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A PROPOSED ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM AND ITS
NEEDS FOR THE TIMPSON SCHOOL AND NEARBY COMMUNITIES

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A PROPOSED ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM AND ITS
NEEDS FOR THE TIMPSON SCHOOL
AND NEARBY COMMUNITIES

By

Lillie Jones Parker

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Science
in the
Graduate Division
of

LC
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1953

Prairie View Agricultural and Mechanical College

Prairie View, Texas

August, 1953

DEDICATED

To

My husband and aunt

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writer is deeply indebted to Professor J. E. Ellison, and she wishes to express appreciation for his constructive criticisms and suggestions.

The encouragement and stimulation of thought, given in the progress of the study, by Mrs. Pauline W. Campbell, will be forever remembered.

The assistance and encouragement of the County Supervisor, Mrs. L. B. Forte, were indispensable.

L. J. P.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Adult education is a process by which all adults may develop their talents and abilities to the extent that contribute most to the welfare of both themselves and others.

There has always been some form of adult education. The nature of man was such that his environment, both natural and social became an educational force. This informal education was suitable to the simple and informal life of the past. But as society became more highly organized and complex, the gap between the informal education provided by the environment became wider and wider. The changes became so rapid and complex that even the formal education provided the youth was not adequate to the demands of adult life. So special agencies and programs were provided to supplement the education received by adults in their childhood and youth, and to provide retraining to meet the demands of an ever changing society.¹

Any program of adult education to be worthy of the name must have flexibility. It must be ready to carry on

¹Ambrose Caliver, Trends in Adult Education, For Whom and For What? pp. 6-7.

any type of activities in terms of the traditional class-room setup or otherwise. It must be ready to provide its services anywhere and at any time needed. It must be able to furnish teachers experience in terms of the activity for which they are needed.²

Aside from inability to find satisfactory ready-made answers to curriculum problems, the voluntary nature of adult education in a democracy forces every director of adult education to be his own curriculum expert. In the absence of compulsory attendance laws or other similar forces, adults will not long participate in educational activities which they do not recognize as valuable. During the years of compulsory attendance children may accept curricula laid down for them. Social and economic pressures encourage many young people to finish high school after legal requirements expire. Similar pressures and requirements of chosen occupations help many young people finish advanced curricula. Acceptance of standard courses reaches a minimum in adult education. While adults willingly submit to courses with specific purposes, such as preparation for the naturalization examination, for a driver's license, or for a civil service position, in these and other activities, the learning must have a

²Adult Education in San Francisco, June 30, 1949, p. 1.

direct bearing on their purposes--their own felt needs. Adults, more than others, determine what they will learn.

It is the task of the director of adult education and the teacher or leader of adults to find out what adults want to learn and need to learn. Sound program building requires this. When well done, it assures a program that fits the needs and interests of adults. When poorly done, much energy and money is wasted devising educational programs in which few adults participate.⁵

Statement of the Problem

It was the purpose of this study (1) to give the present educational status of the adults of the Timpson consolidated school community; (2) to point out the educational needs of the adults of the school and community; (3) to propose an adult educational program for the Timpson school community to meet these needs.

Importance of the Study

In presenting the material found in this study, the writer is presenting a source of material which will

⁵Identifying Educational Needs of Adults, Circular No. 330, pp. v-vi.

prove valuable in preparing the adult education program of the local school. Such a study will enable the teachers to detect the outstanding adult-needs of the Timpson community. This, of course, will serve as a necessary reform in the educational areas of the community.

Definitions of Terms

The phrase "program of adult education" as used here refers to a plan of procedures followed in the education of adults who are no longer enrolled in a school, or college. The procedures include those required in the administration of the educational enterprise, the scheme of organization employed, and both the course content and method of teaching involved.

"The school" is another term used in this study to refer to the school as an institution. It is used in this sense in speaking of the program of adult education of the school or when speaking of the school in the community. If a more specific use of the term is intended, it will be spoken of as the high school or the rural school.

"Home and family life" is used for that portion of living in which a group of related persons are associated closely with each other and as individuals or as a group carrying out activities having relationship to their

common interests as members of a family.

"Family" is used in the commonly accepted sense of a group of immediate kindred, usually a father, mother, and their own or legally adopted children. Where a grandparent or hired help or other persons not of the immediate family are living with the family, they are considered members of the household rather than of the family. Since many persons, those who are single, widows, and widowers, have homes and enjoy home life but do not live in a family, the term "home and family life" is frequently used to include the intimate group life of all persons in homes.

The word "community" is used as sociologists use the term, for the body of people living in a contiguous territory, who have something in common. As used here, however, the term refers to their common locality of residence rather than to their commonness of interests.⁴

⁴Mary Stewart Lyle, Adult Education for Democracy in Family Life, pp. 5-6.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There have been many studies of various adult groups, but only a brief summary of the work of experimenters on problems very closely related to the one at hand will be given. These studies vary with respect to: (1) sample; (2) the purpose; (3) the treatment of data; (4) the area studied; (5) the technique used in making the studies.

It is the purpose of this chapter to summarize the results of studies that seem to have special value because of (1) the kind of survey used; (2) the type of analysis made; (3) the areas involved.

Howard Y. McClusky,¹ Director, Bureau of Studies and Training in Community Adult Education, University of Michigan in his discussion on Education of Young Adults, had for his major discussion; (1) the needs; (2) the provision that the United States makes for the education of its youth; (3) the deficiencies in educational opportunity that affect Negroes, youth from rural areas, low income groups, early and middle teens who move from job

¹Handbook of Adult Education, Third Edition, 1948.
pp. 136-137.

to job in an urgent drive to advance their vocational status.

He brought out that young adults fail to accept liberal provisions; in late teens and twenties youth must work, they need to attend evening classes and programs planned for their needs.

Summary-- The young adult is advancing through a period of maturity which in most cases initiates the two most important adjustments; (1) choice of an occupation; (2) the establishment of a home. The requirements of these adjustments largely determine the subject-matter and procedures of the young adults' education. The relation of social and economic status to the deficiencies of formal schooling indicates that young adults of the Negro, rural, and low-income segments of the population have the greatest need for continuing education. Being a special breed, the young adult requires special measure. But his needs are urgent, and his contribution to the community is potentially massive. If he is the main line of defense in time of war, he should be the main line of support in times of peace.

Knowles,² gave some methods as to how to teach adults: (1) the lecture is probably the most efficient

²Malcoln S. Knowles, Informal Adult Education, pp. 43-47.

method for presenting a large number of facts in a short period of time. (2) The question and answer--this is where the teacher questions the students about the assignment and they recite their answers. Knowles found that this method permitted the student to ask questions of the teacher in order to improve their understanding of the material. (3) Group discussion--Knowles observed that adults have a rich background of experience on which to draw. It achieves the highest degree of interaction among the students and teacher, and is almost certain to be keyed to the needs and interest of the students, since they are the ones who decide what is to be talked about. (4) Project method--Knowles found that this method stimulates interest, and gives the student an opportunity to pursue their special interest. It also enables the student to obtain practical experience and to gain a sense of accomplishment. (5) Demonstration helps the student to visualize a process that might be difficult to understand completely from verbal description. (6) Individual investigation--a student undertakes to learn something through his own efforts and carry on under guidance. (7) Exhibits--considerable skill is required in arranging an exhibit so that its purpose is clear; it is interesting, and develops its story logically. (8) Charts--one of the best known of all visual aids is the wall chart; Knowles

says, "without it geography would be unteachable, and they can be constructed by the students." (9) Blackboards--the most used visual aid is the common blackboard which is capable of the same kind of skillful use of symbols and lines that are found in charts. (10) Field trips--this is where the student collects information about something he is studying by actually going out and observing it.

