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THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
GRADUATE COLLEGE

AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED LIFE SPACE FORCE PERCEPTIONS OF
STUDENTS IN COMPENSATORY PROGRAMS AT FIFTH YEAR
CENTERS AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
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degree of
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1976

AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED LIFE SPACE FORCE PERCEPTIONS OF
STUDENTS IN COMPENSATORY PROGRAMS AT FIFTH YEAR
CENTERS AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS

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AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED LIFE SPACE FORCE PERCEPTIONS OF
STUDENTS IN COMPENSATORY PROGRAMS AT FIFTH YEAR
CENTERS AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS

CHAPTER I

One of the major challenges confronting public education has become that of providing an adequate channel for the development of suitable programs to effect the educational attainment of all students. Schools have played an aggressive leadership role in facilitating the growth of student achievement in basic skills, yet, every year a substantial proportion of students reach secondary schools with limited achievement in basic skills necessary for functioning effectively in society (Bloom, 1965).

Cumulative deficiencies in learning experiences and the inferior educational attainment of students can be cited as a primary factor for the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The act granted federal funds to public schools to create instructional and affective compensatory units for meeting the needs of students who were identified as educationally disadvantaged. Curriculum relevance for low achieving students was largely a problem

of relating the cognitive dimensions of learning to those that were affective (Fantini, 1968). Eisner (1974) contended that affective aspects of education were peripheral, if in existence at all in most schools. The significance of the self, interacting with others needed to be studied more closely. The prevailing program of instruction for under-achieving students needed to be expanded to include the pressures and influences exerted on students by their in and out-of-school milieu. What students learned in school was not determined solely by the content of the curriculum; rather, the behavior of students at a certain moment depended on their interactions with people and environments.

Compensatory projects were instituted on the assumption that students eligible for intervention services required different instructional approaches because these students were thought to be different (Bloom, Hess, 1965; Crow, Murray, and Smythe, 1966). It was thought that education for these students required changes in schools from a selective system which graduated only the more able students to one which helped all students to realize their fullest development. If these students were different, educators needed to discover what these students were like in order to plan effective educational experiences for them.

Individuals act according to their own unique perception of reality. Knowing the perceptions of students

could give educators clues concerning the type of social context in which these students live, the social experiences that they have outside and inside the school, and their views and feelings regarding their environment. Students' perceptions of physical, psychological and environmental forces were of equal importance in their lives and all of these forces had been reported as affecting students educational attainment (Taba, 1966).

This investigation was concerned with the extent to which students had positive perceptions of varied life space forces when assigned to compensatory programs at fifth year centers and middle schools. The extent to which students perceive phenomena as positive or negative can act either as an incentive or a deterrent to learning (Perry, 1974).

Few studies had been concerned with educationally underachieving students assigned to compensatory programs at intermediate and secondary school levels, and even fewer investigations had been made concerning the perceptions of these students (McDill, 1969). Since little was known regarding the relationship between varied problems in compensatory education and students' perceptions of environmental and psychological forces in their lives, it was in this context that the writer conducted this study.

The investigation focused on the pre and early adolescent because during this stage of development percep-

tions of individuals become of paramount importance. Adolescence is a stage for initiating social development through change in the individual, consequently, it becomes vital that attempts be made to understand students during this period of development.

A search of the literature revealed a theoretical framework for this investigation, one which combined physical, psychological and environmental forces into a single concept known as life space forces. Life space force was initially defined by Lewin (1936) in terms of topological relations within the physical and psychological environment of the person. Life space was used to indicate the totality of environmental and psychological forces in the lives of individuals. Persons and environments were considered as parts of one situation, although their relative importance was different in varied cases.

Fox (1966) defined life space as the way individuals perceive pressures and influences that people and periods exert on their lives. A life space force approach implied that if students did not have a secure sense of belonging to and being accepted by the social group in which they found themselves, it was impossible for them to think well of themselves or to be contented with their lives. It was evident that if schools were to assist in the development of adults who functioned effectively in society and who con-

tributed to that society in a positive manner, educators needed to be concerned with not only what students did in classrooms, but also with what they did outside of classrooms.

Educators had to be willing to make a commitment to the comprehensive reappraisal of what they did in school to help those students identified as academic underachievers. Dennis (1976) advised that if teachers would admit to the classroom not only the subject matter, but also the lives and experiences of students, those teachers would be in a better position to help students with their educational progress.

No longer could the school remain aloof and isolated, dealing only with its intramural problems. Educational attainment became a function of socio-economic factors in which the school was part of a far larger complex set of influences in the background and environment of youth. This approach required new concepts of educational programs, new policies, rearrangement of resources, modifications of the curriculum, and a new relationship of the school to the community, family and neighborhood. The perceptions of students concerning life space forces as variables in their lives became of paramount importance in efforts by the school to provide adequate educational experiences for adolescent underachievers.

Need For The Study

There had been diverse views concerning how to improve the effectiveness of education for those who fail to acquire skills that society demands. Educators had lacked a precise assessment of deficiencies in program efficacy for the underachieving student, consequently, there was a need for further investigation in this area.

Educators do not know exactly how these forces, referred to in this study as life space forces, affect the school learning of academically underachieving students. However, studies have indicated that when teachers understand the psychological and environmental factors involved, learning improves in the classroom. Knowing the relative importance to youth of the several environmental and psychological forces in their lives could be valuable in increasing teachers' understanding of underachieving students.

Because of the inconclusive nature of findings regarding the effects of compensatory programs on the perceptions of students who score low on achievement tests, there was a need to gather base-line data in this setting. Few studies had focused on the perceptions of students who score in the lower percentiles on standardized tests. Data concerning the perceptions of those students could assist with efforts to determine what compensatory experiences should be provided for them.

Statement of the Problem

This investigation analyzed and compared the perceptions of students assigned to compensatory programs at fifth year centers and middle schools concerning selected life space forces as variables in their lives, when race and sex were controlled. More specifically, the investigation analyzed students' positive ratings on evaluative scales of selected life space forces, and made comparisons by sex and race of black and nonblack subjects by items on the Influences on Learning inventory.

Statement of Hypothesis

To facilitate an analysis of the problem the primary null hypothesis of no statistically significant difference between the positive ratings by sex and race among black and nonblack subjects on the Influences on Learning inventory was tested by items.

Delimitations of the Study

This study was limited to the perceptions of academically underachieving students assigned to compensatory programs funded under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Educational Act of 1965. Compensatory program enrollment was used only as a process to identify a population of students, consequently, no individual school comparisons or results were used as a part of the study. Only fifth year cen-

ters and middle schools were utilized in the investigation as a means of defining a population of students who were pre and early adolescents. Finally, the school district in which the study was conducted precluded inquiries into areas of a student's home or family life. Therefore, the relationships of the home and family were excluded as variables on the questionnaire used as a source of data collection.

Operational Definitions

Affective domain - Emotional, psychological areas of an individual's development

Cognitive domain - Mental, intellectual areas of an individual's development

Confluent education - An integration of the affective and cognitive domains as a theoretical framework for teaching students

Compensatory instruction - Supplementary instruction rendered to students in addition to that which is conducted in regular classes

Educationally Disadvantaged Students - Students who score in the lower 40 percentiles of reading comprehension and/or mathematics sections on a standardized achievement test

Fifth Year Center - A division of the public schools consisting of two grades, kindergarten and fifth grade

Learning Centers - Supplementary instructional classes for students identified as educationally disadvantaged

Life Space Forces - Pressures and influences exerted on the lives of students by people and environmental factors

Perception - The mental process which gives meaning to phenomena

Title I Schools - Schools eligible to render compensatory instruction financed by federal funds

Underachieving students - Students who score low on a standardized test

Significance of the Study

It was hoped that this investigation might provide needed insight into the manner in which life space forces affect students assigned to compensatory classes. Central office administrators, principals and teachers who are involved with rendering compensatory instruction to students may be able to use the information obtained from this study to increase their understanding of the psychological and environmental factors that impede the educational attainment of students. The matter of gaining insight into the behavior of underachievers within the domain of an educational system may help teachers plan more effective learning experiences for these students.

