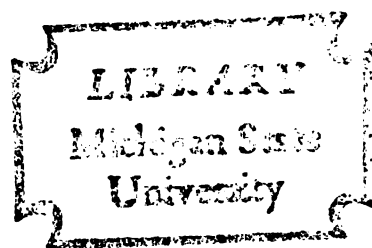


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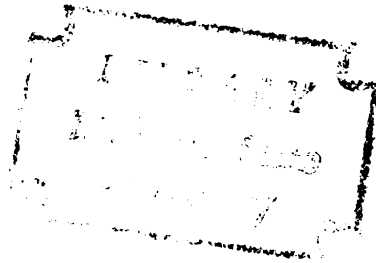


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A DESCRIPTION OF A PRESCHOOL
PROJECT FOR CULTURALLY
DEPRIVED CHILDREN

By,

Carol Lou Holt

A PROBLEM

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ABSTRACT

A DESCRIPTION OF A PRESCHOOL
PROJECT FOR CULTURALLY
DEPRIVED CHILDREN

by Carol Lou Holt

The Michigan State University Pilot Project for Children from Deprived Environments was established in response to the expanding concern in Michigan regarding the training of teachers for compensatory preschool education programs. The project was incorporated into the Home Management and Child Development Department's already existing preschool teacher-training program to include specific experience with disadvantaged preschool children and families for both the staff and students.

On the basis of findings from the literature and from visiting various on-going compensatory preschool projects, parameters in the areas of family economic status, race, family stability, age and sex of the children, and size of the class were specified for admitting children to the pilot project.

The group of enrollees consisted of fourteen preschool children: eight boys and six girls ranging in age from three years to five years and two months. There were

four white children, four Mexican children, four Negro children, and two children of racially mixed parentage, Negro and American Indian.

The intellectual level of the children ranged from 74 to 109 on the Stanford Binet Intelligence Score and from 69 to 105 on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. The mean I.Q. for the group ranked in the lowest quarter of the average range.

During the testing situation these children, as contrasted generally with middle-class children of the same age, appeared to have less familiarity with common objects in the environment. They were less free in expressing their imaginary activities, were more uncomfortable with unfamiliar activities and tended to avoid new learning situations rather than learn from them. They reasoned more on a concrete, functional basis. However, in the areas of rote memory, ability to follow directions, hand-eye coordinative tasks and simple tasks requiring a type of convergent reasoning, these children compared favorably with their peers representing different socio-economic levels.

The median educational level of the children's parents was 9.0 years. The occupations of the parents ranged from unemployed and recipients of welfare to skilled laborers. Except for one family, all the parents were married and living together. The number of children per family ranged from three to twelve.

The school personnel consisted of a director experienced in nursery school administration, one head teacher with previous training and experience with culturally deprived children and families, one graduate teaching assistant and one undergraduate teaching assistant (both in the field of child development and preschool education), one aide with nonprofessional experience in a preschool and one graduate student in speech therapy.

The daily and long-range program was planned and operated on the basis of five guidelines. The first guideline, promoting the growth of the whole child, emphasized physical and motor development and emotional, social, and intellectual development. According to the second guideline the program was developed from the child's immediate interests. The third guideline, planning a balanced program, provided for indoor and outdoor play, individual and group play, active and quiet play, play activities and routines, variety and repetition and daily and long-range planning. Following the fourth guideline, parents were involved in planning, operating and evaluating the program. And finally, community resources were utilized in daily and long-range planning. As the project continued throughout the ensuing years, further developments were incorporated. These included an increased enrollment of children, provision for a lunch program and a weekly staff meeting for discussion and evaluation of the program.

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INTRODUCTION

The current political interest in poverty has created an upsurge of national concern regarding the education of children from low-income families, especially during the preschool years. Coupled with current interest has been the establishment of numerous compensatory preschool programs throughout the country.

By virtue of the speed with which many programs have been established, question arises as to the adequacy of understanding of what children from impoverished environments are like and of what types of programs best suit their needs. Assuming that background information regarding such preschool children and existing compensatory programs would aid effective implementation of future programs, this study reviews literature and selected existing preschool programs concerning culturally deprived children.

In surveying the literature, the factors in a deprived environment which affect children's development, the learning patterns affected by cultural deprivation, and the objectives and curricula of three nationally known preschool programs have been reviewed. In addition, the impetus, procedures and results of the Michigan State University Pilot Project for lower-class preschool children have been described.

PART I. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

An overwhelming number of students in the American public educational system are not progressing normally in their academic achievement. These children are predominantly from low-income families. "Studies repeatedly show that the home is the single most important influence on the intellectual and emotional development of children, particularly in the preschool years" (6).

What, then, characterizes the low-income family so as to impede the academic achievement of these children? Bloom, Davis, and Hess suggest that many children from low-income families do not have prerequisite "experiences" at home which "transmit the cultural patterns necessary for the types of learning characteristic of the schools and the larger society" (6). It is on this basis that these children are termed "culturally deprived."¹

As a prerequisite to understanding, some of the factors contributing to the academic failure of these "deprived" children, an examination of literature related to the environmental milieu of the low-income family and of literature

¹"Culturally deprived," and other terms such as "experientially deprived" and "disadvantaged" are used interchangeably throughout the literature. In the text of this report these words are also used interchangeably except when specified in the context of the report.

related to the learning patterns as affected by cultural deprivation is necessary.

Existing research in the area of cultural deprivation seems to indicate that children from low-income families are often "experientially" deprived or "functionally" retarded by the time they enter the public school. Inherent in these research findings is the assumption that the lack of early experience in basic learning patterns is a handicapping or retarding factor to school achievement. An important implication, and indeed a current national trend, is that preschool programs might provide milieus which would promote the cognitive and affective development of children of low-income families so as to enhance their later learning.

By virtue of the nature of the family backgrounds and environmental conditions of experientially deprived children, it may be necessary to adapt conventional teaching methods, program emphasis and supplementary materials to the varied needs of these children. Therefore, three nationally known and representative preschool programs, designed specifically for deprived children, were reviewed on the basis of their objectives and curricula.

CHAPTER I

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AFFECTING CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT

Physical Characteristics of Poverty

The "culturally deprived" child is living in physical poverty. In a time when the vast majority of Americans are enjoying a period of national affluence and prosperity, approximately twelve million children under eighteen years of age are living in families which are economically deprived; that is, the incomes of these families "are very far below the standards which knowledgeable people deem to be even barely adequate . . . with respect to food, clothing, housing, medical care, education" (41). The definitions of economic deprivation based on annual money income varies from author to author depending upon the particular author's frame-of-reference; however, an annual family income of approximately \$3,000.00 has generally been accepted as a "poverty demarcation line" (14). As a result of economic deprivation, housing is inadequate; it is physically dilapidated and run-down; it is over-crowded, and this results in a severe lack of privacy (7, 41). Insufficient and inadequate food, clothing and medical care also are characteristic

of the low-income family and result in malnutrition and a high incidence of general physical deterioration.

For children of low-income families, public health statistics generally confirm the increased incidence of gross organ deficiencies (for example, dental problems, defective vision, impaired hearing) as well as diseases commonly associated with adverse economic circumstances, such as tuberculosis. In addition, there are a variety of illnesses of a debilitating nature that are commonly not treated in this group and sap their energies. Included here are various specific deficiency problems and parasitic invasions (6).

Sociological Characteristics of Poverty

Another characteristic of the impoverished which further complicates their adverse situation is their minority racial and ethnic background. According to Keyserling, approximately twenty-five percent of the poor are non-white, with fifty percent of all Negroes and Indians and thirty-three and one-third percent of all Puerto Ricans and Mexicans having incomes below the poverty demarcation line (41, 13).