Summary--These are the principal methods and some material for teaching adults. Each one has unique characteristics that render it peculiarly useful in certain situations and out of place in others. Usually the methods are most effective when used in combination, as when a lecture includes several demonstrations, is followed by a question and answer period, and then discussed. Over the span of a whole course the teacher may find an opportunity to use almost every method effectively.

In Brunner's³ Community Organization and Adult Education, Chapter VII, on development "In the Negro Area in Greenville County, North Carolina," Ro. O. Johnson, M. A., Negro Coordinator, made a report on organizing the Greenville area Council. One of the main

³Edmund De S. Brunner, Community Organization and Adult Education, pp. 97-98.

ways in the organization was the formation of committees which would concentrate on (1) specific problems needed most; (2) working with the proper authorities so that the Negro might be included in all programs.

The committees' major interests were concerned with (1) education (2) leisure time and recreation (3) health, crime and delinquency government and economics.

It was found in this report that the committees' recommendations were brought to the council for action by the whole group, and was reasonably well maintained.

Studebaker⁴ made a study in the city of Denver, Colorado in 1932. The subject of the study is the "Denver Opportunity School;" namely, to provide any kind of service for any individual when he comes and asks for it. A survey was made by an eighth grade teacher, Emily Griffith, to collect the needed data. When children were absent from her classroom, she visited their homes to ascertain the cause.

The major findings of this study was vocational training. In homes visited was found poverty, distress, discouragement and despair. Many foreigners unable to procure work or greatly handicapped were unable to speak, read, or write English. The parents from these homes were

⁴John W. Studebaker, "What is This Opportunity School?" Safeguarding Democracy Through Adult Civic Education Bulletin No. 6, United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1938, pp. 9-10.

encouraged to come together in groups, and plans were discussed for a solution to the problem. These plans were carried to Miss Griffith's employer's organized labor and social agencies. The Board of Education was convinced that Miss Griffith's proposal be given a trial. In September, 1916, "Opportunity School" was opened, and in 1931 more than 1,000 students had to be denied admission because of inadequate space and facilities.

Conclusion-- Most of the thousands of individuals who pass in and out the door of "Opportunity School," go there seeking the fundamental preparation for some vocation or supplementary training to increase their efficiency in the occupation they are already following.⁵

Aims of founders of "Opportunity School:" (1) to provide a working knowledge of many trades and industries (2) to offer opportunities to men and women who have the ambition to become more efficient workers (3) to provide the fundamentals of an education for those persons who have been deprived of school advantages in youth (4) to give another chance to boys and girls, who for various reasons have not fitted well into the regular public schools (5) to give people born in other countries a chance to learn English and also to prepare them for

⁵Ibid., p. 84.

naturalization and citizenship.⁶

Studebaker and Williams⁷ for three years conducted public forum demonstrations in 580 communities in 38 states. It was found that Federal emergency funds were made available by the office of Education to assist in the conduct of these demonstrations.

It was found that plans and programs came in response to need; (1) truth-seeking under competent guidance; (2) increased understanding of the problems which beset them and their communities; (3) help in their study and discussion of public affairs--of their problems.

The authors tried to put into brief and readable form that body of practical experience on which our agencies of public education may build permanent and growing programs for improved citizenship.

Correctional Institutions in the Federal Prison System

A report of 25 adult institutions in the federal prison system: six penitentiaries, three reformatories for men and one for women, a medical center, nine cor-

⁶Ibid., p. 86.

⁷John W. Studebaker and Chester S. Williams, Forum Planning Handbook, The American Association for Adult Education, United States Department of Interior, Office of Education, Washington, D. C., 1939, p. 7.

rectional institutions (for short term offenders), four prison camps, and one detention headquarters (jail). Since 1930, academic and vocational education, industrial training, and library services under trained personnel have been stressed in all the federal institutions.

Some of the major findings in the federal prisons: (1) compulsory education for those with less than fifth-grade rating; (2) a great percentage of prisoners in federal institutions are enrolled in some educational activity.⁹

State Programs-- In most states, classroom instruction has been improved under certified teachers, state adult education funds made available for that purpose. All education is voluntary but fifth-grade achievement is a prerequisite for parole in some states.⁹

Army and Navy-- The Army's Disciplinary Barracks have compulsory education for prisoners with less than fifth-grade rating. Army and Navy have two educational aims: (1) to prepare as many as possible for restoration to active duty; (2) and to prepare the remainder for civil life.¹⁰

⁹Ibid., p. 336.

⁹Ibid., p. 337.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 338.

Kempfer¹¹ made a survey of over one hundred school adult education programs in public schools and found a need for a multiple approach to adult education. Some of the suggested approaches were: grouping adults by life stages such as the unmarried, the newly married, young parents, parents of adolescents, grandparents, homemakers, young workers, retired and studying the interest and need of each group. These were offered: workshops, open forums, lecture and concert series, guidance services, radio broadcast for adults, community councils, film forums, individual tutoring, educational camps, excursions with occupational life the major consideration.

Leads to adult education programs are making use of one or more of these approaches which were furnished by the survey report in office of Education Pamphlet, No. 107.

Adult Education in Latin America-- Kempfer¹² made this study, also, and reported to the United States on Latin-American scene. Information for this report was obtained from plenary sessions, group meetings, and interviews with more of the 19 delegations present at the Inter-American Seminar on illiteracy and the Education of

¹¹Homer Kempfer, Selected Approaches to Adult Education, Bulletin No. 16, United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1950, pp. 1-3.

¹²Ibid., p. 2.

Adults held near Rio de Jenerio, July 27, to September 3, 1949. It was found that the most widespread and unique feature in Latin-American Adult Education is the campaign against illiteracy. It was found that over one half of the adult population is unable to read and write. Literacy campaigns have started during the last decade; most of them are still going and conducted by the National Ministries of education. He found in Ecuador the campaign is sponsored by the National Union of Journalists, and supported partly by the sale of special stamps. It was found in El Salvador that volunteer teachers were used, and the campaigns were aiming primarily at the beginning reading levels in (1) agriculture, (2) child care; (3) health; (4) homemaking, and related fields.

The campaign in Cuba found about 900 elementary schools with evening classes attached to them. In Chili about 900 teachers instruct adults in late afternoon and evening classes in the elementary curriculum.

Costa Rica began a new adult education program in 1948, using the same methods with adults as are used with children only taught at night.

Brazil was found to have raised the literacy level of 594,000 during 1948.

Ecuador reports over 140,000 made literate in six years. An estimated quarter million "have benefited" from

the campaign in the Dominican-Republic during the last eight years.

Mexico has reached 1,700,000 out of 6,000,000 illiterate adults in Latin America have had literacy skills at one time but have lost them through disuse. It was found that the need for easy-to-read materials in practical fields is possibly greater than in this country.

Free public circulating libraries are virtually non-existent in Latin America.

Cultural Missions

A Cultural Mission is a community organizing team of two to six practical educators, each a specialist in one field such as agriculture, building construction, health and sanitation, homemaking, nutrition, recreation, and rural industries. This team establishes itself in a village located so that 10 or more surrounding villages and the rural area can be served. They are supported by the federal government. They evidently do little for the people of their areas, but seemingly attempt to help people help themselves.

Special Projects

Nuclear Schools-- They attempt to educate the total

community by using the local teachers plus a supervisor of agriculture and a supervisor of health and homelife. It was found that these schools drew upon specialized service available for a co-ordinated life improvement program.

Amazon Valley Project

This project seems to have been a health campaign and is conducted in a portion of the Amazon Valley. The use of radio with street corner loud-speakers, record playing units, movies, health clubs, bulletins, talks, leaflets, are among the media and methods used.

Films in Puerto Rico-- With the advice of the observer the Division of Community Education newly added to the Department of Education there, hopes to produce eight 16 mm pictures per year, each with 200,000 accompanying illustrated booklets on newsprints for distribution at neighborhood and group meetings. Subjects will be on such topics as malaria, co-operatives, and geography of the island. Education leading to more local responsibility for action, is the motive.