Organization of the Study

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter I includes an introduction, need for the study, problem statement, as well as delimitations for the investigation and major divisions describing the study. Chapter II reviews related literature pertinent to the study. The methodology and procedure of the study are described in Chapter III. In Chapter IV the findings of this investigation are presented and analyzed. Chapter V contains a summary of the study, the conclusions based on data collected, application of the findings, and implications for further research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In order to arrive at generalizations from a vast body of literature this review was limited to a threefold purpose. The first purpose was to present information concerning the background and status of compensatory programs that were funded under Title I of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The second purpose was to describe characteristics of underachieving students and recount attempts at creating learning conditions for those students. The third purpose of this review was to relate social and psychological factors, referred to in this study as life space forces, that were associated with interpersonal relations, environmental conditions, and perceptions of students.

Background and Status of Compensatory Education

During the late 1950's and early 1960's, the social conscience of Americans focused on the fact that many citizens were not receiving adequate educational experiences to equip them to cope in our complex society. A massive social effort was started to provide social action programs which became labeled "compensatory education," education designed

to make up for deficiencies in a person's learning experiences (McDill, 1969).

The inferior educational attainment of students can be cited as a primary factor for the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that was enacted into law on April 11, 1965. Title I of the act was designed to provide supplementary federal funds, over and above funds normally available from state and local sources to improve educational opportunities for children from poverty-impacted areas.

Title I provided grants to local educational agencies in a state based on the number of eligible students. Eligibility depended on (1) the number of children aged five to seventeen, inclusive, in the school district from families below the poverty level as determined on the basis of the most recent satisfactory data available; (2) two-thirds of the number of children aged five to seventeen, inclusive, from families receiving income under the program of aid to families with dependent children under Title IV of the Social Security Act; (3) the number of children aged five to seventeen residing in recognized institutions for neglected or delinquent children, multiplied by 40 percent of the average per pupil expenditure in the state (P.L. 93-380, 1974).

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) has been amended four times: November, 1965 - Public Law 89-313;

November, 1966 - Public Law 89-750; January, 1968 - Public Law 90-247; April, 1970 - Public Law 91-230. In addition, more than 70 administrative guidelines have been issued concerning the act (ESEA Review, 1969).

Compensatory education was based on certain major assumptions. Among these were: (1) The school as a delivery system represents an appropriate and effective place in which to overcome the slow learning rate that tends to be common among underachievers; (2) The regular curriculum and school budget could not adequately provide for substantial groups of educationally disadvantaged students; (3) Special federal funding would permit the development of innovative techniques which could institute advances to help educationally deprived students learn better; (4) Increased educational attainment would lead to increase productive citizenship (Interim Report NACED, 1976).

Varied compensatory programs have been organized to provide supplementary training for the disadvantaged. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act provided programs designed to provide pre-school instruction for inner-city blacks; special efforts were made to lower the dropout rate among teenagers; programs were organized to provide compensatory education aimed at modifying the behavior of the individual so that he could better survive in the educational system (McDill, 1966).

In April, 1970 Congress added to Title I a requirement that Title I schools must be comparable with other schools in a district in order to receive Title I aid. It was believed that within a single school district, at least as much state and local money should be spent on the education of a disadvantaged child as on advantaged pupils. Three factors were specified in the new regulation for determining comparability: (1) ratio of pupils to teachers, (2) teacher's pay and (3) expenditures for educational materials and supplies (Brown, 1974).

Since 1964, when ESEA was enacted, Title I has provided more than \$11 billion to various school systems to provide supplementary educational assistance to children in poverty areas who were not making normal progress. Title I funds supplemented, not supplanted, state and local school expenditures (Mattheis, 1973).

Gordon (1966) concluded that the unexpressed purpose of most compensatory programs was to make disadvantaged children as much as possible like middle class children with whom the school had been successful. He was of the opinion that what was needed was not so much an attempt to mold those students by middle class standards, but rather to attempt a determination of what kind of educational experiences are most appropriate for students.

Early evaluation studies of compensatory education programs reported that "compensatory education programs did

not have a reliable and lasting effect" (McDill, 1966). During the 1960's Cohen (1970) reported that in the most narrow sense, compensatory education had failed. Most Title I programs which sought to improve achievement have had no discernible effect. This was apparently a result of the fact that the programs sought to provide for disadvantaged students more of the school resources which had never been found to affect the achievement of advantaged students.

Cohen further stated that compensatory programs need not fail. The difficulty with most programs was that they rested on an extremely limited evidence about the process of schooling. Cohen noted that we have no evidence that IQ affects life chances, while Gordon (1966) reported that compensatory programs had been founded mainly for pre-school children or students who had dropped out of high school with little attention given to investigating the overall appropriateness of contemporary educational processes.

Gordon (1975) pointed out that a committee under the chairmanship of Benjamin Bloom met in June, 1964 to discuss research findings about disadvantaged populations and the prospects for educating them. By 1975 many of the goals identified in 1964 had been realized. More money had been spent, and more than half of the teachers colleges provided training for teaching disadvantaged children. More guidance programs had been developed, and progress had been made in

developing cultural and ethnic pluralism in educational materials. There was a renewed concern for vocational education and career development. In spite of massive efforts to upgrade the learning patterns of disadvantaged pupils the problem still existed.

Hughes, while serving as federal director of the Title I program during its first four years, argued that few people really wanted the Title I program to work the way it was intended. He contended that Title I had not been very successful. Title I implementation had resulted in benefits for those it was intended to assist, but the program had been a failure (Hughes, 1973).

Tyler (1974) reported that while there has been an increase in the number of successful compensatory programs, the effective programs are still in the minority. The slow development of successful efforts had partly been due to the wide acceptance of the notion that a child's capacity to learn is the chief factor in limiting his education rather than the inadequacy of the learning experiences.

Idleman (1973) indicated that some promising developments had been made in planning and carrying out successful programs for disadvantaged pupils. Among these were smaller class sizes, use of teacher assistants, new organizational patterns, and team teaching. He recommended the application of psychological insights and the utilization of community

resources. In addition, he suggested that teacher attitude and methods of planning were vital factors for effective programs.

Chaffee (1973) indicated that Title I had failed because its goal was "unrealistic" as supported by the opinion of the nation's school systems that the benefits were targeted too narrowly, and that there was no real national commitment that the program succeed. Others have also concluded that compensatory education was a failure. (Cronbach, 1969, Jensen, 1969, Hunt, 1969).

Several reasons are suggested for this failure: Congress never provided USOE with sufficient funds to staff, monitor and evaluate the program adequately. Attempts by USOE to compel a state education agency or local school district to comply with the law, usually resulted in intervention by either the White House or a member of Congress and the need for compliance was waived.

At the state and local levels funds earmarked for disadvantaged children were used for the advantage of all children. Local districts often used Title I funds for a variety of purposes. Florida, Tennessee and Mississippi have been cited as among the states most engaged in illegal practice in this regard.