In addition to the deprivation of basic physical necessities and the possible possession of an unfavorable racial and ethnic background, there are other characteristics which adversely affect the child from a low-income family. Family instability, as exhibited in the high incidence of desertion, separation, divorce, illegitimacy and excessive family size, exists for approximately one-fourth of the low-income families (41, 32, 37, 64, 7, 54, 13). Often the

educational background of the heads of low-income families is grossly deficient. According to Keyserling, approximately fifty-two percent of the poor have inadequate educational backgrounds. More specifically, of this group, two-thirds have less than an eighth grade education while an additional one-fifth have not more than a high school education (13).

Poverty is not static. It is a dynamic, interacting, complex and massive phenomenon. For poverty to exist and to be detrimental, it is not necessary that each of the characteristics mentioned above (i.e., family instability, educational deprivation) be present or functioning simultaneously. The importance is that the factors are very closely inter-related and have a constant effect upon each other. As with most behavioral science phenomena, it is assumed that causation of problems is multiple and follows with cultural deprivation. Cultural deprivation cannot and must not be equated with one single factor, but according to Bloom, Davis, and Hess, "should be defined in terms of characteristics of the individual and/or . . . [his] environment" (6).

Psychological Characteristics of Poverty

In addition to and in conjunction with the rather obvious external physical and sociological characteristics of poverty, there are some rather subtle and discreet aspects of deprivation which adversely affect the child. It

is the psychological climate of interaction within the impoverished home which is of concern at this point.

The child's cognitive and affective development during the preschool years is largely influenced by his primary group and his situational milieu (i.e., his parents, family and home environment). It has been largely through the study of the child's home environment that an understanding of his development has evolved.

The ways in which parents spend time with their children at meals, in play, and at other times during the day have been found to be central factors in developing skills which prepare children for school (6).

MacDonald, McGuire, and Havinghurst found that lower-class families, as compared with families of higher social class, have fewer activities within the home (44). Keller, in her study of the urban slum child, found that the lower-class child experienced minimal "shared family activity" and "had little sustained contact with adults" (40). Bloom, Whiteman, and Deutsch found that lower-class parents are often away from their children during breakfast, thus eliminating the possibility of any meaningful parent-child interaction during this period (7). These studies give support to the conclusion made by Bloom, Davis, and Hess that lower-class children, as compared with middle-class children, are deprived quantitatively of "direct interaction with their parents" (6). Consequently, the lower-class child is deprived of experience which facilitates and affects the

development of skills which are important in successful school achievement.

CHAPTER II

LEARNING PATTERNS AFFECTED BY CULTURAL DEPRIVATION

Sensory-Perceptual Development

Inter-related with deprivation of parent-child interaction and meager physical environment is impoverishment of sensory-perceptual stimulation. Stimulation, especially in the tactile, auditory and visual areas, is a basic prerequisite for language development and cognitive learning (6). It is through the sense of touch, tactile stimulation, that the child learns to discriminate various shapes and textures within the environment. Tactile perception is an inter-related aspect of general perception since the child learns, through his sense of touch, to relate how an object feels to how that same object looks or sounds. "Through the sense of vision, the child detects light, senses form, recognizes color and perceives depth and distance" (10). In order that the child's visual field have meaning for his perceptual development, there must be some degree of visual stimulation. In addition, "hearing is an important means by which the child relates himself to his environment and a factor in learning speech" (10). Auditory discrimination is learned through directing toward the child meaningful, informational

conversation in which he hears proper enunciation, pronunciation and grammar. A well integrated sensory-perceptual discrimination ability provides a base from which the young child can begin to develop language skills.

Children from low-income families have been found to be retarded in their sensory-perceptual discrimination by the time they enter the public school (6). Weaver, in a study of the psycholinguistic abilities of culturally deprived children, found that children from low-income families showed a deprivation of auditory-vocal channels, as exhibited on the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities (65). Irwin's study, relating infant speech and family socio-economic status, further supports the notion that deprived children are retarded in auditory discrimination development. Specifically, Irwin found that the quantity and frequency of sound types were significantly lower for children from low-income families, as compared with other children from higher socio-economic backgrounds (35, 36).

Deprivation of sensory-perceptual stimulation may be due, in part, to the lack of physical and material stimuli per se or to the lack of meaningful interaction with the physical and material environment and the individuals within the environment.

Deutsch reports that within the lower-class home "there is a scarcity of objects of all types . . . especially books, toys, puzzles, pencils and scribbling paper" (20).

Consequently, there is a lack of variety of tactile/visual stimuli which offer necessary prerequisite sensory stimulation for cognitive and affective learning. Deutsch elaborates further by stating that the child has "few opportunities to manipulate and organize the visual properties of his environment and thus perceptually to organize and discriminate the nuances of that environment" (20).

In regard to auditory discrimination, Deutsch suggests that the impoverished home is not one which is "verbally oriented." This is not to say that the home is a "quiet one." On the contrary, verbal noise is constantly emanating from the environment--from television, radio and the many individuals within the often over-crowded situation. It is not noise, however, from which the child effectively learns to discriminate various sounds and speech patterns. The noise of the deprived home creates a milieu in which the child seeks to "tune out" the world and thus to retreat into inattention, further impeding the possibility for meaningful auditory discrimination (20). The observations of Siberman and of Black concur with Deutsch's findings that the lower-class environment impedes auditory discrimination (59, 5, 20).

Jensen's study of the learning patterns of preschool children supports the general consensus of the literature that sensory-perceptual stimulation and general experience within the home environment are very basic and important prerequisites for various learning patterns (38).

Language Development

In discussing language development as a specific learning pattern, Bloom, Davis, and Hess conclude that the low-class child is generally deficient in sensory-perceptual skills which are prerequisites to adequate development of language. The authors state further that "the language deficiencies of deprived children are probably due to the ways in which language is used in the home and to the amount of practice children have in using language in the home" (6). In support of this conclusion, Milner, in a study relating reading readiness to patterns of parent-child interactions, found that upper/middle-class children consistently scored higher on the readiness test. It was found that the "verbal environment" (50) of the upper/middle-class child was much larger than that of the lower-class child; that is, in the homes of upper/middle-class children, more books were found, the parents read to their children more often, and there existed, quantitatively, more meaningful verbal interaction between parents and children during meals and throughout the day (50). Miller and McCarthy generally support the conclusion that the lower-class child, as compared with the middle-class child, is generally retarded in his language development (49, 46).

More specifically, the vocabulary of the deprived child is generally deficient, as compared with the vocabulary of his middle-class peer. Figure 1 found that the

deprived second-grader's vocabulary was approximately one-third of the vocabulary of the middle-class second-grader (25). Thomas, in a study of the language development of the lower-class child, found also that there was a quantitative deficit in vocabulary (62). Another indication of vocabulary limitations was found by John as a result of analyzing vocabulary measures on test scores on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Enumeration, I.Q., and WISC (39). The studies of Deutsch, Maliver, Brown, and Cherry further support the conclusion that the lower-class child is generally retarded in his quantitative vocabulary (22).

In addition to a general quantitative vocabulary deficit, the deprived child is limited in the range of his vocabulary. John concludes from her investigation of slum children that the "acquisition of more abstract and integrative language seems to be hampered by the living conditions in the homes of lower-class children" (39). The results of studies by Deutsch, by Brown, and by Black all seem to support the indication that the lower-class child has language deficits in abstract-categorical usage; that is, he has difficulty naming various objects and events, and he also has difficulty in grouping various objects into schemes (21, 11, 5). John states that "this type of learning requires specific feedback or careful tutoring" (39). However, according to Bloom, Davis, and Hess, this type of learning is rarely available to the lower-class child because the parents

"usually do not have the skills or the language to effectively use the time they spend with their children to foster . . . language and cognitive development" (6).