Conclusion-- On the whole and with certain exceptions, adult education in Latin America is less well developed than in the United States. It was found to be on the move, however, and several features will bear

watching. Most Latin-American adult education is entirely free to the public which is something that cannot yet be said in most of our states.

The Rio Seminar proposed that quarterly inter-American bulletin be issued in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and French to provide for an exchange of information on adult education. If the proposal materializes, many educators of adults in the United States undoubtedly would want to subscribe.¹³

The Fund for Adult Education

The fund for adult education was established by the the Ford Foundation in Pasadena, California; it is a philanthropic organization. This was done to determine areas and ways in which it might most effectively and properly give aid in the contemporary society. The Ford Foundation in the Report of the Study Committee, November, 1949, marked out for itself five major areas of endeavor as follows: (1) the establishment of peace; (2) the strengthening of democracy; (3) the strengthening of the economy; (4) education in a Democratic Society; (5) individual behavior and human relation. The goals for Program Area

¹³"Patterns of Adult Education in Latin-America," Adult Education Journal, (Article) January, 1950, pp. 13-18.

Four, that the foundation should support activities to strengthen, expand, and improve educational facilities and methods to enable individuals more fully to realize their intellectual, civic and spiritual potentialities; to promote greater equality of educational opportunity; and to conserve and increase knowledge and enrich our culture.

In the general area of education, the Ford Foundation established this independent organization with "that of the total educational process which begins when schooling is finished," and was considered to have as its aim "the expansion of opportunities for all adults to continue their education in the interest of mature and responsible citizenship"--bearing in mind that "in today's world civic responsibilities are political, economic, and social in scope."¹⁴

State Legislation and Adult Education

Everett C. Preston, Director, Division of Adult Education, New Jersey Department of Education, made a ten-year study, 1936-1946, finding provisions of adequate financial support for the leadership and services authorized by legislation.

¹⁴Annual Report of The Fund for Adult Education, 1951, pp. 11-12.

The data for 1936 were taken from Handbook of Adult Education¹⁵ and the information for 1946 is based upon replies to a letter of inquiry sent out by the commissioner of Education of the State Department in New Jersey in March, 1946. It was found that the following states provided state financial aid and support for community programs and for state leadership in the development of adult education: California 1936-State funds used for evening schools as for day schools. Three full-time state supervisors of adult classes; total enrollment, all classes, 319,200.

State Apportionments

The 1946-State apportionments to school districts on account of adult education made on the basis of units of average daily attendance in each school district. Indicated enrollment in adult classes this year, about 600,000; average daily attendance 50,000; state apportionments to districts on account of adult education, about \$4,500,000.

New York-- The 1936-State financial aid gives no aid to local communities for adult education, while

¹⁵Dorothy Rowden, Editor, Handbook of Adult Education, American Association for Adult Education, 1936, pp. 169-79.

1946-State financial aid is given to any district maintaining an approved adult education class. The rate is \$2.50 for each such class multiplied by the number of class periods. Approximately \$1,000,000 will be paid during the current year in state aid for adult education to communities.

Pennsylvania-- The 1936-State law makes extension education for adults part of state program of free public instruction. State gives aid to local communities for adult education, ranging from 25 per cent to 75 per cent of minimum salary of teachers. The 1946-School laws make extension education (public adult education) an integral part of the public schools. Aid to local communities continues in the form of a percentage reimbursement of teachers' salaries ranging from 25 per cent in large, wealthy school districts to approximately 100 per cent in smaller and poorer ones.

Wisconsin-- The 1936-State aid reimburses part of cost of adult education, but local communities spend at least six times as much as the state contributes. The 1946-State appropriation of approximately \$400,000 is provided for state aid for schools of vocational and adult education.

Washington-- In 1936, classes were offered in home economics and vocational subjects. The state department

supplied services of specialists in parent education who conducted training classes for leaders in eleven selected centers. In 1946, attendance of adults in night school classes or in part-time classes is accredited for apportionment purposes on the basis of one hour as equivalent to one-fifth day's attendance in the elementary school.

Connecticut-- In 1936, the state paid \$4.00 for each pupil in average attendance for 75 sessions of two hours each; also 50 per cent of salaries of 21 local directors of adult education, properly certified and approved. In 1946, Chapter 253 of the Public Acts of 1943 provides for the state financial support of community programs of adult education.

Michigan-- During 1936, the State makes no financial provision for adult education classes, but state officials encouraged local communities to continue and enlarge adult education programs. In 1946, there was appropriated from the general fund for each of the fiscal years ending June 30, 1945, and 1947, the sum of \$250,000 for the purpose of providing an experimental program in adult education.

Summary-- The summary of state adult education legislation given above in the notes for 1946 indicates that the states of California, New York, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Connecticut, Washington, and Michigan have in recent years

most adequately provided state financial aid and support for community programs and for state leadership in the development of adult education.

Among the states in which the legislatures were currently considering adult education, bills looking toward increased financial support for adult education were New Jersey, Colorado, and Florida.

In final summary, it may be said that the changes observable in the 1936-46 decade, and events which have taken place, give ample evidence that there will be constantly increased efforts throughout the country to promote state legislation favorable to adult education. Furthermore, the civic, social, and educational leaders who are working for this legislation are determined that it shall not only authorize community programs of adult education, but shall also provide adequate financial aid and support for the development of the programs.¹⁶

University Evening Colleges

Bee Day, administrative assistant of Dallas College of Southern Methodist University, after one year leave of absence to study university evening schools,

¹⁶Mary L. Ely, Editor, Handbook of Adult Education in the United States, Institute of Adult Education, New York, 1948, pp. 202-213.

returned by Dallas, September 14, 1952, to resume her duties. Day participated in a research program conducted by the American University Evening Colleges' group on a grant from Ford Foundation. In this tour, Day visited twelve university evening schools from the city college of New York to the University of Southern California. The study determined areas to be used in working out units for adult education classes.

The major findings of this observation are:

(1) adults are going back to school, because they are finding schools tailored to their needs and interest; (2) it's a growing trend; (3) promotion in their jobs; (4) lack of educational backgrounds and want to fill in gaps; (5) some have nothing else to do in their spare time; (6) a good way to make new friends.

It was emphasized that the courses differ from those offered on college campuses. The classes recognize the students' broader background of experience. The students are interested in the state of the world--our American philosophy, and why our government is the way it is.¹⁷

Charles A. Bryant, director of Dallas independent

¹⁷"Adult Education Tailored to Fit Needs of Students," Dallas Morning News, September 14, 1952, Part VI, p. 5.

school district's public evening schools, tells of a survey of two main Dallas education institutions. Roughly, 6,700 adults attend classes. Its student body includes a 55-year old woman who has never learned to read or write, and a Polish Ph. D., and an ex-concentration camp inmate who wants to benefit from the school's free "Citizenship for Foreigners" courses, and a 70-year old salesman aiming for a degree in chemistry.

The Dallas College, which is one of the three in the state to be accepted as a member of the National Association of University Evening Colleges meet three nights a week, and the classes of the public evening schools have made Dallas, "a leader in providing adult education in the state."¹⁸

Charles W. Deslandes, announced the opening of adult evening classes for 1952-1953, September 8, and will offer four terms of 12 weeks each. Classes are open to all persons 16 years or over who desire them, and depend upon an enrollment not less than 17 students. Courses include pre-high school subjects, high school subjects, and vocational subjects.¹⁹

¹⁸"School Bells to Ring for Daddies and Moms," Dallas Morning News, Sunday, September 14, 1952, Part I, p. 9.

¹⁹"Adult Evening Classes Begin," Houston Informer, September 13, 1952, p. 1.