In 1974 Congress passed P.L. 93-380 which mandated studies to update existing measures used to count Title I

children and to propose alternatives for change in the regulations. The Act established a compensatory education study giving the National Institute of Education (NIE) authority to conduct up to twenty experimental programs to test possible new variants of Title I regulations (Request For Proposal, 1975).

NIE was given the authority to invite school districts to serve as demonstration projects for the following types of changes in the operation of their Title I programs: Changes in instructional programs and other services which districts provide under compensatory funds; and changes in allocation and concentration of compensatory funds and services among schools and students. NIE was given the authority to request waivers of federal regulations for school districts that were selected for demonstration projects.

Compensatory studies were to be conducted over a three year period beginning in July, 1975 and ending in June, 1978. NIE was instructed to make a final report by September, 1978 to Congress concerning the results of the experimental programs. The report was to be used as a basis for possible changes in Title I regulations.

Characteristics of Underachievers

Identification of those students who might be categorized as underachievers can be a severe problem. Such

identification might be established by examination of the expectations of student performance and behavior. Before a system can be developed to assist underachievers in their learning efforts, the underachiever and his problems must be isolated. Among educationally underachievers can be found individuals possessing a wide range of characteristics. Not all underachieving pupils, possess all the same characteristics, however, a complete description of this group will help one understand those who are educationally underachievers. From the viewpoint of educators, educationally underachievers were those students who exhibited the most severe scholastic retardation and the highest dropout rate. These students scored in the lower forty percentiles on standardized achievement tests (Passow, 1968).

Karnes (1970) observed that home conditions often reflect a multiplicity of problems that affect individuals' learning patterns. Underachieving students from disadvantaged homes characterized by poverty often experience adjustment problems which are not conducive to cognitive and affective development.

Clift (1969) identified characteristics of disadvantaged youth under three headings: (1) factors of personality, (2) factors of cognitive function, and (3) factors related to educational values.

I. Factors of Personality

- A. Negative feeling about personal worth
- B. Low levels of aspiration
- C. Prone to delinquent behavior
- D. Deep-seated anxiety about achievement in any domain
- E. Lack of ego-involvement

II. Factors of Cognitive Function

- A. A lack of dependence on verbal and written language for cognitive cues.
- B. A lack of receptive and expressive modes
- C. Slow in cognitive function
- D. Poor powers of concentration
- E. Not persistent in problem-solving tasks
- F. Dependence on external more than internal control of things
- G. A lack of ability to sustain attention
- H. Poor performance on I.Q. tests
- I. More present-oriented and less aware of past-present sequences
- J. A lack of training in listening to a variety of verbal materials
- K. Handicapped in anticipatory language skills
- L. A tendency to concrete rather than symbolic approaches to problem solving
- M. The thought process is more inductive rather than deductive

III. Factors In Relation To Educational Values

- A. Reading is not valued
- B. Fear and suspicion of school
- C. Lack of motivation
- D. Personality problems
- E. Gain status among peers by defying school authority
- F. American heroes, tradition, institutions provide little inspiration
- G. No realistic yardstick with which to measure personal resources
- H. Little confidence in ability to succeed

Karnes (1970) described slow learners as among the educationally underachievers, possessing discernable charac-

teristics. One criterion in identifying slow learners is the intelligence quotient, which may range between 75 and 90. Slow learners are consistently below grade level in academic progress. The range of individual differences among slow learners increases with age. They lag further and further behind their more able peers, making it increasingly difficult for the school to differentiate instruction to meet their specific needs.

In addition to serious deficiencies in cognitive function deficiencies in the processes of thinking, reading and language skills, a substantial number of students have difficulty attaining general academic motivation.

Underachievers were defined by Hummel and Sprinthall (1965) as those pupils with grade-point discrepancy scores that fell one or more standard deviations in the negative direction from the average discrepancy score of the population. Cohen (1969) stated that students were called culturally deprived because they lacked the cultural qualities measured by standardized intelligence tests. He concluded that aptitude could be measured only by noting achievement, as measured by intelligence tests.

Henson (1973) defined the educationally disadvantaged as any individual who does not have the same opportunity to get an education that most people in this country have. Among these individuals he identified: Black Americans,

Mexican Americans, North American Indians, rural Americans and migrant students. The educationally disadvantaged also were referred to as being socially disadvantaged (Havighurst, 1964). Havighurst described the educationally disadvantaged in terms of family characteristics, personal characteristics, and the social group characteristics of their families. He identified the socially disadvantaged students as being from families that were poor, and that were recent immigrants to the big cities. He suggested that this group needed special attention in the schools and special help to assist them to overcome the disadvantages conferred on them by their families.

A preponderant proportion of educationally deprived students have been characterized as being deficient in both school performance and financial resources. Disparities of both home and school have been interlocking factors (Strom, 1965; Pease, 1966; Hess, 1966).

Passow (1966) summarized the disadvantaged as having characteristics as follows: (1) language inadequacies, difficulty in developing and maintaining verbal thought sequences, and greater reliance on nonverbal communication means; (2) perceptual deficiencies and problems of visual and auditory discrimination; (3) an orientation of life that seeks gratification in the here-and-now; (4) a poor self-image; (5) aspirations and motivation too modest to achieve goals;

(6) apathy and detachment from formal educational goals; (7) limited role-behavior skills and inadequate or inappropriate adult models; (8) inability and unreadiness to cope with the demands and expectations of the school program; (9) a cumulative academic retardation, and a high incidence of early school withdrawals; (10) two to three years behind grade norms in academic areas.

Compensatory Attempts At Creating Learning Experiences
For Underachievers

Storen (1968) indicated that disadvantaged students during junior high years had not been studied as carefully as had students during the elementary years. About twenty percent of students who entered junior high had not learned academic skills at what would be considered a normal rate. These students were two or more years behind their peers academically.

Students from poverty impacted areas are from environments characterized by: slum neighborhoods, family disorganization, adult illiteracy, considerable crime and delinquency. These students are most in need of experiences to compensate for these negative influences (Wilkerson, 1966).

In order to create meaningful curricular experiences for students, the emotional and social factors that affect learning must be understood. Ornstein (1971) indicated that teachers failed to reach disadvantaged students espe-

cially at the junior high level. Loretan (1966) emphasized that it was imperative that programs be developed for the middle and upper grades for those students inadequately equipped to handle what the school had to offer. He maintained that it was the schools' responsibility to develop compensatory strategies through a program of stimulation appropriate to students capabilities.

Gordon (1966) concluded that several innovations implemented by compensatory programs showed little empirical evidence of providing a more effective learning situation. Homogeneous grouping techniques provided an easier teaching situation, but in practice have not proven more productive in the total development of the child; team teaching provided for more effective use of personnel, rather than a more effective method of handling disadvantaged children.

Numerous studies have suggested strategies considered effective for compensatory training (Kaplan, 1963; Shaw, 1963; Ausubel, 1963; Frost, 1964; Wilkerson, 1964; Riessman, 1968; Elkins, 1968; Karnes, 1970). Among strategies suggested for compensatory training are: Use of appropriate materials, activities and evaluations. Materials should be interesting as possible to accommodate the short attention span of the slow learner. Activities should be carefully chosen to ensure success in the shortest possible amount of time. Evaluation for students should evolve around

tangible evidence such as graphs, positive verbal evaluations and positive comparisons of present work with previous efforts.