Based on the theoretical formulation of Bernstein and empirical research, Bloom, Davis, and Hess suggest that "the middle-class family is more likely to make use of language in an elaborated way: this includes using language to extend ideas, feelings, and individual interpretations" (3, 4, 6). In contrast, the lower-class family has been found to be "restricted" in their language usage. Deutsch and Black have found that lower-class children have a limited number and variety of words at their command and that they usually use language to express concrete needs rather than as a means of self-expression (21, 5). McCarthy, in a study of preschool language development, found that the "mean length of response . . . was found to be significantly higher for higher socio-economic status children than for lower socio-economic children" (6, 46). McCarthy also found that "children from upper socio-economic status were found to use a larger percentage of adapted-information responses and ask more questions than children of lower socio-economic status" (6, 46). Brown suggests that the speech of lower-class children is "more likely to be heavily loaded with pauses, repetitions, slips and extraneous words than is the speech of middle-class children" (11).

Bloom, Davis, and Hess generally conclude that the language of the lower-class child is limited and deficient.

In the deprived home . . . much communication is through gestures and other non-verbal means. When language is used, it is likely to be terse and not necessarily grammatically correct . . . it is likely to be restricted in the number of grammatical forms which are utilized. Thus, the deprived child enters school inadequately prepared for the typical language tasks of the first grade. The greatest handicap seems to be a lack of familiarity with the speech used by teachers and insufficient practice in attending to prolonged speech sequences (6).

Cognitive Development

Effects of Environment on Cognitive Development

The work of Piaget, Bruner, Jersild, and others support the proposition that children cannot move toward abstract structure and reasoning without a broad base of direct encounters from which to abstract and generalize (52).

Deficiencies in experience with the world, as well as language disabilities, hinder the child's cognitive development. McCandless, in discussing the relationship between the environment and intelligence, suggests that the "intellectual level may be a function of the amount of material available for learning and the types of learning which occur" (45). Bloom, Davis, and Hess also suggest that "toys and other objects which help develop concepts are not readily available or used effectively in promoting learning" in the lower-class family. (6). Petigrew further agrees that the lower-class child's intelligence level is hampered because of his "constricted encounter with the world" resulting from

his deprived environmental conditions (53). Keller's study lends support to the suggestion that inferior intellectual functioning and development is, in part, a result of environmental deprivation (40).

The importance of sensory-perceptual stimulation, as related specifically to learning, has been studied by Jensen, Deutsch, and Casler. The findings of these studies support the conclusion that the lack of sensory-perceptual stimulation impedes learning. In addition, the converse is also true; that is, learning is facilitated by sensory-perceptual experience (38, 20, 12).

Specific Learning Disabilities

Deutsch and Bloom, Davis, and Hess suggest that the lower-class child is cognitively deficient in his ability to abstract and generalize (21, 6). Montague, in a study related to the arithmetic concepts of kindergarten children of various socio-economic classes, found that the total score on an Arithmetic Concepts Inventory, consisting of subtests of enumeration, quantitative relationships, symbol recognition, social usage and problem solving, was lower for low socio-economic children (51). Siller, in a study of the relationship between socio-economic status and conceptual thinking, found that "high-status children score higher than low-status children on all tests of conceptual ability" (60) involving verbal and non-verbal tasks of classification and

analogies, and also a vocabulary test of words ranging from concrete to abstract in meaning.

Curry, in a study of the relationship of socio-economic status to academic achievement, suggests that "above average intellectual ability, as demonstrated by high test scores" (California Mental Maturity and California Achievement Tests) is positively correlated with ability to "cope" with adverse environmental conditions (17). Curry further states that "as the intellectual ability decreases, the effects of deprived social and economic conditions of the home begin to have a more serious effect on scholastic achievement" (17).

Factors Affecting the Measurement of Intelligence

Several studies (mentioned above) suggest that children from low-income families as compared with their middle-class peers are generally retarded in cognitive development. There is some indication, however, that these deficiencies manifest themselves partially as a result of the instrument employed, and therefore these deficiencies are an indication of "functional" disability rather than lack of ability. Bloom, Davis, and Hess suggest that there may be "little relationship between measured intelligence and performance on certain learning tasks under laboratory conditions" (6). Related specifically to the present methods of measuring intelligence, Eells states that "most presently used

intelligence tests . . . are so constructed and so administered that scores on them are influenced by the cultural backgrounds of the children taking the test, in such a way that children from certain kinds of cultural backgrounds receive scores that are not accurate reflections of their basic intelligence" (23). Bloom, Davis, and Hess suggest that the performance of various tasks by lower-class children is comparable to the task performance of middle-class children when proper reinforcement conditions exist (6). Haggard's study regarding certain cultural determinants of measured intelligence support this suggestion. Haggard found that when the child's motivation was low and when he was not efficient in taking tests, his performance was adversely affected. Haggard also found the converse to be true; that is, performance was enhanced by high motivation and an ability in test-taking techniques (30). In addition, Boger, in studying the effects of perceptual training on group intelligence scores, found that a group of children with below average I.Q. scores "showed significant increases in total I.Q.'s and California non-language scores after training" (6, 8). Significant gains were also seen in subtests of spatial relationships and logical reasoning after training.

The extent of improvement as a result of training indicates that scores from I.Q. tests often give an estimate of mental ability which is an injustice to these pupils so far as actual ability is concerned and that perceptual training remedies some of the handicaps which influence performance . . . on group tests (8).

In concurrence with these findings, Brazziel and Terrell, in a study of readiness of deprived children in the areas of perception, word reasoning, and ability to follow directions, found improvement after training (9). Gray, in studying the effects of early training for pre-school children from low-income families, found that the performance on the Binet and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test was significantly improved for those children involved in a preschool enrichment program, as compared to a control group receiving no training (29). In summary, studies generally seem to indicate a positive correlation between pre-school enrichment training and improved cognitive functioning as manifest on tests of learning abilities.

Social-Emotional Development

Social Patterns

In addition to the expectation for cognitive achievement, the public school demands a certain level of social-emotional development and sophistication on the part of the young child. Unfortunately for the lower-class child, social-emotional sophistication is measured by middle-class normative standards. According to Deutsch, the child from the low-income family is so poorly prepared cognitively and socially, for the expectations of the school "that initial failures are almost inevitable and the school experience becomes negatively rather than positively reinforced . . ."

(20). Specifically, the lower-class child is socially handicapped in the school situation because often he has not acquired and learned the "patterns of future-time orientation and striving for delayed, often symbolic, gratification . . ." (6). Le Shan, in a study of the relationship between time-orientation and social class, found that "time-orientation varied systematically with social class . . ." (6, 43). It was Le Shan's hypothesis that there was a correlation between time-orientation and the child-rearing practices of the various social classes. He found that in lower-class families the children were often trained by means of immediate punishments and rewards, in contrast to the general middle-class procedure of delaying gratification. Thus a pattern of immediate gratification is set for the lower-class child; whereas, in the middle-class family a delayed or future orientation predominates (43). Deutsch, in his discussion of the disadvantaged child, concurs with Le Shan's findings when he states that the lower-class child has a short-time span; therefore, Deutsch infers an orientation of immediate gratification (20).

Black clearly stated the practical academic importance of time-orientation:

Culturally disadvantaged children are placed at a marked disadvantage in timed test situations. Efforts to apply objective measure to almost every phase of school interest and activity have doubtful value for the children from a very low income home. Accurate determination of his potential and his achievement must be obtained through some technique which does not penalize him with rigidly defined time limitations.

