lively	_____	_____	_____	_____

(pp. 1-2)

2  
VITA

Billy Travis Wilson

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: AN INTERVENTION PROGRAM USING ALTERABLE VARIABLES TO IMPROVE  
SCHOOL SUCCESS OF UNDERACHIEVERS

Major Field: Student Personnel and Guidance

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Shattuck, Oklahoma, November 5, 1944, the  
son of Mr. and Mrs. O. L. Wilson.

Education: Graduated from Gate High School, Gate, Oklahoma, in May,  
1962; received the Bachelor of Science in Education degree  
(Elementary Education) from Southwestern Oklahoma State Univer-  
sity, Weatherford, Oklahoma, 1967; received the Master of Edu-  
cation degree in Counseling from Southwestern Oklahoma State  
University, Weatherford, Oklahoma, in 1970; completed require-  
ments for the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State Uni-  
versity in May, 1982.

Professional Experience: Elementary Teacher, Sentinel Public Schools,  
1967-70; Elementary Teacher, Beaver Public Schools, 1970-72;  
Instructor, Oklahoma State University Extension, Spring, 1975;  
Counselor, Beaver County Cooperative Summer School, 1972-78;  
Administrator, Beaver County Cooperative Summer School, 1979-  
82; Counselor, Beaver County Cooperative Guidance Program, 1972-  
82.

Professional Organizations: American Personnel and Guidance Asso-  
ciation; Oklahoma Personnel and Guidance Association; Panhandle  
Representative to Board of Directors, 1976-77; National Educa-  
tion Association; Oklahoma Education Association, Panhandle  
District President; 1976-77, Beaver County President, 1975-76,  
State Delegate, 1978-82; Phi Delta Kappa; Western State Mental  
Health Committee, Vice Chairman, 1981-82; Beaver County Inter-  
Agency Organization, Chairman, 1981-82.