Slow learners have social and emotional problems. More than fifty percent of this group experience poor personal adjustment. Many are discipline problems. Karnes and Doughtie (1966) reported that studies dealing with prediction of academic success are now concerned more frequently with nonintellectual influences of such variables as socio-cultural factors upon the meaning of standardized test scores.

In most instances, studies indicate that traditional instruction has been incompatible with the needs of those students identified as disadvantaged (Riessman, and Hannah, 1966; Cohen, 1970; Halliburton, 1973; Idleman, 1973; Brown, 1974). Monolithic structure of schools prevents educators from reaching students. Middle class standards have been forced upon poverty stricken youth who have no desire to conform to "middle-class measuring sticks...", and unless we find another more realistic one, we shall have lost the minds and hearts of countless children." (Riessman, 1966, p. 341).

Maslow (1954) contended that in efforts to teach children, consideration must be given to teaching the whole child. Maslow lists five basic needs that must be satisfied. The lower needs must be satisfied in order to make energy

available to higher needs. The needs were ranked as follows: psychological such as, hunger and warmth, safety, love, self-esteem and self-actualization.

Effects of Life Space Forces And
Perceptions of Students

Feelings are vital to human functioning, and individuals act according to their own unique perceptions of reality (Perry, 1974). Attempts at creating learning conditions for disadvantaged students should consider individual potential, motivation and environmental stimulation.

The manner in which individuals perceive their psychological environment was part of their life space forces as defined by Lewin (1936). He contented that through one's knowledge of his life space events, cognitive structure developed. Lewin asserted that an individuals behavior is dependent to a large measure on what he thinks is going on in his life space, the actions of people in his social field, and by locomotion which includes changes of opinion and physical movement.

Life space included the physical, social environment of the individual, the individual's relationship to other persons, and his own place in society. Life space was influenced from outside forces, by perceptual processes regarding the effects of psychological and environmental forces in the lives of individuals. Life space indicated the totality

of both persons and environments which determined the behavior of an individual at a certain moment.

Piaget (1950) and Hunt (1961) pointed out that development of intelligence is substantially influenced by environmental conditions. Smilansky (1974) stated that cognitive orientation and affective behavior are nonseparable elements in the development of adolescent personality. He contended that the seventies could become a decade when educators choose to reform adolescent schooling. The reorientation process requires a social climate that is based on the affective interaction of people.

Wilkerson (1966) emphasized that there was a need for more study concerning the quality and effects of interaction between teachers and disadvantaged pupils, especially as regards teachers' perception of underachieving students, as well as students' perceptions of homogeneous vs. heterogeneous grouping in the classroom.

Smilansky (1974) indicated that metamorphic development was needed to change the climate and the interpersonal relationships within schools, "... the focus must be on the whole school, not on a single part of it" (p. 420). Compensatory attempts needed to be aimed at increasing coping capacities of adolescents. The focus of compensatory instruction needed to focus on students' ability to confront themselves in their environment cognitively, but on an affective basis.

Several studies support the theory of perception as learned behavior (Bugelski, 1965; Hebb, 1947; Hunt, 1964), which is in opposition to the Gestalt theory of perception as innate and structurally determined. Shih-Sung Wen (1974) contended that styles are maintained and enhanced by the individual's interactions with his environment and his perceptions of those interactions. The student's cognitive style is formed by the interaction of many factors as he grows and develops.

Fox, Lippitt and Schmuck (1964) found that pupils feel more isolated from the teacher when they perceive themselves as being disliked by the teacher than when they think they are liked by the teacher. They reported the following findings: Pupils who perceive themselves as having a low status among peers are lower utilizers of their abilities than pupils with higher perceived status. Perceived liking status in the peer group is related positively and significantly to both attitude toward self and attitude toward school. Pupils who have positive attitudes toward their class are higher utilizers of their intelligence than those who are less attracted to the class. Student perceptions of one's place in the peer group, high status or low, is related also to his utilization of his ability in academic learning.

Flanders (1962) findings revealed the teacher's methods influenced the students learning and achievement.

Schmuck and Van Egmond (1965) concluded the lack of congruence between the way students feel about classroom behavior and how they think teachers feel is accompanied by a low level of academic performance.

Lippitt (1962) reported that peer groups in the classroom establish norms which influence learning. Pupils with compatible relations with teachers perform at a higher level academically than those with less compatible relations. Mahmoudi (1974) reported that when students and teachers expect each other to have many "good" qualities, greater learning takes place.

Rogers (1974) made the point that when a teacher responds in a way which makes the student feel understood, not judged or evaluated, this has a tremendous impact. Teachers need to accept personal feelings of students which both disturb and promote learning. In addition, students must to some extent perceive that this type of attitude exist in the teacher. It was further stated that for many years schools have focused only on the cognitive and have avoided any feelings connected with learning.

Rubin (1974) concluded satisfaction with the completion of a task creates positive affect, while anxiety over anticipated failure produces negative affect. One needs to achieve positive feelings and prevent negative ones. Blackham (1967); Palkovitz (1971); Frerichs (1971) concluded

there was a significant and positive relationship between academic achievement and self-concept. Kubinieć's (1970) findings reported that a person's behavior was a function of his perceptions of himself and of his environment.

Dinkmeyer (1965) and Mead (1955) were of the opinion that a child sees himself from the reflected views of those around him. Soares' (1970) findings indicated, disadvantaged children do not necessarily suffer from lower self-esteem and a lower sense of personal worth, while Maslow (1965) theorized that when a child's achievement are reflected in acceptance by and respect from others he comes to accept and respect himself. The child acquires esteem, the feeling of being a worthy, adequate, and capable person, when teachers provide opportunities for students to develop skills.

Diagnostic-prescriptive instructional procedures have been suggested for attempts at providing instruction for underachievers (Lewy, 1969; Cohen, 1970; Pusey, 1973). Eisner (1974) contended that what children learned in school was not determined solely by the content of the curriculum, but rather that education needed to extend itself beyond what goes on in school. It needed to try to get inside the disadvantaged students' world to determine what had significance for them.

Compensatory programs which provide teachers with curricula more suited the educationally disadvantaged stu-

dents result in teachers developing more positive attitudes regarding these students. Compensatory instruction can overcome the negative effects of low achievement by disadvantaged students (Riessman, 1963).

Many empirical studies support the assumption that certain environmental conditions may retard the intellectual development of students (Ausubel, 1963; Isenberg, 1963; Frost, 1964; Loretan, 1966; Martin, 1968; Havighurst, 1970). The school is only one of the many forces acting on the lives of students. The performance of students in school depends on their perceptions of varied life space forces.

Dennison (1969, p. 7) indicated that we should be concerned not only with the instruction of students, but also, with students' relationships with adults, and other students. This implies that students' relationships with adults, and other students are of importance to their academic development. Teachers must accept personal feelings of students which both disturb and promote learning. Students function on the basis of their perception of themselves and of their environment. Knowing the perceptions of students can assist teachers in their efforts to provide effective learning experiences for them.

Summary

A review of the literature revealed that a disproportionate number of students have not responded to tradi-

tional curriculum and instructional techniques, and there has been a high percentage of failures, life-adjustment problems and low achievement. Compensatory programs have been instituted to provide programs that come closer to meeting the needs of underachieving students than have previous traditional programs. Intervention attempts are based on the assumption that divergent views of the educative process are vital in efforts to provide adequate educational experiences for all students.

Academic underachievers have been identified as culturally deprived, and economically impoverished. They are from lower socioeconomic groups and are often deficient in cultural and academic strengths. In efforts to help educationally underachievers, fear of failure should be eliminated in the classroom organization.