Culturally disadvantaged children tend to have poor attention spans and consequently experience difficulty in following the orders of a teacher. Several authorities have reported the great amount of time children spend listening in the classroom. Research shows that pupils "tune in and out" on the teacher, supplying from context and from their own experience much that they miss during these brief periods of inattention. The lack of connected discourse and generally inadequate communication processes in the disadvantaged home foster the inability of children to attend to instruction. This environmental deficiency is reinforced by differences in the vocabulary and syntax used in the classroom and in the home. The pupil whose cultural background is the same as that of the teacher is in a position to supply through context much that he may have missed during intermittent periods of inattention. The sparseness of furnishings in the homes of the very poor, the general drab visual quality of the environment, tend to deny the pupil needed experience in organization, perception, and reorganization of the objects in the environment (5).

Another social characteristic of the low-income child which further handicaps his school success is his social naivete in terms of his unawareness of the "social skills" or "ground rules" for academic success. Because these "social skills" are derived from the normative standards of the middle-class, the child from the low-income group is unfamiliar with such norms. Nevertheless, the school maintains its middle-class behavior expectations at the expense of the lower-class child (55, 42). An example of the lower-class child's social naivete is his unawareness that an adult is a source of information.

Culturally disadvantaged children need assistance in perceiving an adult as a person of whom to ask questions and receive information. The growing tendency of teachers to act as directors of classroom activity and to perceive

themselves as resource persons implies an area in which culturally disadvantaged children will need specific help. They must be helped to accommodate themselves to an adult role which is unfamiliar to them (5).

The findings of Davie in a study of social class factors related to school attendance further support the conclusion that the school system is biased in favor of the child from the middle-class family.

. . . the pattern of schooling is partially determined by the mere fact of birth into a particular family with a particular class status. A considerable portion of the individual's life as an adult is influenced in his early years . . . the school appears to be perpetuating the status of some children and is serving as a channel of upward mobility for others. This study and others bring into question the myth that the United States is a classless society and that there is equal educational opportunity for all (19).

Bloom, Davis, and Hess state further that "the motivational patterns of deprived children, particularly present-time orientation and reliance on immediate, often material, rewards are adaptive to their life circumstances, though not facilitative in school" (6). The consensus of the research in the area of social patterns of lower-class children suggests that some change, either in the approach of the school or in the alteration and change of lower-class children's social patterns, is indeed necessary and imperative if the disadvantaged child is not to fall further behind in his academic achievement (6).

Emotional Characteristics

Of Self-Concept

In discussing the social-emotional development of the lower-class child, one area of importance is the child's feelings about himself, or his "self-concept." Crow, Murray and Smythe give a clear, concise and representative description of the self-concept:

An individual's self-concept is a syndrome of attitudes and feelings that accompany his awareness of himself as a person together with what he believes himself to be. A child's self-concept begins to develop as soon as he identifies himself with members of his family and with other significant persons. This usually starts in a family setting and is affected by child-rearing practices to which he is subjected. These practices vary from family to family and with the socio-economic status of the family (16).

Discussing the self-concept as it relates to the child from the low-income family, Crow, Murray and Smythe state further:

Many socially disadvantaged children are deprived of those experiences that are the constructs for the development of an adequate self-concept. The middle-class child is more likely to have two parents with whom to identify than the lower-class youngster, who may live in a fragmented home. The latter's family is in flux. He is deprived of a stable constellation of individuals to give him needed attention and provide him with the feeling of security that he needs (16).

Research studies dealing specifically with the personality characteristics of the lower-class child have not been extensive; however, a few studies have been done and do lend support to the observations of Crow, Murray, and Smythe.

Ausubel and Ausubel, in a study of the "ego development"¹ of segregated Negro children, found that the society's negative connotation of racial differences did affect the ego development of the young Negro child. Ausubel and Ausubel found that as a result of the negative implications of being Negro in the United States, the Negro preschool child "resists identifying with his own social group" (1). The effect of the young child's reluctance to identify with his racial background, according to Ausubel and Ausubel, "not only results in ego deflation but makes it difficult to identify with his parents and to obtain from such identification the derived status that universally constitutes the principal basis for self-esteem during childhood" (1).

Goodman's study of race awareness in white and Negro preschool children suggests that both white and Negro children, ages three and one-half through five and one-half, are aware (increasingly so as they grow older) of racial differences and of the derogatory implication of being Negro in our society. The author states further that race awareness is learned from "personal, social and cultural experiences. The child picks up cues given by others" (28).

¹"Ego development" as defined by Ausubel and Ausubel (1963): "the orderly series of changes in an individual's self-concept, self attitudes, motives, aspirations, sources of self-esteem, and key personality traits affecting the realization of his aspirations as he advances in a particular cultural setting" (1).

In addition to the effects of racial discrimination on the self-concepts of young lower-class children, social class status has also been found to be related to a child's self-concept. In studying the self-images of white children from varied socio-economic backgrounds, Silverman found that there was a relationship between the socialization and value orientation of the various social classes and the resulting self-images of the children. Silverman found that the upper-middle class youngster was characterized by "expressive," independent personality traits, as compared with the "repressive," restrained, and internal personality characteristics most often found in the working-class child (61).

In studying the relationship of socio-economic status and aggression to the competitive behavior of pre-school children, McKee and Leader found that lower-class children were characterized by more competitive and aggressive behavior¹ than were their middle-class peers (47).

Battle and Rotter, in studying children's feeling of personal control as related to social class and ethnic group, found that lower-class children were more externally controlled; responsibility was attributed to an external source. In contrast, middle-class children were more likely to be

¹Competitive behavior as defined by McKee and Leader, was equated to excelling behavior. Aggressive behavior was equated with injurious behavior.

internally controlled; they accepted and assumed personal responsibility (2).

In studying children's estimates of their school work ability as a function of sex, race and socio-economic status, Wylie found that in the area of social class, children from low-income families are modest in their estimates as compared with their middle-class peers (67).

Generally, the above mentioned studies regarding the self-concept of lower-class children, support the conclusion made by Bloom, Davis, and Hess that "the ego development of the deprived child is more likely to be characterized by lack of self-confidence and negative self-image than that of the middle-class child" (6).

Emotional Characteristics

Of Academic Aspiration and Achievement

Academic aspirations and achievements is another area in which the child from the low-income family has been found to be deprived as compared with his middle-class peer. In the literature three primary variables appear which seem to affect the child's aspirational levels and his academic achievement levels. These variables are: racial discrimination (for non-white children), socio-economic status and past experiences with success and failure.

In relating racial discrimination to aspirational levels of minority group children, Groff found that, as

compared with their majority group peers, these minority group children tended to have less confidence in both their school activities and their extra-curricular activities. In addition, these feelings were found generally to increase with age (27).

In terms of the effects of socio-economic status, various studies have found that lower socio-economic status negatively affects both the aspirational levels and academic achievement levels of children. In studying the effects of residential segregation of social classes on the aspirational levels of high school boys, Wilson found that when a boy from a middle-class family attended a high school composed primarily of children from lower-class families, he was less likely to have the motivation and aspiration to attend college. Wilson also found the converse to be true; that is, when a lower-class boy attended a high school composed predominantly of middle-class students, he was more likely to have the motivation and aspiration to attend college. In addition to motivational and aspirational levels, academic achievement tended to be affected in a similar manner. Therefore, the author concluded that residential segregation negatively affects both aspirational levels and achievement levels of high school students (66).

Sewell, Haller, and Straus also studied the effects of social status on educational and occupational aspirations of high school students. They found a significant relationship

between socio-economic status and aspirational levels. The authors suggest that it is the "value orientations" related to socio-economic status which affect the motivational and aspirational levels of students (58).

In a study of socio-economic status and its relationship to school achievement in the elementary school, Hill and Giammateo found that achievement was correlated with the socio-economic status of the child. They found that the lower-class child, on an average, was seven months behind his middle-class peer in such academic areas as vocabulary, reading comprehension, arithmetic skills, problem-solving and composite achievement scores (34).