The community adult-education program at Sac City, Iowa, which has operated successfully for about 20 years, suggests this sample program of six steps to meet varying adult needs: First step involves the organization of a community adult education council composed of representatives of varied interests in the community. Second step is the designation of a full time or co-ordinator, after general plans have been discussed and understood by council. Third step involves conducting a survey to ascertain the needs and interests which might be met through providing an adult education program. Fourth step deals with the selection of leadership talent and the adoption of a plan for financing the program. Step five--A short intensive-training program for the leaders should precede the actual organization and scheduling of groups. Sixth step involves a continuing process of evaluation for intelligent and careful replanning.

In judging the proper balance of the adult education program in terms of its offerings, the following areas might be considered as guide posts: (1) home and family living; (2) current, international, national, state, and community problems, (3) vocational retraining, and job improvement; (4) creative diversion in recreation; (5) education for special groups like the foreign-born, illiterate, and physically handicapped; (6) education for

workers; (7) education for social and technological changes and (8) civil defense.²⁰

Conclusion-- A program of adult education, in home and family life in a community will have three major tasks: (1) to arouse the interest of a considerable number of adults in the re-examination of their practices and relationships in family living; (2) to aid the adults to re-interpret for themselves the meaning of democracy in family life; (3) to aid each person in reconstructing his own behavior as a family member so that he becomes continually more willing and able to share with other adults and with the younger members of the family in the on-going experience of working for the common good.

Such a program of education for adults should recognize the voluntary nature of the enterprise and should start at the point where the adults are interested in furthering their own education.

In an adult education program the adults should cooperate in setting the goals to be achieved, and in determining the larger outlines of the plans to be followed to reach these goals. The program may proceed slowly, for too many adults show little purposefulness and but passive

²⁰Roben J. Maaske, An Adult-Education Program, (an article) National Education Association Journal, April, 1951, pp. 252-53.

interest in planning for their own education.

In brief, the point of view in this chapter is:

(1) Democracy is the best way of life to develop and enlarge human personalities. (2) A program must both respect and use the intelligence and experience of the adults themselves in choosing the goals and the procedures that will aid in their own education. (3) In such a program emphasis will be placed upon widening the area of interests which the adult participants hold in common and upon increasing use of individual intelligence in the solving of problems of the group.

CHAPTER III

GROUPS STUDIED IN THE COMMUNITY

Groups to be Served

The provision of educational services to community groups is not a prominent feature of public-school practice. Traditionally public schools have been organized on the promise that those to be educated must assemble in classes at the school building for instruction. Yet, in the absence of compulsory attendance laws, experience shows that ordinarily only a minor fraction of the adult population feels the need for education sufficiently to seek it under those circumstances. On the other hand, enough experience has accumulated to prove that a considerable fraction of all adults can be involved in educational activities taken to them as they meet in their various organized and unorganized groups. An examination of such groups will begin to reveal the possibilities.

Organized Groups

In contrast to the people of many other countries, Americans have long been noted for their habit of voluntarily banding together into groups having officers and some purpose requiring meetings on a weekly, monthly, or

other periodic basis. Sample studies and complete counts of the population and analysis of membership lists of organizations show that roughly half of all adults in the typical community participates more or less regularly in the activities of one or more organized groups in addition to church-connected activities. The proportion varies widely depending upon sections of the country and educational level. In some places fewer than one-fourth of the adults belong to such groups, and in others as many as nine-tenths belong to some organization. Usually only a small proportion of out-of-school young adults up to age 30 belong to such groups, and sometimes as high as 25 per cent. Middle-aged people belong in greatest numbers, and participation by older adults runs slightly less. A considerable drop off occurs as old age is approached.

These organized groups flourish in communities of all sizes. Eighty have been identified in this rural community of less than 2,000 people.

The purpose of these groups include the following:

Recreation, fellowship, self-improvement, service to others, protection of occupational and property interest, political action, conservation of natural and human resources, and promotion of ideas of all sorts.

Current events and public affairs groups, parents' organizations, mothers' clubs, literary societies, luncheon and service clubs, labor unions, farm clubs, men's and women's

clubs, professional associations, volunteer service groups, hobby and interest groups, veteran and patriotic associations, fraternities, sororities, alumni clubs, lodges, and benefit associations are some of the major types having educational purposes.¹

Insofar as an organization has education as one of its purposes, or can be induced to accept such a purpose, an opportunity usually exists for improvement in the quality and content of the learning. This provides opportunity for an imaginative adult educator to get in some good work.

Un-Organized Groups

Besides the formally organized groups every community has a much larger number of informal or un-organized groups. They are groups of people who assemble at regular or irregular intervals, as follows:

Daily, weekly, or frequently on the street corner, during the lunch hour, after dinner; at the corner drugstore; on the front porch; at a neighbor's for an afternoon of sociability, sewing, and tea; at a member's home for playing cards, and other situations of a few minuets to several hours' duration chiefly for recreational and companionship purposes. Among adolescents such groups are frequently known as "gangs."²

¹Kempfer, op. cit., pp. 4-5.

²Ibid., p. 5.

Un-organized groups, form chiefly because their members enjoy one another's companionship. Congeniality rather than conscious purpose or activity is the dominant attraction that holds them together. They have their own self-selected functions and interests. Together with the family they are all-important in the formation and maintenance of personality and are of considerable importance in the structure and functioning of the community. They seldom have a set program, although their activities are likely to form a consistent pattern. Because of the strong personal ties of the members, these groups provide an approach of great value in adult education and cultural development. Frequently they are difficult to identify, although each is likely to have a recognized leader.

The Opportunity for Educational Service

Both the organized and un-organized groups provide an opportunity for the local director of adult education with realistic vision to multiply his area of service several fold. Over a period of years the school can develop a set of educational services for community groups which will make it what it is basically intended to be-- the recognized central agency concerned with education in the community.

Three facts justify provision by the school of educational services to outside groups, as follows:

1. The school is a public educational agency from which the community, if adequate support is given, has full right to expect educational services to be available to the total community.
2. The school represents (or should represent) the largest concentration in the community of specialized personnel familiar with educational methods, techniques, and materials.
3. A large segment of the community can be reached and served with less cost for housing, promotion, and similar expenditures than would prevail if the same numbers were served in conventional evening schools.³

In addition, if community groups know that they can turn to the schools for competent help in their educational work, there will come into being a general strengthening of public attitude favorable toward the schools. Under such conditions the schools are very likely to find that they have a deeper reservoir of support for their educational service should be provided solely for its public-relations value, this incidental result should not be forgotten.

Organized groups are usually easier to serve, although the larger and stronger of the unorganized groups

³Ibid., p. 6.

offer opportunity for considerable informal education; many more of them would provide such opportunity if we knew more about effective techniques for involving them in learning activity. Educational work with the informal groups must be much more imaginative than that in the conventional evening school. The newer methods in social case work, social group work, and community organization are useful. Nothing can be imposed from without; any change must come from within the group. Planning must be with the group. Outside leaders desiring to work with these groups must have great persistence, must maintain relationships over a long period of time for maximum results, and must come skilled in winning their confidence and in repeating the independence and leadership of the groups. Only those services which the groups desire will prove acceptable, although skilled leaders will be able to instill the desire.

One major way of providing educational assistance is by helping group leaders to develop their capacities. In fact, on some sociological settings the best, if not the only, way to make any headway with these groups is through their accepted leaders. County agents in home-making and agriculture owe no small part of their success to their ability to identify and train leaders of home-maker and farmer groups. Developing leaders who can return

to their groups and teach a skill, develop a viewpoint, or start a new habit is an important means open to the adult education director for reaching a large number of people. Methods of working within formal groups are not highly standardized; they call for a great deal of flexibility and tailoring to the situation. Work, with these groups is relatively new to educators, but it is difficult to over-emphasize the importance of educational services to them. Persons desiring to work with these groups should have a thorough theoretical and practical grounding in group work and community organization.