The general literature on underachievers gives substantial attention to a wide span of characteristics which describes this group. In providing compensatory experiences for this group, it appears that very few programs are concerned about affective domain inadequacies in the society, or students' perceptions of environmental forces. While much attention is focused on modifying the disadvantaged child through cognitive-learning experiences, little attention has been given to modifications in the school through affective intervention experiences. Recent research has

stressed the importance of giving attention to affective domain areas in efforts to provide adequate intervention experiences for students identified as underachievers. Recent research supported the need for the present investigation.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Subjects

A major consideration concerning the design of the study was to use a population of students identified as underachievers and who were enrolled in compensatory programs. Fifth year centers and middle schools were used in the study only as a means to identify the population of pre and early adolescents. Consequently, no individual school comparisons or results were used as a part of the investigation.

A proportional stratified random sampling of respondents was obtained from among fifty percent of fifth year centers and middle schools identified as eligible for administering Title I services. Van Dalen (1966, p. 299) suggests that investigators may use a stratified random sampling technique to obtain a representative sample. When employing this technique, the population is divided into strata by some characteristics and from each of these a pre-determined number of smaller homogeneous groups are drawn.

A proportional stratified random selection method insured that the sample of students drawn was representative by race, sex, and program enrollment. The population from which the student sample was taken consisted of six fifth year centers and two middle schools randomly selected from among the school district's twelve fifth year centers and four middle schools. The sample size included 250 subjects randomly selected from among a compensatory program enrollment of 810. Of the 250 students selected for the study, 243 usable questionnaires were obtained and utilized in the investigation. Table 1 illustrates the student sample composition by sex, and race.

TABLE I
SAMPLE COMPOSITION
Race and Sex

| | Male | Female | Total |
|----------|------|--------|-------|
| Black | 62 | 53 | 115 |
| Nonblack | 62 | 66 | 128 |

The Instrument

The literature pertaining to perceptions of students revealed an adequate instrument designed to analyze the attitudes and opinions of students regarding life space forces as variables in their lives. To obtain use of the

instrument for this investigation permission was requested and received from Science Research Associates to modify instruments included in the book Diagnosing Classroom Learning Environments. (See Appendix A).

After permission was granted to modify and use the requested instruments, modifications were developed. Instruments were revised to be relevant for use in the study and to remove items that were restricted by the school district in which the study was conducted.

Modification of the instruments included combining three instruments designed to assess the perceptions of students into a single data collection instrument. Further modifications involved adding the items of race, sex, and school level as variables on the instrument. All variables referring to the home or family were eliminated from the modified instrument. This restriction was necessary because the school district in which the study was conducted delimits inquiries into areas of a student's home or family.

All instrument modifications were underlined and included an acknowledgment. Science Research Associates granted permission to use the instruments with the provision that the following acknowledgment appear on all copies reproduced:

From DIAGNOSING CLASSROOM LEARNING ENVIRON-
MENTS BY R. Fox, M.B. Luszki and R. Schmuck.
1966, Science Research Associates, Inc.
Used by permission.

The school district in which the study was conducted granted permission to the researcher to use the instrument at fifth year centers and middle schools located in the school district. The researcher was assigned to conduct the study at fifty percent of the schools at each level.

Reliability

As a measure of reliability for the Influences on Learning inventory, a pilot study was conducted at a Title I school where members of a compensatory class completed the survey instrument. The Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 was applied to the responses to obtain an estimate of reliability.

Ferguson (1971, p. 368) indicated that Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 may be applied to compute a reliability estimate when items have more than two categories of responses. When employing this method, the variances of the items are calculated and their sum substituted in the Kuder-Richardson Formula. The obtained r_t of .84 was considered sufficiently adequate for the purposes of this investigation.

Scoring

Respondents answered the items on a five-point scale with values from one to five assigned to the different positions on the scale. A response of three was considered a neutral position. The one and two positions on the scale referred to negative perceptions, and the four and five positions on the scale referred to positive perceptions.

The score for each item was determined by finding the frequency of subjects who responded to each scale category. The five categories were then reduced to three. By considering a score of 3 as a neutral position, scores of 5 and 4 were combined to represent positive perceptions, while scores of 1 and 2 were combined to indicate negative perceptions.

Since the number of respondents was not the same for each group, frequencies were converted to percentages to establish each category of students on a common basis. The study was primarily concerned with the extent to which respondents rated items in the positive range, subsequently, only scores in the positive range were converted to percentages to be used in the analysis.

An IBM Model 360 computer was used to compile the data. Frequencies and percentages were obtained for responses to each of the twenty-four items on the data collection instrument.

Procedure

This study was designed to investigate, to analyze, and to compare the perceptions of students assigned to compensatory programs at fifth year centers and middle schools regarding life space forces as variables in their lives.

The study was designed to describe existing conditions by employing the descriptive survey method of

investigation. The preliminary steps of the investigation involved an intensive review of available related literature. A detailed examination was made of Dissertation Abstracts, Eric, indexes, and bibliographies relating to Title I compensatory programs, perceptions of adolescent underachievers, as well as, general areas of the affective domain. Relevant published books, articles, papers and unpublished materials also were explored.

A search of the literature revealed an appropriate instrument to acquire the information desired for use in the study. The instrument was used to obtain the perceptions of students concerning the effects of selected life space forces on their lives. The instrument was administered once to each of the selected groups utilized in the study.

The independent variables included in the design for comparing the responses of students were: race, sex of student, and school level. The dependent variables included in the design were: (1) students' perceptions of life space forces that they routinely encountered in their daily lives, and (2) students' perceptions of social interactions concerning the extent to which they felt accepted or rejected by others.

The questionnaire was based on the assumption that the respondents would express their beliefs truthfully. Thurstone (1970, p. 129) assumed that an attitude scale

would be used only in those situations in which one expected people to tell the truth about their convictions. He contended that the only thing to be done with an attitude scale is to measure the attitude actually expressed with the full realization that the subject may be consciously hiding his true attitude.

A cross-sectional approach was employed to gather data. When using this approach the data are collected at one point in time, but different subgroups are sampled.

The investigator personally collected data at each of the selected sample schools during a two week period. After an appointment was made with each principal of the eight schools selected for the study, a data collection schedule was developed. During scheduled visits to the schools, the researcher administered the instrument to randomly selected students on an individual or small group basis. The data collection instrument was read to those students who lacked adequate reading ability to respond to the instrument alone.

The data collection instrument was administered to students assigned to compensatory classes in grades five through eight. The data was collected during the period of time that students normally reported to compensatory programs.

To determine whether differences between groups were statistically significant, each null hypothesis was tested

at the .05 level of significance. Hypotheses were tested by computing a two-sample z-test for uncorrelated percentages between pairs of percentages for items. A z-test for uncorrelated data is considered an appropriate statistic when the data of two independent percentages have a large sample size. Downie (1970, p. 188-190) recommends that the statistic, p , be employed to combine percentages of two groups when computing the z . Justification for the use of p , resides in the fact that in all cases the null hypothesis is assumed that no differences exists in the population proportions. The z for uncorrelated data was used in computing the differences between percentages.

To determine whether differences between groups existed on the total scale, the mean percentage was obtained for each group. A weighting procedure was employed for obtaining the mean of percentages where N 's differ by using a formula given by Guilford (1965, p. 64).

The mean percentage was used to analyze data when items were grouped according to factors. Percentages were computed for each of the twenty-four items on the data collection instrument, to facilitate various groupings of items.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter presents an analysis of the data and interprets the results of statistical procedures for testing the hypothesis. The investigation analyzed and compared the perceptions of students assigned to compensatory programs at fifth year centers and middle schools concerning the extent to which they had positive views of selected life space forces when race and sex were controlled.