Rosen studied the psycho-cultural dimensions of social stratification as they are related to the child's academic achievement. As a result of his study, Rosen concluded that the motivations and values necessary for academic achievement are less likely to be taught in the lower-class family than in the middle-class family (56).

In reviewing the literature related to achievement behavior in young children, Crandal concluded that "environmental intervention might increase the achievement of children from deprived backgrounds" (15). In support of this conclusion, Crandal referred to specific research done by Forgays which studied the subject's characteristics and the selective influence of enriched experience in early life. Crandal summarized Forgays as follows:

Forgays (1963) presented four-year-old children with discrimination problems in which their only incentive was the opportunity to obtain tactual, visual, or auditory stimulation. Middle-class children learned these problems more rapidly than lower-class subjects, presumably because of their early exposure to more stimulating surroundings (15, 26).

In addition and related to racial discrimination and socio-economic status, past experiences seem also to affect the aspirational and motivational levels of young children. Sears studied the levels of aspiration in academically successful and unsuccessful children and found that successful past experiences tended to increase the aspirational levels of the children; whereas, unsuccessful past experiences tended to decrease the motivational level of the child (57).

CHAPTER III

PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS FOR CULTURALLY DEPRIVED CHILDREN

A Preschool Enrichment Program (Deutsch, New York City)

In 1962, under the direction of Martin Deutsch, a three-year demonstration program for socially deprived preschool children was undertaken by the Institute for Developmental Studies, Department of Psychiatry, New York Medical College.

The program was designed to explore the value of an enriched nursery program stressing particular areas of intellectual functioning as well as the school orientation and motivations necessary for adequate learning in the early elementary grades. There were two aspects of the program: (1) development and evaluation of the enriched program; (2) evaluation of the effectiveness of that curriculum on later school achievement (24).

The foundation for the enriched nursery program was the basic nursery curriculum supported by most Early Childhood Specialists. The most salient feature of the new program was increased training for teachers and more participation for parents, in order to make both aware of the individual's needs and deficiencies (24).

The "structural aspects" of the program, such as room arrangement and routines, were defined clearly for the children. Through the use of uncluttered equipment, an orderly arrangement of the furniture, and a unified use of

colors, the room arrangement was presented in a simplified manner for the children. In addition, "classroom routines were introduced slowly and explicitly through repeated motor demonstrations" (24).

The child's concrete experiences with routines were expected to make him aware of existing patterns of social action and to give him a sense of sequence and organization of activities. As routines were understood and became manageable for him, variations were introduced to build concepts of flexibility (24).

The curriculum, per se, stressed language, concept-formation, and perceptual discrimination, "with development of positive self-image underlying each of these areas" (24).

Through the use of "Negro and white dolls and the use of a full-length mirror in the doll area," (24) the children's self-concepts were positively reinforced. In addition, "pictures of children with varying skin colors were hung in the classroom, books about Negro children were read, and snap-shots of the children themselves in their classrooms were used for language activities . . ." (24) to reinforce positive self-images.

To help the children develop language skills, people and objects were labelled. The children were called by their first names, and the children were encouraged to call the teacher by his name. All equipment was referred to by name.

Activities to increase size and range of vocabulary and to encourage use of expressive language were also used. Individual teacher-child contacts served as the basis for initial expressive language. Class experiences and stories

soon encouraged group language experiences. Then, activities such as use of two telephones in the doll corner, group finger plays or songs gave the children opportunities for more extensive expression (24).

The use of story-books dealing with concrete, relevant and familiar experiences of the children fostered both language and concept development. "Stories initially helped to reinforce the child's fund of information and to entertain him; later they also served as sources of new information" (24). Tape-recordings of the favorite stories of the children were made by the teachers "so that a child might on his own initiative listen through earphones to a particular story and at the same time follow it by watching the book" (24).

Graded use of standard equipment such as puzzles and blocks helped the children learn perceptual discrimination in the areas of size and shape.

Use of other equipment often required discrimination of size, shape, color, or number. One activity stressed color. The children were asked to take all objects of a particular color from a box of small objects. Another game, a miniature postal box, required shape discriminations. Each different slot took only a particular shaped slab; the child therefore had immediate feedback about the perceptual correctness of his choice (24).

Music and rhythmic activities were the chief avenues for the development of auditory discrimination skills.

In the groups there were fifteen children, a group teacher and an assistant teacher. Sessions were two hours, daily, four times a week.

Although there were no statistical data regarding the effectiveness of the project, the teachers could see gains in the children at the end of the first year of this experiment.

They observed that the children were using short descriptive sentences instead of their former one-word requests. Descriptions of home happenings and verbalizations of needs also were more often noted. The children were reported to be able to listen and respond to verbal directions with greatly increased attention spans.

Perhaps most important, gains were seen in increase of interest and enthusiasm toward school-oriented activities by both the children and their parents (24).

An Early Training Project (Gray, Murfreesboro-Nashville, Tennessee)

The Early Training Project, organized and supervised by George Peabody College for Teachers and the Murfreesboro (Tennessee) City Schools, was designed as an intervention project to "offset the progressive retardation commonly observed in the schooling" (29) of culturally deprived children.

The design of the study consisted of dividing the population of all Negro preschool deprived children into four treatment groups: two experimental and two control groups. In the two experimental groups, treatment group one received three ten-week summer sessions and two years of home visits. The purpose of the home visit was to educate parents to help their child in school. The second treatment

group received two such summer school sessions and one year of home visits. In the two control groups, treatment group three was located in the same city as the two experimental groups. Treatment group four was a control group in another city. "This fourth group was included to check the possibility of diffusion effects, which seem possible in a small city where the subjects of the three treatment groups live in fairly close proximity" (29, 33).

The curriculum for the two experimental groups was focused around two specific classes of variables. The first variable was attitudes (motivation) toward achievement which included persistence, ability to delay gratification, and the child's general interest in the use of typical school materials. The second variable was aptitudes toward achievement. This included perceptual-cognitive development and language.

The activities and materials utilized in the program were similar to or the same as those used in conventional preschool and kindergarten programs. However, the difference in the Early Training Project was in the utilization of materials and the emphasis on the experimental variables (attitudes and aptitudes towards achievement).

An illustration of this approach might be given in our use of 1-inch colored cubes. We used these constantly. In terms of aptitudes variables, they could be used for various position words: "Put the red block on the blue one"; "Put the green block beside the yellow one," and the like. Blocks could also be used in terms of the attitude variables. We encouraged the

children to build the tallest towers they possibly could. In this way we tried to develop persistence toward a goal. We exclaimed over their successes in this activity; we called it to the attention of others, in an effort to get the children to take pride in their own performance and to internalize some standard of excellence. Blocks could obviously be used for more difficult constructions and for fairly complex designs in terms of colors (29).

In addition, the experimental groups had "extensive trips in the community; personal attention for each pupil; student-teacher ratio of 5:1; and extensive guidance in personal adjustment" (33).

In regard to the research related to the aptitude variables, Gray and Klaus, in an interim report, suggested positive trends in the findings.

Continued tests of intelligence and language indicate that just prior to school entrance the experimental groups showed significant gains ($< .01$), while both a local and a nonlocal control group showed losses (29).

Data regarding the research related to the attitude variables, however, were not available.

An Experimental Nursery School Program (School District of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

The Experimental Nursery School Program, directed by the School District of Philadelphia, was established as an educational enrichment program for culturally disadvantaged preschool children. The primary objectives of the project were to train nursery school teachers, to contribute to the cognitive and affective development of the children, to gain

insight into educating the deprived child through experimentation and research, to develop parent-teacher interaction, and to help parents enhance family living by encouraging the effective utilization of community resources (18).

The curriculum of the Experimental Nursery School for socially deprived preschool children was that of a "conventional" nursery school program, with special emphasis on language, visual discrimination, auditory discrimination, listening and paying attention, conceptualization, and information regarding the environment and self-image (18).