Among the programs reported in this study parent groups such as:

Parent teachers' associations and mothers' clubs are most frequently served by providing leadership training, consultation services, and luncheon and service clubs; public affairs groups; study clubs and church groups. Organizations less mentioned were fraternities and lodges, farm organizations, and governmental groups.*

The number of organizations depends somewhat upon the size of the community, of course.

Principles

Four principles derived from experience reported by

*Ibid., p. 7.

schools are recommended by the author, for those who wish to provide educational services to community groups are:

1. Stick to education--not propaganda. -- As much or more vigilance must be exercised here as in the selection of instructional materials offered free for use by children and youth. Some groups requesting help will be more interested in spreading a fixed answer to a problem than in true education. The co-operative search for truth, the right answer, and the best way should predominate--not a predetermined line of thinking. Any competent educator usually can recognize the difference without difficulty.
2. Do not infringe on the autonomy of the group served. -- Each group has a right to retain its own full independence, its own program and direction, and to accept only as much professional assistance as it wishes. The relationship must be democratic. The school can exercise no arbitrary control--its only approach to influencing the group is the educative one. Usually the group continues to meet on its accustomed schedule in its regular place.
3. Stay in the background as much as possible. -- Let volunteer members in the group rather than the paid professional workers have the credit and praise. Among the skills of the competent educator is that of inducing others to act, to experience, to change, and to increase their ability to help others change their behavior.
4. Tailor the educational service to fit the need. -- Skills in discerning the educational needs of groups are somewhat different from those ordinarily utilized by the teacher or the registrar of an evening school, but they can be cultivated and improved.⁵

⁵Ibid., p. 8.

Kinds of Services

Training for Leadership in Community Organizations

One major way to improve the quality of educational experience in groups is through direct training of group leaders. An analysis was made of a number of the above programs to see what training was provided other than the general public speaking courses which are offered in a great many adult schools. Some specialized groups of leaders, their training needs, and the types of leadership training given to serve those needs are described below.

Organization officers-- Common observation reveals that a great many officers of community organizations are inexperienced and inept in the arts and skills of group leadership, organization, and administration. Frequently, there is no training provided for the new officer. Chairman of some groups need instruction and practice in parliamentary procedure; secretaries need to know efficient methods of keeping minutes and records; treasurers need appropriate methods of keeping financial accounts; all of them and others need to understand the club organization and internal relationships. Some of the specific skills can be taught in one session, while others may take more time. Improved competence of officers will mean more

efficient operation of their organizations which in the aggregate represent a good percentage of the population.

Program planners-- Program chairmen, executive committees, and general officers usually have most of the responsibility for program planning.

General meetings especially are likely to provide opportunity for educational activity; it is in these that most educational enrichment is possible. A variety of types of instruction can be used to increase the competence of these leaders in building more educationally worthwhile programs; among them are demonstrations of effective techniques for group involvement, instruction in organizing the program of meetings, revelation of available program resources, and help with evaluation.⁶

A great deal of this can be done in groups although much can also be done on a consultant basis.

An example of group training is provided by the Workshop for Program Planners organized by the Sheboygan, Wisconsin School of Vocational and Adult Education which meets once a week for a total of five evenings. The Workshop acquaints leaders of adult and youth groups with:

Techniques and materials of program planning, using materials, group leadership, promotion and publicity, parliamentary procedure, and discussion leadership. Members have the opportunity to present programs and

⁶Ibid., p. 9

promotional literature for the examination and comment of the rest of the group. Each member participates in the planning of programs, using study materials, conducting group activities and other experiences common to those responsible for program planning. Free materials, including a mimeographed resume of each meeting, are distributed.⁷

Group workers.-- Several schools reported training programs for special leaders such as scout masters, recreation leaders, Sunday-school teachers, and other group workers. Usually participants in these programs have been previously selected for the specific work.

Leadership training institutes for group workers are most frequently found among the adult schools in California, New York, and Michigan. Sometimes they serve a general class of workers such as follows:

Parent teacher association officers, scout-masters, service club chairmen, playground leaders, camp counselors and directors, or recreation workers; at other times they are tailor-made to meet a specific organizational need. It is common to hold an institute of several meetings at each of which an expert presents a topic for general discussions. Demonstrations, exhibits, films, and work sessions are often a part of such institutes. Religious training institutes for church school workers are frequently co-sponsored by the adult school and the area churches. For example, the Jackson County, Michigan School of Christian Living co-sponsored by the County

⁷Ibid., p. 9.

Council of Churches and the public schools each year gives several 5-night courses for church school teachers and leaders. Course subjects in recent years have included: Guiding Intermediates, Creative Activities, Character Education and the Home, Plans for Holding the Child's Interest, and Use of Visual Aids in the Church. Also, in Jackson the Scout Council and the school's co-sponsor courses for Boy and Cub Scout leaders.⁸

Council and committee members, participants, and technicians-- Educators serving on community councils or problem-solving committees can train their co-workers in community leadership by injecting educational methods at every appropriate opportunity and carefully explaining their operation and value. For example, surveys can be purely fact-gathering devices or, if properly designed, can be real educative experiences for the planners, the participants, and the whole community. Educators can help community leaders use methods and set up situations for solving group problems which will help the maximum number of people grow in the process. In fact, community councils provide one of the major ways for improving the life of the total community through education-and-action techniques. When it is remembered that a strong community council with all of its committees and sub-committees may involve as many as 200 or more people, the educational

⁸Ibid., p. 11.

values of working in and through such councils become apparent.⁹

An example of this type of activity is the Stephenson, Michigan Community Coordinating Council, which was organized in 1946, with a membership representing every social, civic, economic, and religious organization in the mid-county area. The Stephenson area was selected by the Michigan Department of Public Instruction as one of five communities which would be given the opportunity to organize their human resources to survey and study local needs in order that they might make the area a better place in which to live. Committees were set up to study education, religious life, community services, farm and land use, home and family living, trade and industry, and healthful living. The staff and resources of the school are playing important roles in this Community School Service Program as the project is called. The school has the opportunity of developing the abilities of numerous community leaders throughout the area.¹⁰

Improving Living Through Community Education

The writer believes, that a program of education

⁹Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁰Third Annual Report of the Stephenson Community School Service Program, Stephenson Community Coordinating Council, 1949, 18 Pp. mimeograph.

for adults should start at the point where interest, need, and educational background converge, then the task of one who is to give leadership in curriculum planning is to find what point in their experience, in attitudes, and in abilities has been attained by the group with whom he is planning.

Improved nutrition and health form the center of activity in the writer's community. The superintendent of schools has realized that the health needs of his pupils were serious; teachers, pupils, and adults should work together for the betterment of home and family life. Suggestions for surveys, conferences and carefully planned action programs will lead to better living for the children and their parents.

This community, with not much cultural background, and mostly rural problems, has a population of about 3,000, with approximately one-third of this number Negroes. The income is derived largely from agriculture--tomatoes, cotton, poultry, sweet potatoes and vegetables. While living in an area suited to truck farming, most of the people in the community are eating less than half the amount of green vegetables needed. Since better health is revealed as a pressing need, the superintendent suggested that a trained nutritionist be obtained from the State Extension Service to assist in planning a health program for the community.

Other problems needing attention in the home and family life in this community as revealed in this study as Lyle has written:

1. Making the houses of one-eighth of the families more healthful places to live.
2. Developing an awareness of the importance of cultivating unique qualities of personality in adults and children.
3. Discovering and developing special talents of children and adults that might bring them and their families enjoyment.
4. Increasing the co-operation of all family members, especially of older children, in money management.
5. Increasing the disposition and ability of many families to plan together as well as to work together.
6. Increasing the opportunities and the desire of adults to carry on some activities of their own as expressions of their unique personalities.
7. Interesting the majority of these families in taking an active part in community improvement.
8. Awakenning the majority of the families to an intelligent concern for the welfare of others outside their own families and community.¹¹

These problems provide ample challenge to those concerned with building a curriculum for adult education in home and family life for this community. Since adult

¹¹Lyle, op. cit., pp. 110-111.

education is entirely voluntary, none of the problems can be solved unless the adults begin to recognize them as problems needing solution.¹²

Forums

Studebaker and Williams¹³ conducted for three years in 580 local communities in 38 states, public forum demonstrations. It was found that Federal emergency funds were made available by the office of Education to assist in the conduct of these demonstrations.