To facilitate the analysis, frequencies were converted to percentages as a relative measure to simplify the comparison of data, since the number of respondents were not the same for each group. Only responses in the positive range were used in making the analysis. Z-tests were employed to determine whether statistically significant differences between groups existed on each item on the scale. The .05 level of confidence was used for testing the hypothesis. Items were summarized and placed in tables with statistical results.

To determine the extent to which subjects had positive views of the selected life space forces, the data were grouped according to sex among black and nonblack subjects.

Table 2 shows the percentage of subjects who responded positively by sex for black and nonblack subjects. Of the 24 items on Influences on Learning (IOL), all items with the exception of nine were rated positively by a majority of the four subgroups.

Subscale I contains five of the nine lowest positive rated items. Item 2, life in the regular class, was rated lowest by each of the four subgroups. It is noted that while compensatory classes received low positive ratings, each group rated compensatory programs more positively than regular classes with the exception of black males. Among the additional low positively rated items on subscale I were: item six, groups after school, received less than a majority of positive ratings by nonblack females. Item seven, school clubs, shows less than a majority of positive responses by nonblack males and females. Item eight, being alone, shows less than a majority of positive ratings by black females.

Subscale II shows three items receiving less than a majority of positive responses by subjects on IOL. Item ten, nonfriends in the compensatory class, received a low positive rating by nonblack males. Item eleven, friends in the regular class, was rated low by nonblack females. Item twelve, nonfriends in the compensatory class, shows less than a majority of positive ratings by each subgroup with

the exception of black males.

Subscale III shows one item receiving less than a majority of positive ratings. Item 17, the way subjects perceive non-friends views of them, was rated less than positive by a majority of nonblack males and females. It is further noted that a majority of the items on subscale III were among the highest rated items on the total scale. It appears that subjects were more positive about their social interactions with others than they were towards items on the other two subscales.

It appears from the data in Table 2 that subjects responses to item 16, satisfaction with their school work, and item 24, the extent to which subjects perceived themselves in a positive manner, were rated in an extremely positive manner. This appears to indicate that students definitely perceived themselves in a highly positive manner. In addition, on several items there appeared to be common agreement among the four subgroups in their positive ratings, while on other items vast differences appeared to exist. A majority of students in each group perceived the principal as holding positive views of them as indicated by item 22, the principals views. On item seven, school clubs, a majority of black subjects perceived this item in a positive manner, while less than a majority of nonblack subjects gave a majority of positive ratings for this item.

Table 2
 Percentages of Positive Responses By Sex
 For Black and Nonblack Subjects^a

| Item | Black | | | | Nonblack | | | |
|------------------------|-------|----|----|----|----------|----|----|----|
| | M | | F | | M | | F | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| <u>Subscale I</u> | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Compensatory class | 17 | 27 | 23 | 43 | 24 | 39 | 37 | 56 |
| 2. Regular class | 30 | 48 | 20 | 38 | 17 | 27 | 20 | 30 |
| 3. Nonclass act. | 36 | 60 | 40 | 75 | 40 | 64 | 36 | 54 |
| 4. Outside s. life | 46 | 75 | 38 | 73 | 44 | 72 | 45 | 68 |
| 5. Friends after s. | 43 | 69 | 41 | 77 | 47 | 76 | 49 | 74 |
| 6. Groups after s. | 36 | 58 | 28 | 53 | 31 | 50 | 25 | 38 |
| 7. School clubs | 34 | 55 | 32 | 60 | 23 | 37 | 23 | 35 |
| 8. Being alone | 39 | 63 | 25 | 47 | 33 | 53 | 34 | 51 |
| <u>Subscale II</u> | | | | | | | | |
| 9. Comp. class friends | 46 | 74 | 43 | 81 | 44 | 71 | 48 | 73 |
| 10. Others in comp. c. | 34 | 55 | 30 | 57 | 24 | 39 | 36 | 54 |
| 11. Regular c. friends | 31 | 52 | 29 | 55 | 42 | 69 | 30 | 45 |
| 12. Others in reg. c. | 35 | 57 | 26 | 49 | 27 | 43 | 23 | 35 |
| 13. Comp. teachers | 49 | 79 | 47 | 89 | 50 | 81 | 62 | 95 |
| 14. Past teachers | 49 | 79 | 41 | 77 | 44 | 72 | 61 | 92 |
| 15. Regular teachers | 44 | 71 | 39 | 75 | 48 | 77 | 53 | 81 |
| 16. Personal | 53 | 85 | 43 | 81 | 51 | 82 | 58 | 88 |
| <u>Subscale III</u> | | | | | | | | |
| 17. Others | 50 | 81 | 45 | 85 | 40 | 64 | 47 | 71 |
| 18. Others reg. class | 31 | 50 | 27 | 51 | 26 | 42 | 27 | 41 |
| 19. Close friends | 51 | 82 | 44 | 83 | 52 | 84 | 59 | 89 |
| 20. Comp. teachers | 47 | 76 | 41 | 77 | 39 | 63 | 53 | 81 |
| 21. Regular teachers | 39 | 63 | 31 | 58 | 31 | 50 | 43 | 65 |
| 22. Principal | 43 | 69 | 36 | 68 | 35 | 56 | 44 | 68 |
| 23. Past teachers | 34 | 55 | 38 | 72 | 40 | 64 | 52 | 80 |
| 24. Personal | 54 | 87 | 48 | 90 | 48 | 77 | 51 | 77 |

^aResponses on Influences on Learning inventory; items were summarized in the table.

To further facilitate an analysis of the problem, the primary null hypothesis of no statistically significant difference between the positive ratings by sex among black and nonblack subjects on the Influences on Learning inventory was tested. A two-sample z-test for uncorrelated percentages was employed to test the hypothesis at the .05 confidence level.

Table 3 shows the results of the z-tests computations by sex for black and nonblack subjects. Of the 24 comparisons by items, no statistically significant differences were found among black males and females, while among nonblack males and females, five statistically significant differences were found. Item one, views of the compensatory class, showed that a higher percentage of nonblack females responded positively than nonblack male subjects. Item 11, satisfaction with the subjects school work by friends in the regular class, shows a higher percentage of nonblack males gave positive ratings than nonblack female subjects. On item 13, satisfaction with the subjects school work by compensatory teachers, the data shows nonblack females gave higher percentages of positive ratings than nonblack males subjects on this item. Item 14, satisfaction with the subjects school work by past teachers, and item 20, compensatory teachers views of the subjects social interactions, showed that a higher percentage of nonblack females responded positively than nonblack male subjects.