To facilitate language development, in his daily contacts with the children the teacher emphasized proper labelling of objects, naming of people and verbalization of feelings. He encouraged the children to discuss their everyday experiences and to question and explore the environment. Stories, poems, pictures, a lending library, puppets, records and trips were media used in the program to promote language development. In addition, some specific materials and techniques were used to help the children develop skills in organizing ideas and thoughts in a sequence, recall, and verbal facility. "See-Quees," a series of four or more pictures of a familiar story or rhyme, were given the children to place in a holder in the proper left to right sequence of ideas as they retold the story. Slides were another material utilized. The teacher projected slides of trips and experiences which children had had and which he

had photographed. Children recalled the experiences through seeing the pictures and were encouraged to discuss them. Children also recorded stories on tape and then played them back. They were fascinated by the tape recorder and were eager to "talk" to the microphone (18).

Visual discrimination was facilitated by the teacher as he helped the children discover and identify various likenesses and differences visually apparent in the everyday environment. Specific materials and techniques were also used. For example, a set of Kin-E Letters, large capital and lower case letters cut out of 3/4" plywood with individual blocks to hold the letters, were used as puzzles. The blocks (holders) of similar letters, such as O and Q, M and N, and P and B, were placed side by side. Children placed the proper letter in the holder. At first this was a trial and error method. After a while, however, the children observed differences in letters and holders and placed letters in the proper holders. The teacher casually named the letters. In addition, the letters also gave the children the sensory experience of feeling the letter forms; this is believed to be an effective way of learning the shape and form of letters (18).

In order to increase the children's ability to discriminate likenesses and differences in sound, the teacher provided specific materials and experiences. For example, musical instruments were available for exploration and

experimentation by the children. The teacher asked the children to listen to sounds inside and outside the room and to identify them during their daily play. The teacher sometimes structured the situation further and asked the children to listen to a familiar sound made behind a screen, such as that of a triangle or egg beater or rattling paper, and to try to identify the object. In addition, tape recordings were utilized in the program specifically to promote auditory discrimination. For example, the teacher recorded voices of a group at play, and the children tried to identify the different voices and background noises (18).

By requiring the children to follow directions, the teacher helped them learn to listen and attend. For example, the teacher played a game with a small group of children in which he gave simple directions at first and then gradually increased the number of directions in one sentence.

"Go to the doll corner, Jane." The child's name was used at the end of the direction so that all children were encouraged to listen to the direction and then for their names. "Go to the doll corner and bring me a doll, Henry." "Go to the doll corner and bring me the blue truck, Willie." "Go to the doll corner, pick up the doll with the red dress and sit her on the rocking chair, John" (18).

The curriculum provided experiences in science, social studies, mathematics, and in health and safety to expose the children to the rudiments of conceptualization and to gain further information. Materials such as animals, fish, flowers, plants and simple science materials such as magnets, kaleidoscopes, prisms, magnifying glasses, pulleys

and dry cell batteries were utilized in exposing the children to rudimentary scientific concepts. Basic concepts in mathematics were presented to the children by such concrete experiences as counting cookies, children and books. Also, experiences in foundation learnings about space, size, weight, balance, symmetry and quantity were provided through the utilization of block building activities (18).

Social studies and health and safety concepts were brought into the program by talking about the immediate environment of the children (i.e., home, school, neighborhood and larger community). Trips were planned within the school building and immediate neighborhood to observe and later to discuss such things as construction sites and machinery, the coal furnace in the school building, and different types of houses. Trains, trucks, stores, gas stations, people and animals provided additional information regarding the environment for the children (18).

Through the encouragement of specifically designed tasks and through the use of equipment which would enhance the children's success the teacher tried to encourage a positive self-image for each child. Full-length mirrors, photographs of the children, and calling the child by name were means by which the teachers encouraged a positive self-concept. Teachers took pictures of every child, alone and with a group, and projected them for the group to see, to identify and to discuss. A table viewer was also used by

an adult with an individual child to show him pictures of himself and to talk about the pictures with him. Through this close, one-to-one contact the adult skillfully helped the child enjoy self-realization.

The program basically utilized the same activities and materials of a conventional nursery school program. There was an emphasis on dealing with the children in terms of their own individual maturational levels. The program also tried to have a balance of self-initiated and structured activities (18).

PART II. THE MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
PROJECT FOR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN
FROM DEPRIVED ENVIRONMENTS

Prior to 1965 interest and concern was being expressed in several Michigan communities regarding educational programs for disadvantaged preschool children. Programs were being established, and many of them were under public school administration. There existed, however, a serious shortage of professionals trained to work effectively with these children.

The Department of Home Management and Child Development at Michigan State University had a long-established program for training teachers of preschool children. However, their program did not include teaching experiences with deprived children. Therefore, responding to the growing concern with compensatory preschool programs and thus helping to meet the current demands for training teachers, the department proposed to establish a pilot project for disadvantaged preschool children as part of the laboratory preschools used in training prospective preschool teachers.

In establishing the project, specific objectives were outlined. First of all, the project was planned to enrich the education of the students. This included providing classroom instruction in studying cultural deprivation,

an opportunity for observation of and laboratory teaching experience with deprived preschool children, and also an opportunity to visit with parents of disadvantaged preschool children in their homes.

Secondly, the project was planned to further broaden the understanding and experience of the child development teaching staff. All of the departmental staff were well trained in child development and preschool education, and some had had experience working with disadvantaged children. An on-going teaching experience with disadvantaged children and families would enhance the staff's competency to give consultation service to communities planning programs for deprived preschool children. The project also encouraged the exploration of teaching techniques, program emphasis and materials appropriate for preschool children from impoverished homes. Finally, it encouraged the development of parent education programs appropriate for the disadvantaged.

The establishment of such a teacher-training program was later endorsed by increased national interest and concern with compensatory preschool education projects. John A. Hannah, President of Michigan State University, stated that the universities must take active leadership in combating poverty through education.

The American people are committed to a war on ignorance, on poverty, on intolerance, on injustice, on inequality of opportunity.

Will public universities stand aside and refuse to participate in this gigantic national

effort to improve the condition of American life? The question . . . is rhetorical, for public universities would disown their heritage and deny their purpose if now they were to remain aloof. . . . Education has been cast in a leading role in this social drama, and it is a role that cannot be refused with grace or good conscience . . . only the public universities, and their sister universities not under public control, have the resources to do the job that needs to be done. Their faculties represent a tremendous reservoir of knowledge, of experience, of intellectual curiosity, of social commitment. No other combination of agencies--not all of our community relations commissions, not all of our legislatures, not all of our federal government--can muster such an array of brilliant and useful talent (31).

CHAPTER IV

PROCEDURES FOR DEVELOPING THE PROJECT

In order to establish the pilot project, the following specific procedures were outlined: (1) Explore existing preschool programs for disadvantaged preschool children; (2) Establish criteria for enrollees; and (3) Operationalize the project.

Exploring Preschool Projects

Following the review of literature, the staff sought first-hand information on preschool programs for disadvantaged children through visits to existing programs in the state of Michigan. Such information proved helpful in setting up the pilot project at Michigan State University. The director of the Child Development Nursery Schools and the head teacher for the pilot project visited eight programs¹ throughout the state early in 1965. A summary of the information gained through their visits follows.

¹Perry Preschool Project in Ypsilanti; James Cousins School, Brewster Douglas Project, Franklin Settlement, and Saint Boniface, in Detroit; Allen Street School in Lansing; Clark School in Flint; and Campau School in Grand Rapids.

Purposes of the Projects

In four of the eight schools visited, the primary purpose of their projects was preparation for later academic work. One project had research as its primary purpose. In the other three projects the purpose was mainly one of providing a variety of experiences which might facilitate the social, emotional, intellectual and physical growth of the children. Experiences were appropriate to preschool levels of maturation. In all of the programs the importance of helping the children through parent education was recognized.