It was also found that plans and programs came in response to need. (1) Truth-seeking under competent guidance, (2) increased understanding of the problems which beset them and their communities, (3) help in their study and discussion of public affairs--of their problems.

The authors tried to put into brief and readable form that body of practical experience on which our agencies of public education may build permanent and growing programs for improved citizenship.

Studebaker¹⁴ learned that the Carnegie Foundation was interested in finding a way to meet the needs for

¹²Ibid., p. 111.

¹³Studebaker and Williams, op. cit., p. 7.

¹⁴Studebaker, op. cit., pp. 25-26.

Adult Civic Education, and the Foundation appropriated enough money to carry on an experiment in a typical American community. That community was Des Moines, Iowa.

In 1935, tens of thousands of young people and adults in Des Moines attended public forums for the discussion of social, political, and economic problems. The schoolhouses were appropriated there as fortress in the program to end civic illiteracy. Almost every night in the forum season, groups meet under trained forum leadership. The program is based on a broad foundation consisting of fortnightly neighborhood forums. Adults can attend these relatively small meetings held in places which are usually within walking distance of the homes in the vicinity.

Rich and poor, schooled and unschooled, these adults come together to educate themselves in the realities of economics and government in order that they may better discharge their civic responsibilities.

During a single school year approximately 575 forum meetings are held in this city of about 150,000 people, and at each meeting a competent, well trained, and well paid forum leaders in charge.¹⁵

Studebaker¹⁶ believes that educational opportunities should be carried into every community, that the people should be gathered in the school houses and other meeting places, confront them with all sides of public

¹⁵Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 25.

questions, stimulate them to debate and discuss among themselves.

A community-wide public-forum program makes it more difficult for unsound ideas to get accepted in the competition of a free and open market place.¹⁷

Studebaker in attempting to give the major purposes of the Des Moines experiment in community adult civic education through public-forums, was to demonstrate what could be done in a typical American city, so that the program would be taken up by other communities.

A Nation-Wide System of Public Affairs Forums

Franklin D. Roosevelt once said:
I believe there should be launched a long-time program through which there will be established forums as meeting places for the discussion of public questions in the questions in the cities, hamlets, and on the farms throughout the length and breadth of the land.¹⁸

Studebaker¹⁹ believes to create a nation-wide program with fairly equal opportunities to the masses, the program will have to be sponsored by some Federal agency. The agency in Washington established for such a purpose is

¹⁷Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 31.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 32.

the office of education. Studebaker proposes the establishment of a number of "experiment stations" financed by the Federal Government, but administered and completely controlled by the local education authorities.

Some of the benefits of a planned Nation-wide system of forums on public affairs are:

1. People in all sections of the country will come to look at public problems from a national instead of a sectional point of view. The understanding of the problems of various parts of the country will dispell the foolish notion that one section can profit at the expense of the others. People will begin to learn that we cannot grow rich by picking each other's pockets.
2. The American people will begin to reclaim the essential equipment of a democratic form of government, the ability of the citizenry to discuss problems in public. Once again we may witness independent Americans standing on their own feet in their public forums speaking their minds to one another.
3. A tolerance and balance ought to grow out of these forums as they have in Des Moines. Once the rabble-rouser is faced with a panel and a free open forum, people will fear him less, and perhaps stop building him up with denials of his civil liberties.
4. The action gathering of Americans, mass meetings, political conventions, etc., will begin to take on a more intelligent atmosphere.
5. After a few years of national adult civic education conducted on a professional basis in public forums under democratic control, the demagogue with his cheap but effective bag of tricks will find himself facing different audiences.

6. Certainly, we can expect that very shortly our people will express a new enthusiasm and interest in public affairs. The public business is the first business of the American people and it deserves the very best leadership our democracy can produce.²⁰

Forum leaders are not to be engaged to tell people what to think, but to help people organize their thinking on public affairs. The reason that forum leaders will avoid the former and follow the later is that the American people will insist that they do so.

Conclusion-- This study by Studebaker is interesting, because it brought out that no one community, section, nor race needed public forums, but insisted that the program should be nation-wide.

Studebaker was concerned first with well trained and well paid leaders. An illustration of the Des Moines, Iowa community-wide program, and the financing of same by the Carnegie Foundation was given, and it was suggested that a Nation-wide program be sponsored by some Federal agency.

Audio-Visual Aids in Adult Education

Film Forums

A number of experimental film forums which were

²⁰Ibid., pp. 34-35.

conducted by different library centers between 1941 and 1944 were reported by various authors to be definitely worthwhile. The results realized by these forums support the conclusion that films draw people, impart knowledge, and serve as a good springboard for discussion.²¹

Canadian experience with film forums indicated that:

They are effective, that they bring people out, and that they stimulate discussion. Also pointed out was a main trend toward the increasing integration of films into community programs of education and action.²²

On the basis of several experiments, Bingham reported that,

As a rule films present problems and issues clearly and dramatically; that participation in discussion is usually more general when films are used.²³

Miller concluded that:

The film provides an emotional impact and that the educational value of the discussion depends on skill in using the film.²⁴

Treash added that:

²¹Review of Educational Research (Adult Education) Vol. XX, No. 3, June, 1950, pp. 221-2. Bibliography No. 20, 25, 55, and 56.

²²Ibid., p. 216.

²³Ibid., p. 216, Bibliography No. 7.

²⁴Ibid., p. 216, Bibliography No. 47.

Such topics as labor management, city government, and race relations have greater appeal than do those pertaining to United Nations, world security, and housing.²⁵

Sheats pointed out:

As an informational medium alone the usefulness of films as a springboard for discussion in large groups is limited.²⁶

The conclusions show that there is a need for better films and more and better leadership. More encouraging still is the fact that in almost every area of adult education there is a deep-rooted interest in the improvement of method and recognition of the need for careful research as a prerequisite to this improvement.

Adult Educator in Community

Conditions in any community will require all the ingenuity which an adult educator possesses. There is no one plan, one program, or one project which can be put into effect in all places. The leader must expect to fit into a given community those portions of the ideal, gloriously planned, which are best suited to that community.

²⁵Ibid., p. 216, Bibliography 73.

²⁶Loc. cit., Bibliography 65.

In the long run the success of a project rests primarily upon the skill of the person responsible for building a particular program as differentiated from all others.

First and foremost, the adult education organizer must know the community and know it intimately. He must not only be in possession of the facts about it that may be gained from the Census, the County Agent, or the Bureau of Labor Statistics--these are all valuable--but he must also acquaint himself with even more essential information, he must know the habits of the human beings with whom he would work. For example, he must be familiar with the usual dinner hour of the community. Train schedules then become important. Commutation may be in two directions, both toward and away from the central community. If he is planning a program for young married women, he must know if mothers of small children can be away from home in the afternoon or just before the dinner hour. If the women take care of their own children, they can bring them along with them. A play hour for the children can be arranged to relieve mothers to join study groups. Here mothers will learn under expert leaders, many facts concerning child guidance.²⁷

Hundreds of people in rural communities are anxious to secure information and to broaden their understanding. These, often have more receptive attitudes toward adult education than persons living in congested sections. The desire for knowledge in our rural communities is more apt to turn into cultural channels than it is among many of

²⁷Dorothy Hewitt and K. F. Mather, Adult Education A Dynamic for Democracy, pp. 28-29.

the groups in our cities.

Although no two communities are exactly alike, large cities, towns, or the countryside, it is essential to remember that human nature is fundamentally much the same wherever it is found.