Table 3

Z-Test of Percentages of Positive Responses
By Sex For Black and Nonblack Subjects^a

| Item | Black | | | Nonblack | | |
|---------------------------|-------|----|----------|----------|----|----------|
| | M | F | <u>z</u> | M | F | <u>z</u> |
| <u>Subscale I</u> | | | | | | |
| 1. Compensatory Class | 27 | 43 | 1.80 | 39 | 56 | 1.97* |
| 2. Regular class | 48 | 38 | 1.15 | 27 | 30 | .36 |
| 3. Nonclass activities | 60 | 75 | 1.75 | 64 | 54 | 1.15 |
| 4. Outside school life | 75 | 73 | .28 | 72 | 68 | .48 |
| 5. Friends outside s. | 69 | 77 | .96 | 75 | 74 | .20 |
| 6. Groups outside s. | 58 | 52 | .57 | 50 | 38 | 1.38 |
| 7. School clubs | 54 | 60 | .60 | 37 | 34 | .27 |
| 8. Being alone | 64 | 47 | 1.83 | 53 | 51 | .19 |
| <u>Subscale II</u> | | | | | | |
| 9. Compensatory friends | 74 | 81 | .88 | 71 | 72 | .21 |
| 10. Others (compensatory) | 55 | 57 | .01 | 39 | 54 | 1.79 |
| 11. Regular C. Friends | 52 | 55 | .31 | 69 | 45 | 2.64* |
| 12. Regular C. Others | 57 | 49 | .88 | 43 | 35 | .93 |
| 13. Compensatory teacher | 79 | 89 | 1.39 | 81 | 95 | 2.58* |
| 14. Past teachers | 79 | 77 | .20 | 72 | 92 | 3.02* |
| 15. Regular teachers | 71 | 75 | .47 | 77 | 81 | .57 |
| 16. Personal | 85 | 81 | .63 | 82 | 88 | .89 |
| <u>Subscale III</u> | | | | | | |
| 17. Others feelings | 81 | 85 | .60 | 64 | 71 | .81 |
| 18. Others Regular c. | 50 | 51 | .09 | 42 | 41 | .11 |
| 19. Close friends | 82 | 83 | .09 | 84 | 89 | .92 |
| 20. Comp. teachers | 78 | 77 | .12 | 63 | 81 | 2.34* |
| 21. Reg. teachers views | 63 | 58 | .48 | 50 | 65 | 1.74 |
| 22. Principal's views | 69 | 68 | .17 | 56 | 68 | 1.30 |
| 23. Past teachers | 55 | 71 | 1.87 | 64 | 80 | 1.95 |
| 24. Personal views | 87 | 91 | .59 | 77 | 77 | .01 |

*Significant at .05 confidence level

^aResponses to Influences on Learning inventory; items were summarized in the table.

To determine whether statistically significant differences between races existed, further comparisons were made. Table 4 shows the results of z-tests computations for comparisons by race for items where statistically significant differences by sex among nonblack subjects existed. The data showed that statistically significant differences existed between races on four of the five comparisons by items. The pattern of responses to the five items indicated nonblack female subjects responded more positively than did other groups on four of the five items. Item 11, regular class friends, was the only item of the five that did not receive a higher percentage of positive responses by nonblack females than by other subjects.

Table 4
Z-Tests of Percentages of Positive Responses
 By Race for Influences on Learning

| Items | Nonblack | | | Nonblack | | |
|---------------------------|----------|------|----------|----------|--------|----------|
| | Blacks | Male | <u>z</u> | Blacks | Female | <u>z</u> |
| 1. Compensatory class | 34 | 39 | .53 | 34 | 56 | 2.80* |
| 11. Regular class | 53 | 69 | .60 | 53 | 45 | .98 |
| 13. Compensatory | 83 | 81 | .48 | 83 | 95 | 2.34* |
| 14. Past teachers | 78 | 72 | .92 | 78 | 92 | 2.45* |
| 20. Compensatory teachers | 78 | 63 | 2.12* | 78 | 81 | .57 |

*Significant at .05 confidence level

Table 5 reports the results of z-tests of percentages of positive responses by race for Influences on Learning for items not included in Table 4. Of the 19 comparisons by items, five statistically significant differences were found. Item two, the regular class, showed that a higher percentage of black subjects responded positively than non-black subjects. It was further noted that less than a majority of both races responded positively to this item. On item 7, school clubs, and item 12, others in the regular class, the data reports that a majority of black subjects responded positively, while less than a majority of nonblack subjects responded positively. Item 17, others views of the subjects social interactions, shows that a higher percentage of nonblack subjects responded positively than black subjects. A higher percentage of black subjects responded positively to item 24, subjects views of their social interactions, than nonblack subjects.

Of the 19 comparisons by items black subjects had a higher percentage of positive responses than nonblack subjects on 13 of the items. One item received less than a majority of positive responses by blacks, item 2, the regular class. Six items received less than a majority of positive responses by nonblack subjects.

Table 5

Z-Tests of Percentages of Positive Responses
By Race for Influences on Learning^a

| Item | Black | Nonblack | <u>z</u> |
|-------------------------------|-------|----------|----------|
| 2. Regular class | 43 | 30 | 2.37* |
| 3. Nonclass activities | 67 | 59 | 1.26 |
| 4. Outside school life | 74 | 70 | .72 |
| 5. Friends after school | 73 | 75 | .35 |
| 6. Groups after school | 56 | 44 | 1.85 |
| 7. School clubs | 57 | 36 | 3.35* |
| 8. Being alone | 56 | 52 | .59 |
| 9. Compensatory class friends | 77 | 71 | .98 |
| 10. Others in comp. class | 56 | 47 | 1.37 |
| 12. Others in reg. class | 53 | 39 | 2.19* |
| 15. Regular teachers | 73 | 79 | 1.22 |
| 16. Personal | 83 | 85 | .36 |
| 17. Others | 68 | 82 | 2.62* |
| 18. Others regular class | 50 | 41 | 1.40 |
| 19. Close friends | 83 | 87 | .88 |
| 21. Regular teachers | 61 | 58 | .49 |
| 22. Principal | 69 | 62 | 1.06 |
| 23. Past teachers | 63 | 72 | 1.62 |
| 24. Personal | 88 | 77 | 2.34* |

*Significant at .05 confidence level

^aResponses on Influences on Learning inventory not included in Table 6; items were summarized in the table.

To facilitate an analysis of data by factors, the mean percentage was computed for each of the three such scales on the Influences on Learning inventory. Subscale I assessed the views of subjects concerning how they would change the amount of time that they spent engaged in each life space force. Responses were considered as indicators of the importance of each life space force as a variable in the lives of the subjects. Subscale II determined how satisfied subjects felt that others were with the respondents class work. Subscale III assessed subjects views concerning their social interactions.

Table 6 shows the mean percent for each of the three subscales. The data indicates a majority of each subgroup gave positive responses to most items on each of the subscales.

Table 6
Mean Percents of Positive Responses By Sex
For Subscales^a on Influences on Learning

| Subscale | Black Males | Black Females | Nonblack Males | Nonblack Females |
|----------|-------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| I | 57 | 61 | 52 | 51 |
| II | 69 | 70 | 67 | 71 |
| III | 70 | 73 | 63 | 72 |

^aResponses to Influences on Learning inventory by black and nonblack subjects

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings

This investigation hypothesized that there was no statistically significant difference between the positive ratings by sex and race among black and nonblack subjects by items on the Influences on Learning inventory. The results of testing the hypothesis at the .05 confidence level did not support the hypothesis. It was found that there was a significant difference by sex between nonblack male and female subjects on five of the twenty-four comparisons by items on Influences on Learning inventory. Statistically significant differences were found by race on nine comparisons by items between black and nonblack subjects. On the basis of the findings it was necessary to reject the primary null hypothesis.

The intent of this investigation was to analyze and compare the perceptions of students assigned to compensatory programs at fifth year centers and middle schools concerning selected life space forces as variables in their lives, when race and sex were controlled. The findings concerning the

positive ratings of subjects in this investigation can be generalized only to academically underachieving students assigned to compensatory programs at fifth year centers and middle schools.

The findings revealed that black and nonblack subjects had positive perceptions of a majority of the items on Influences on Learning inventory as indicated by a mean score on each subscale representing a majority of positive responses by each group. The findings lend support to the hypothesis that compensatory programs offer curricular suited to the cognitive-affective development of underachievers.