Personnel

In many of the projects, the teachers were certified by the state of Michigan; that is, they held either an elementary or secondary teaching certificate. However, this did not necessarily include experience or training with the preschool child. In most cases the teachers had had no previous training or experience with preschool children. In some schools the teacher was a non-professional; she had some college education; however, she had not completed a degree. Teaching assistants were usually mothers of the children in the groups, non-professional aides, or aides indigenous to the community. In addition to the teaching staff, most projects had a variety of consultants, such as research associates, social workers, speech therapists, and psychologists.

The number of pupils per teacher varied from group to group; the highest ratio was one teacher to six pupils, and the lowest ratio was one teacher to twenty pupils. When non-trained assistants were included, the ratio of adults to pupils was at a maximum of 1:4 and at a minimum of 1:8.

Populations

The number of children varied from group to group. None of the groups exceeded twenty-nine children; the minimum number of children per group was twelve and the average number was 19.87. In six of the groups there was racial homogeneity, all of the children were Negroes. In the remaining two groups there was racial heterogeneity, with such racial and ethnic backgrounds as Caucasian, Negro, and Mexican. The economic status of the families was usually lower-class. The family breadwinners were of diverse occupational backgrounds in unskilled and semi-skilled labor. In some families neither parent was regularly employed. Some were supported solely by social welfare or aid to dependent children.

In two of the projects, where only retarded children were eligible, the children's intelligence quotients ranged from 70 to 85.

Programs and Methods

The curricula of the projects varied. In general, each program emphasized one or more of the following areas: language development, sensory stimulation, small group

experiences, encouragement of positive self-concepts and increased motivation, cognitive stimulation (i.e., emphasis on classification, labelling and identifying various objects by shape, color and form), dramatic play, manners as a means of learning cultural values, and speech correction.

All of the projects offered supervised play programs for preschool children. All tried to provide some type of parent education through such methods as home visits, group meetings and parent involvement in the play program. This included assisting in the group and observation and discussion of the daily program. Some of the projects offered field trips in the community for the children and, if possible, for the parents.

When social workers were involved in the programs, full case-work was often carried out with the families. Consulting and referral services were offered for both psychological-emotional and physical problems in some of the programs.

The immediate nutritional needs of the children were sometimes recognized, and daily supplements to the diets were provided. Juice, milk and crackers were provided in all of the programs, and in one program a full lunch was served.

Transportation

In many of the programs it was necessary and expedient to provide transportation for the children to and from school. In some cases when the school and home were in close proximity (e.g., when the school was located in a housing project or within walking distance), transportation was provided by the families.

Establishing Criteria for Enrollees

On the basis of findings from the literature and from visiting various ongoing preschool projects for disadvantaged children throughout the state, parameters in the following areas were specified for admitting children to the pilot project: family economic status, race, family stability, age and sex of children, and size of class.

The children were to be from disadvantaged, lower socio-economic status families. Therefore, the family income was to be below \$5,000.00 annually, and the parents were to be unskilled or semi-skilled workers, as opposed to professional or executive workers.

To demonstrate that cultural deprivation was not equated with one particular racial group, such as the Negro, a racially heterogeneous group was desired.

Because the pilot project was planned specifically for the training of teachers of children who were not extreme deviants, children from families with extraordinary

deviations were not considered for admission. Parameters in the following areas were helpful in ascertaining family stability: health, marital status, mobility and criminal record. It was desired that the health of the child and the immediate family members be normal; thus good school attendance would be possible. It was also desirable for the parents to be living together; if either parent were absent for reasons of social distress, problems for the children might be increased. The families should exhibit residential permanence because families having a history of short tenure were likely to move prior to completion of the academic year. Finally, parents with criminal records were not to be considered because such overt, extraordinary, antisocial or unusual circumstances were likely to create especially unusual disruptions for the children.

In order that the children would be able to continue in the program over an extended period of time, the age range was limited to children who might attend throughout the 1965-1966 academic year before leaving to enter kindergarten. The age range, as of April 1, 1965, therefore, was to be from three years to four years and three months.

To maintain a balance of children's interests and activity levels, and to provide adult students with an opportunity to observe sexual differences in rate of maturation, an approximately equal distribution of male and female children was desired.

To allow for necessary individual attention, the program could accommodate only a small number of children, probably fifteen or less.

Operationalizing the Project

Defining the Area

After delineating the criteria for the enrollees for the pilot program, various community resources were contacted for information regarding location of disadvantaged pre-school children. The county planning office provided census data which grossly defined the county area on the basis of family socio-economic status, racial and ethnic composition, and residential location. Various university staff members and individual citizens working in the community were able to specify areas of particular relevance for the program. City school boards provided general school census information, and individual school supervisors, principals and teachers working with lower-class children were able to provide specific information regarding families with preschool age children. In addition, state and county welfare agencies had pertinent information regarding specific areas within the community and also specific families within specified areas which pertained to the criteria of the program.

Recruiting the Children

Once the admission criteria for the children in the program were established and the area from which to obtain the children was located, a plan was needed for securing children for the program. After the staff had reviewed the literature and talked with personnel in various on-going projects, they concluded that face-to-face communication, in contrast to written communication, was a good means of contacting the families and also of beginning to build good rapport with prospective families. This would be done by a personal visit to the home of each prospective enrollee.

A list of families with preschool children in the designated areas was obtained from the local elementary schools. From this list homes to be visited were selected. Two staff members usually visited the home. Occasionally one person went alone; however, there were no more than two individuals per visit.

A Spanish interpreter, a woman living in the children's community, accompanied the staff members on visits to homes where only Spanish was spoken.

The following is a sample introduction of the visitors at the initial visit:

Hello. My name is _____, and I teach at Michigan State University (the college). Mr. _____ from _____ school gave me your name and may have told you I was coming. We train teachers of three and four year old children, and we need more children for our students

to learn about. We have a nursery school for three and four year olds at the college. May we ask you some questions to see if you might be interested in having your child come to the school?

After an initial introduction, as described above, the visitor showed the parents and children an album of photographs of the nursery school and of children playing at school. The photographs in the album were especially chosen so as to facilitate visual as well as verbal interpretation of the nursery school program. As the pictures were shown and the program described, the visitor talked with the parents and children and answered any questions they asked.

If the parents expressed an interest in having their child in school, the visitor then asked if she might ask some questions about the child and his family. The following is a sample of the information interview sheet used:

Name of parents:

Address:

Phone:

Age of Child: Birthdate: Sex: Race:

Family members in the home:

Occupation of father: Mother:

Education of father: Mother:

Mobility: How long have you lived in this area?

Home Owner?

Renter?

Where did you live before?

Do you plan to stay in this place next year?

Child's health:

Outside financial assistance:

If the parents expressed a desire to have their child in the program, the home visitor made arrangements to visit the family again and gave them a specified time (i.e., in a few days, next week) which would be convenient for the family. She explained that when she visited them again she would give them more specific details about the first day of school. The following is a sample of the form which the visitor gave to the family on the next visit:

Michigan State University Playgroup

Teacher's Name: Miss Sue Torrey

Helping Teachers: Miss Betty Garlick
Mrs. Bernadette Randall

Where: Spartan Nursery School
Corner of Birch and Willow Lane east of Harrison Road
Michigan State University Campus

Telephone: 355-0336

When: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday afternoon 2:00 - 4:15.

Begins April 5 at 2 o'clock.

Transportation: The American Red Cross has a large station wagon which will pick the children up at 1:45 and bring them home by 4:30. A teacher will ride in the station wagon, too.

Cost: 50¢ for snacks and treats for the children. If this seems too much to pay, maybe a Mother could come and help serve the treat to the children.