Hewitt and Mather²⁸ in recommending a program for adult education directly approached the problem with the recognized need in the community, and advised against discouragement to any interested group. They concluded that:

Consultation with community leaders takes time. It may seem to slow down the thing that we, as adult educators, are trying to do and which we believe is urgently needed. We cannot expect, however, to accomplish every thing in a week or a month. The end is so valuable that to attain it requires an expenditure of time, thought, and energy in proportion to the value of the ideal toward which we are striving. Because all three are involved in this development, we must remember the fact that creative work is slow, that it takes time for things to grow and that, after all, education is a growth process.²⁹

Although the concerns of modern adult education are not only with empty minds but also with very full minds. Thomas Hardy has clearly pointed out what is as true now as when it was written; namely, "That by the very nature

²⁸Ibid., p. 36.

²⁹Loc. cit.

of our educational systems, there is no foundation for fear that there will be an over-supply of adult education opportunities, when education is taken to mean, not preparation for life, but life itself."³⁰

If the interest in improved community living were to grow as desired, in five years, one might expect to see this adult education program include the following:

1. An annual adult night school including at least one forum on some phase of family life; a class for young married couples dealing with some aspect of successful family life; classes dealing with consumer problems, economic and social problems; and classes in vocational subjects such as agriculture, business education, and homemaking skills. All of these classes and forums would be planned by the adult education council.
2. The home economics teacher acting as a consultant to mothers of the girls and boys in her classes, often inviting mothers to see demonstrations or displays prepared by high school students or to hear or take part in group discussions of these students.
3. Scheduled evenings throughout the school year when the farm shops and the home economics laboratories are available to adults who want to learn to do their own home repairs, remodeling, or construction of needed articles; an information center maintained by the home economics department and available at certain hours so that any one in the community could obtain advice or information on homemaking problems.³¹

³⁰Ibid., p. 40.

³¹Ibid., pp. 20-21.

CHAPTER IV

TECHNIQUES FOR THE STUDY

The Questionnaire Results

In order to get the viewpoint of patrons of the district, the writer sent questionnaires to 108 families in the Timpson School District and 92 were returned.

This questionnaire dealt with the family education, a desire to increase their education as was found to be 100 per cent in question three, Table I; their present knowledge proved to be a handicap with 38 men or 88.1 per cent and 44 women or 90 per cent: Their interest in some particular subject, their thought of Forums or discussion groups on considering important questions of interest in the community, general interest in club organizations and other community activities.

The latter part of the questionnaire was devised to discover if these adults had any leisure time in the evening, and if adult classes were offered in what they needed would they attend. The details of the procedure used in devising this questionnaire together with a copy of the final form may be found in the appendix.

The Interview

Bingham and Moore¹ in their How to Interview, found that the interview by sociologists and psychiatrists to be a reliable and fruitful technique for securing many intimate details about the personal and family life of people. Bingham and Moore, after discussing the uses of the interview in a wide variety of situations, concluded:

Our survey of the personal interview as a means of fact finding leads to broad conclusions. The chief of these is, that contrary to common assumption, the interview, skillfully used, has its greatest value in obtaining knowledge, not about specific events but about an interviewee's own attitudes, feelings, and customary behavior. . . . Feelings and attitudes. . . . have been found to reveal themselves in personal interview with considerable clarity and correctness. This is the area in which the interview as a fact-finding instrument has its greatest value.²

There are seven different communities in the writer's district, and it is a very difficult task to find many patrons at home. There were twenty interviews made successfully in the seven districts.

¹Walter V. Bingham and Bruce V. Moore, How to Interview, pp. 247-248. Taken from Mary S. Lyle, Education for Democracy in Family Life, p. 27.

²Mary S. Lyle, Education for Democracy in Family Life, p. 27.

TABLE I

THE QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Questions		Men	Women
1. Number sent out	108	58	50
Number returned	92	43	49
2. Graduates of a high school		2	4
2a Graduates of college		5	5
3. Desiring to increase their knowledge		48	42
4. Number who thought they were handicapped by incomplete education		38	44
5. Interested in some particular subject		43	49
6. Number who thought that forums for con- sidering important questions such as social, economic, and political would help community		43	49
7. Number belonging to Lodges and P. T. A.		43	34
8. Number that took part in community activities		20	20
9. Number that would attend an adult educa- tion class if formed in community		36	42
10. Number that have leisure time in evening		36	30
11. Number in different families desiring to attend adult classes		43	77
12. Number that thought some field of study would help them with their household duties		--	49
Expressed Needs			
English		2	9
Reading		25	19
Arithmetic		10	8
Spelling		1	8
Do not need		5	5
Total		43	49

The interviews were very informal and were made without taking any notes, but very detailed report of the information received was written as soon as possible after each interview. Three places visited, the housewives were very dilatory about answering questions. It was later found that serious illness of a family member was the reasons for the actions of two of them. Family troubles were found to be the cause of the other case.

Some of the key questions used were as follows:

1. What home activities do you find it wise to perform? (e.g., canning, baking, sewing, laundry, gardening, poultry raising, etc.)
2. Do you find owning or renting your home more desirable?
3. What magazines and newspapers do you take and like to read?
4. What programs do you like to follow on the radio, if any? Why?
5. How large is your family? (Number and ages of children?)
6. Your education? Your husband's education? (Extent and nature, if possible?)
7. Your opinion of your community, what it offers you and what it does not offer you for home

TABLE II

Interview of Twenty Families												
Age of groups	Families			Educational Status of Adults								
	No. of children	No. of families	Children's ages	Elementary			High School			College		
				Grades	Men	Women	Year	Men	Women	Year	Men	Women
17-55	0	4	-	3rd	1	0	1st	2	2	1st	1	0
20-24	14	10	6wks.to 4 yrs.	5th	0	1	2nd	4	-	0	0	0
26-38	10	6	1 yr. to 20 yrs.	8th	1	0	3rd	2	1	0	0	0
							4th	10	16	0	0	0
Total	24	20			2	1		18	19		1	

life?³

8. Your opinion of adult classes?

As Lyle states:

Many other statements and many variations of these questions were used to solicit the information desired in a smooth and easy way without putting the interviewee on the defensive or making her feel uncomfortable. A general atmosphere of sharing in a friendly chat was always sought, and few direct questions were asked until good rapport was secured.⁴

Usually questions one and five were the first asked.

Data concerning home conveniences and size and condition of the house were secured by observation, by picking items up from the conversation, or by questions such as, "You do have a big house to care for, don't you?" or "Have you found an electric refrigerator a good investment?"

All homes visited the wives were contacted. Four families did not have any children, but the husbands and wives of each family did not finish high school and thought an adult program was needed.

The husband of one family was 21 years of age and finished the tenth grade. The wife was 17 years of age

³Ibid., pp. 31-32. Questions 2, 6, and 7.

⁴Ibid., p. 32.

and finished the eleventh grade.

Another family the husband was 55 years old. The wife thought that he finished the third grade. The wife was 50 years old and quit school in the fifth grade.

The third family, the husband was 35 years of age and was in the tenth grade when he quit school. The wife was 30 years old and dropped out of school in the twelfth grade.

The fourth family interviewed, the husband was 19 years old and finished the eleventh grade. The wife was 18 years old and quit school in the twelfth grade. There were no children when the interview was made.

In the other sixteen homes visited, there were ten of these homes that the children were too young to be in school. Their ages were from six weeks to four years of age. Each family was interested in an adult education program if homemaking and child care were offered.

Six of the fathers had finished high school but were interested in adult classes. One wanted more reading; three wanted more arithmetic; one, more agriculture, and one, more spelling. All of their ages were from 20 to 24 years of age.