Subjects were highly positive toward their relationships with others, and perceived others as having positive views of them. This finding has some implications for the findings of Fox, Lippitt, and Schmuck (1964) that perceived liking status is related positively and significantly to both attitude toward self and attitude toward school.

A higher percentage of nonblack females were more positive towards the compensatory class than other students. It appeared that very few subjects perceived regular programs more positively than compensatory programs. In addition, a majority of subjects seemed to view compensatory teachers more positively than either the regular teachers or the principal.

Nonclass activities appeared to be perceived highly positive by all subgroups. The data indicated that a majority of nonblack males and females were apparently dissatisfied with school clubs.

Subjects perceived themselves as making satisfactory progress in school, as well, as perceiving teachers as being positive towards their progress. This can be inferred to lend support to Schmuck and Van Egmond (1965) findings that the way students feel about their classroom progress and how they think teachers feel is positively related.

An additional finding of this investigation was that most subjects perceived themselves as being viewed in a positive manner by close friends, teachers, principals and self-perceptions. Subjects were positive toward most forces related to social interactions.

Conclusions

Several conclusions can be drawn from the findings of this investigation. First, academically underachieving students assigned to compensatory programs have positive perceptions of their academic progress and perceive teachers and close friends as viewing their school work in a positive manner. This infers that compensatory programs contribute to positive self-perceptions among students assigned to the programs.

Black and nonblack students are not equally likely to have similar perceptions of regular classes, or school clubs, consequently, these life space forces are dependent on the race of students. Black males and females have similar perceptions of compensatory classes, while nonblack males and females are not equally likely to have similar perceptions.

Students assigned to compensatory programs at fifth year centers and middle schools for a semester are likely to have positive perceptions of most life space forces. Compensatory programs are more likely to be effective than are traditional programs in providing adequate learning experiences for academically underachieving students.

Application of the Findings

The findings of this investigation have implications for classroom instructional purposes: (1) Teachers could use much of the information on Influences on Learning with other diagnostic measures in working with individual students; (2) Teachers could use information on Influences on Learning to show pupils that they understand their problems; (3) Information on Influences on Learning could be used to determine whether classroom procedures were effective; (4) Information on Influences on Learning can be used to assist students in improving social relationships.

Recommendations for Further Research

The writer makes the following suggestions for further research studies:

- (1) Further research should compare the life space force perceptions of underachieving students assigned to compensatory programs with underachievers in non-compensatory classes.
- (2) This investigation was limited to one instrument to assess the perceptions of students. It is recommended that additional investigations of this nature be undertaken that employ multiple instruments.
- (3) Further research should be employed using Influences on Learning for pre-post testing in compensatory classes.
- (4) A study of this nature could be undertaken using subjects assigned to compensatory classes at the high school level.

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APPENDIX A

INFLUENCES ON LEARNING Inventory

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INFLUENCES ON LEARNING *

Fifth Year Center _____ Middle School _____ Male _____
 Female _____ Race _____

I. DIRECTIONS: Imagine that you could change some of the things you do during the day. Put a check in the box that shows how you would change the parts of your day. There are no right or wrong answers.

| | | | | |
|-------|------|--------|----------|-------|
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| a lot | some | same | a little | a lot |
| more | more | time | less | less |
| time | time | as now | time | time |

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 65 | 1. Life in this class | | | | | |
| | 2. Life in <u>other</u> classes | | | | | |
| | 3. Things you do in school that are not part of your regular classes | | | | | |
| | 4. Life outside of school | | | | | |
| | 5. Doing things with friends after school | | | | | |
| | 6. Meeting with groups outside school | | | | | |
| | 7. Meetings of clubs and groups during the school day with adult leaders | | | | | |
| | 8. Doing things alone | | | | | |

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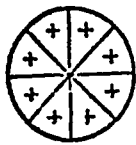
II. DIRECTIONS: Put a check in the box that tells how satisfied you think each one of these people is with your schoolwork. There are no right or wrong answers.

| | | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| very satis- fied | pretty well satis- fied | not well satis- fied | not satis- fied at all | don't really care |

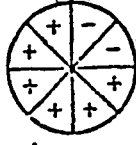
96

| | | | | | |
|-----|----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| 9. | My close friend(s) in this class | | | | |
| 10. | Others in this class | | | | |
| 11. | Friends <u>not</u> in this class | | | | |
| 12. | Others <u>not</u> in this class | | | | |
| 13. | The teacher in this class | | | | |
| 14. | Teachers I had last year | | | | |
| 15. | Teachers in my other classes | | | | |
| 16. | How satisfied am I with myself | | | | |

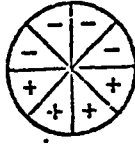
III. DIRECTIONS: Below are a number of circles showing persons with different amounts of (+) things liked about them, and (-) things not liked about them. In the box following each question, write the number of the circle that you think each of the persons mentioned would pick for you.



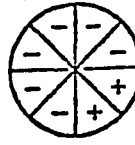
5



4



3



2



1

| | | |
|--------|---|--|
| 17. | Which circle would the boys or girls you spend most time with choose to describe you? | |
| 18. | Which circle would others not in this class choose? | |
| 19. | Which circle do you think your closest friend would choose to describe you? | |
| 67 20. | Which circle would the teacher in this class choose? | |
| 21. | Which circle would most of your other teachers choose? | |
| 22. | Which circle would the principal of your school choose? | |
| 23. | Which circle would teachers you had last year choose? | |
| 24. | Which circle would you choose for yourself? | |

APPENDIX B

Correspondence Relating To Study

Oklahoma City Public Schools

900 North Lincoln
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73106

March 15, 1976

Ms. Ruth W. Faine
1408 N. E. 48th
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Dear Ms. Faine:

I am happy to inform you that the Research Screening Committee has approved your request to conduct a study in the Oklahoma City Public Schools. Please contact the following building administrators to make further arrangements for your study:

| <u>Principal</u> | <u>School</u> | <u>Telephone Number</u> |
|------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| John Brandt | Culbertson | 232-5757 |
| A. J. Lonian | Creston Hills | 427-6800 |
| Myrna Moore | Edwards | 427-3800 |
| Ray Price | Lincoln | 236-1782 |
| Jerry Wallace | Page-Woodson | 235-1109 |
| Mary Moulder | Truman | 424-4211 |
| Vernon Moore | Jackson | 634-6357 |
| Betty Williams | Moon | 427-8391 |

Please feel free to contact this office if you feel there is a need for further clarification of this matter. Good luck on your study.

Sincerely,

Maxie Wood

Maxie Wood
Senior Research Associate

MW:rp



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259 East Erie Street
Chicago, Illinois 60611
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Cable SCIRESUS, Chicago

April 19, 1976

Ms. Ruth W. Faine
Research Associate
Oklahoma City Public Schools
900 North Klein
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73106

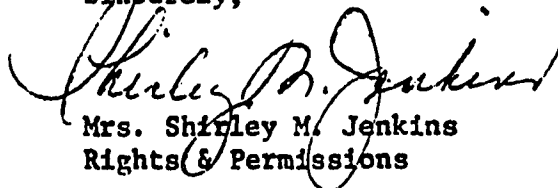
Dear Ms. Faine:

Permission is granted for you to use modifications of pages 70, 72 and 73 from Diagnosing Classroom Learning Environments in your dissertation.

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Sincerely,



Mrs. Shirley M. Jenkins
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SMJ/cd