Of the four fathers who did not finish high school, two were 20 years of age; one finished the tenth grade, and the other quit in the tenth grade. Another was 21 years of

age and finished the eleventh grade. The other one was 22 years of age and quit school in the ninth grade. All of their wives finished high school. All but one of these fathers were interested in an adult education program. This father never did like school, but the children to go when they were old enough.

The other six homes visited, one family had two children. The father was 29 years of age, and the mother was 27 years of age. The ages of the children were 8 and 6 years old. Both parents finished high school. The 8 year old child was in the third grade and the 6 year old was just a beginner.

Another family had three children. Their ages were one, three, and seven years old. The seven year old was in the first grade. The father was 26 years old and the mother was 24. They both finished high school.

Another family had one child seven years old. The father was 27 years of age, and the mother was 25 years of age. They both finished high school, and the father spent one year in college. The child was in the first grade.

Another family had one child 18 years old in the twelfth grade. The father was 38 years old and the mother was 34. The father finished the eighth grade, and the mother finished high school.

Another family had one child 16 years old and in the

tenth grade. The father was 38 years of age and finished high school. The mother was 32 years of age and finished the ninth grade.

Another family had two children; one child 18 years old and in the twelfth grade; the other one, 20 years old and not in school but quit in the twelfth grade. The father was 38 years old and the mother, 38 years old. They both finished the ninth grade.

Of these 20 families which were interviewed, 10 or 50 per cent wanted adult education.

In these communities there are very few children. That is the reason the schools were moved.

"Low income, lack of beauty, along with dirt and disorder would certainly exert a depressing influence on personality and intellectual growth in four of these homes."⁵

Eight or 40 per cent of these families owned their own homes. Eight families were just paying monthly rent. Four or 20 per cent of these families were farming on the one-half basis.

Six or 30 per cent of these homes were very well furnished, from five to six rooms, screen doors and windows, electric lights and radios. Five or 25 per cent had telephones, automobiles with garages, and electric refrigerators.

⁵Ibid., p. 45.

Eight of the renters owned automobiles while five did not have garages for their cars. Electric lights and radios were found in these homes.

It was found that these home owners and two of the renters took some kind of newspaper. One home did not have anything to read, not even a Bible.

During the interviews, the women all but one (and that one thinks that the teachers are responsible for their school being moved out of the community) disclosed considerable information about the extent to which they shared in the family tasks and planning. The interviewer was very careful to show neither approval nor disapproval of sharing as a principle of family living and to get most of the information by asking only how the homemaker usually managed certain things as gardening, raising chickens, canning, etc.

Not many hobbies or special talents were found. Most stated that one thing appealed to their interest as well as the other.

Three families had become disgusted with farming, and two of the families when interviewed were planning on going to the city soon.

When interviewed the opinion of each family was favorable to adult classes. The ones that had finished high school felt the need of more training, and would

attend classes, if held at night.

In conclusion, the physical environment of three homes was not conducive to healthful living in the twenty homes visited. The physical environment provided no intellectual growth in the form of books, magazines, newspapers, radios, space for no privacy to enjoy these if in possession, and actual promotion of stimulation to intellectual growth seemed doubtful.

The pattern of living in six of these homes furnished stimulation to meeting new situations with intelligence and foresight.

There appeared to be no encouragement for the development of special talents, hobbies of either parents or children.

Concern for the welfare of the community or the world-at-large was limited to a few families. For the most part they were not opposed to improvement in the community; they were unconcerned about it.

The techniques described here, each brought out certain information of the communities in the Timpson School District could be appraised. This appraisal could serve as a basis for suggesting an adult education program for the communities.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

This study was conducted with the idea of improving the educational standing of the nature of the adult population of Timpson, Texas.

The communities of the Timpson Public School District were selected for several reasons. The most important of them was the fact that the writer, as a public school teacher felt a particular responsibility for studying the home and family life of the children being taught daily from the different communities as one basis for attempting to bring about a program of adult education.

One assumption basic to the study reflects this philosophy as Lyle¹ concluded: "Education, as a continuous process which aids individuals from birth to death in the reconstruction of their personalities, should seek to promote consciousness in individuals at all levels of maturity and in every area of living."

It is the writer's belief that adult education should start at the stage where the people are in their thinking, practices, and interest in their own education. Also such a program should strive to help the adults to

¹Lyle, op. cit., p. 124.

become aware of the possibilities for enriching personality through working and thinking with others, through applying intelligence to the solution of problems, and thinking together about the ends and means of family living.

In order to know what was being done in various cities in this country and in some foreign countries a review of the work being done was studied with the idea in view of learning their methods and procedures in order that the same devices might be applied in the solution of the local problems of adult education.

It was not believed that all could be overcome by education alone. However, it was believed that if the education program were purposefully planned by the people, with intelligent guidance from the school leaders, some progress could be made.

Enough experience has accumulated to prove that a considerable fraction of all adults can be involved in educational activities taken to them as they meet in their various organized and unorganized groups. Both the organized and unorganized groups provide an opportunity for a local director of adult education with realistic vision to multiply his area of service several fold. Over a period of years the school can develop a set of educational services for community groups which will make it what it is basically intended to be--the recognized central agency

concerned with education in the communities.

In order to more specifically determine the existing situation at Timpson and the attitude of the citizenry toward adult education, a questionnaire was sent out to 108 persons; 92 were returned, and the results were tabulated.

In addition to this, personal interviews were held with 20 families relative to their educational standings and as to their desires for more work in the field of education.

In answer to the problem undertaken, the following results were obtained:

1. The educational status of the Timpson community has improved much in the last ten years. Most any family contacted between the ages of 18 years to 35 years, the husband and wife have finished high school, and are interested in their children's education. Financial conditions have kept most of them from college.

From about 45 years on, the existing conditions educationally are below normal. Countless numbers are found that can not read, write, spell, and count well, and English usage is unknown.

2. The educational needs for most of the families

are more knowledge on health conditions, and the ones that are rearing children need more knowledge on child care.

3. In the light of these findings, the writer of this paper hereby recommends that an adult school might profitably be established and the following subjects given as follows:
Reading, agriculture, spelling, English, Child care, music, homemaking, and arithmetic.

Conclusion

It is the opinion of the writer of this study that the establishment of an adult school would do much to improve the intelligence of many and would elevate the citizenship of the communities, and they may be encouraged to improve the moral, health, economic, political, and religious standing, because any community without these qualities will deteriorate as to rating in the present social order, especially in rearing the future generation. With this knowledge the adults of Timpson should see the need of getting more training themselves.

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School District

San Francisco and Adult Education, San Francisco Unified
School District, 93 Grove Street, San Francisco,
California, June 30, 1949.

A P P E N D I X

PREPARATION OF THE
QUESTIONNAIRE

There were twelve questions listed to be sent to the patrons in the School District. The questions were stated in as simple language as could be stated, because so many of the patrons do not read and understand well.

The communities are all small and the organizations attended most are the churches and lodges. Very few women will attend the P. T. A. and no men, only the ones that are on the faculty.

The writer discussed the questionnaire with the County Supervisor to be sure that the statements as worded would not be too personal. When it seemed that the questionnaire would serve its purpose it was sent out. The final form of the questionnaire is as follows:

1. Name _____
2. Are you a graduate of a high school? _____
Of a college? _____
3. Do you have any desire to increase the knowledge which you now have? _____
4. Has there ever been a time in your life in which a lack of more knowledge proved a handicap to you?

5. Would you be interested in a study of some particular subject? _____ If so, what? _____

6. Do you think that Forums or discussion groups for considering important questions such as social, political, or economic would help your community?

7. What clubs or organizations, including church, do you belong to? _____
8. What part do you take in neighborhood or community activities? _____
9. If a class of Adult Education was formed in your community, would you attend? _____
10. Do you have some leisure time which you are not using in the evening? _____
11. How many adults in your family might attend adult classes? _____
12. Are there any fields of study that would help you with your work or household duties? _____
If so, what? _____