1st Day: On the first day of school any Mothers who can come with their children will be welcome. If you can, please plan to come. The Red Cross will bring

you with the children in the station wagon, or a teacher can bring you in her car.

Providing Preliminary Medical/
Health Examinations

A state law in Michigan requires children to have a physical examination prior to entering school. Because low-income families probably were financially unable to secure a physical examination for their children, it was necessary to consult community resources for ways to provide such an examination. The county medical society, county health department, state department of health, local city hospitals, and individual physicians in the community were approached.

Two individual physicians volunteered to provide the medical examinations without charge to the families or the university. Various staff members provided transportation to and from the hospital. This visit to the hospital with the children and the families was the first time the children were together in groups. During the interim that children awaited their examinations, the staff had an opportunity to observe and interact with the children. A small box of toys was brought from the nursery school to be used by the children in the waiting room at the hospital. These toys were later utilized during the first weeks of school to provide the children with something familiar.

Providing Transportation

Once the area from which the children were to be drawn was established, it was necessary to arrange transportation for the children. Near-by public schools, service clubs in the community, churches in the area, volunteers in the vicinity, the university transportation office, and the Red Cross were contacted regarding the possibility of transporting the children to and from school.

As a result of these contacts, the Red Cross offered to provide the transportation for the project. Since the Red Cross drivers were volunteers, each day there was a different driver. Therefore, a staff member rode in the car each day to provide the children with the security of knowing that someone familiar would pick them up and take them home.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS--A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Group Composition

Number, Sex and Age of Children

The group consisted of fourteen disadvantaged pre-school children. There were eight boys and six girls, ranging in age from three years to five years-two months. All of the children, except two, met the age criteria set for the project (three years to four years and three months). The two exceptions were older siblings of children meeting the age criteria. Because they were too young for kindergarten and because their parents expressed a desire to have them in the project, they were accepted for admission.

Intellectual Level of the Children

The children in the group were tested during the first month of school. Trained testers from the College of Education at Michigan State University tested the children with Form L-M of the Stanford Binet Intelligence Scale and Form A of the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. The range for the Stanford Binet scores was from 74 to 109; 87 was the median, and 89.5 was the mean for the group. The scores on

the Peabody Test ranged from 69 to 105; the median was 87, and the mean was 87.5.

The following is a summary report made by the testers and submitted to the staff after the testing had been completed:

The mean I.Q. for the group of fourteen preschoolers ranked in the lowest quarter of the average range. Most of the children evidenced adequate neurological development and were able to complete visual-motor tasks expected of children in the three to four year old range. Reasoning was primarily of a concrete nature with very little evidence of abstract reasoning ability. Spontaneity in response was conspicuously absent. The children generally appeared reluctant to engage in unfamiliar tasks which would delimit their performance on items calling for spontaneity, abstraction, inventiveness, and imagery.

It was frequently found that these subjects were not able to identify objects common in middle-class environments, but which may not be as frequently encountered in a culturally deprived environment. These children also did not engage in the imaginative activity often encountered in children not from deprived environments. These subjects generally described elements in a picture rather than telling a story related to the picture.

The subjects tested appeared alert to their environment; however, they were very reluctant to become actively

involved in the environment. This was evidenced by tendencies to disassociate common usages between objects, lack of imaginative involvement and a frequent tendency to avoid responding by "rushing through" the task.

In general, the children tested appeared to have less familiarity with common objects in our environment than do less culturally disadvantaged children. They were less free in expressing their imaginary activities, more uncomfortable with unfamiliar activities and tended to avoid a new learning situation rather than learn from it. They reasoned more on a concrete, functional basis than is often seen in children not identified as culturally disadvantaged. However, in the areas of rote memory, ability to follow directions, hand-eye coordinative tasks and simple tasks requiring a type of convergent reasoning, these children compared favorably with their peers representing different socio-economic levels.¹

Residential Location of the Families

Of the fourteen children, eleven were from families living in the L-30 Lansing census tract of slightly west of this area in the Lansing census tract L-12. The remaining

¹Submitted by Robert Green, Associate Professor, and Frederick Hill, Doctoral Candidate, College of Education, Michigan State University, June 15, 1965.

three children were from families living in the Lansing census tract MT-45 (see Appendix).

Racial and Ethnic Background

The group was racially and ethnically integrated. It included four white children, four Mexican children, four Negro children and two children of racially mixed parentage, Negro and American Indian.

Educational and Occupational Level of the Children's Parents

The education of the parents ranged from no formal education of either parent to completion of high school by both parents. The median number of years of school completed by all parents was 9.0 years. The median for the fathers was 8.0 years, and 9.5 years was the median for the mothers. The median for the group was .2 years above that for the Lansing census tract L-30, and it was the same as the median for the MT-45 Lansing census tract (9.0 years). However, the group median was below the median for the city of Lansing and for Ingham County by 2.9 and 3.1 years, respectively (63).

The occupational level of the parents in the group ranged from unemployed and recipients of welfare to skilled laborers. The following were the occupations of the parents in the group:

<u>Father</u>	<u>Mother</u>
1. Plumber	Cafeteria grill supervisor
2. State driver for automobile manufacturer	Part-time waitress
3. Welder	Housewife
4/5. Janitor	Housewife
6. Enrolled in job retraining	Housewife
7. Carpenter's assistant	Part-time domestic worker
8. Unemployed	Housewife
9. Factory worker	Housewife
10. Checker for automobile factory	Housewife
11. Cement mason	Housewife
12. Mechanic, part-time	Housewife
13/14. Foundry worker for automobile factory	Housewife

Family Structure

Except for one family, all parents were married and living together. In the one exceptional family the parents were separated, and the children lived with their mother and maternal grandparents. The number of children per family ranged from three children per family to twelve children per family. The median number of children per family was 4.5 children, and the mean was 5.75 children per family.

School Personnel

The staff working in the daily program consisted of the director, one head teacher, one graduate student assistant teacher, one aide and one graduate student speech therapist. The head teacher had a Master of Arts degree in child development, two years of teaching experience with disadvantaged preschool children and families, and six years of nursery school teaching experience in a university laboratory preschool. The graduate student assistant teacher was a Master of Arts degree candidate in child development. The undergraduate student assistant teacher was a Bachelor of Science degree candidate in child development and teaching. The aide had no specific academic training in child development; however, she had had experience as a parent in the Michigan State University Spartan Nursery School, a parent cooperative nursery school in which parents assist in the teaching under supervision of professional teachers. The graduate student speech therapist was a Master of Arts degree candidate in speech therapy.

The director had a Master of Arts degree in child development, three years of experience teaching high school home economics, one year of teaching experience in a day care center and one year of teaching experience in a university laboratory preschool. For eighteen years she taught in a university laboratory-parent cooperative nursery school.

During the past eleven years, in addition to teaching, she was director of the school.

Daily and Long-Range Program

Five guidelines were utilized in planning and operating the daily and long-range program for the fourteen pre-school children from deprived environments.

Promote Growth of the Whole Child

The first guideline was to plan a program which promoted the growth of the whole child including physical and motor development, emotional, social and intellectual development.

Physical and Motor Development

The daily health inspection, when the teacher greeted the children individually and checked for any apparent physical illnesses, was a means of enhancing the physical development of the children. The snack time each day was another means of promoting physical growth since the children's diets were daily supplemented with high-protein snacks. As the children cleaned up before their snacks, the teachers talked with them about the importance of washing their hands before eating and demonstrated habits of personal cleanliness. The teachers also discussed children's physical growth needs with parents during home visits.

Both indoors and outdoors, provision was made for the young child's strength and coordination to be increased through physical activity. The program provided equipment that stimulated both large and small muscle activity. The indoor play environment provided opportunities chiefly for the use of the smaller muscles of the child's body through the use of such materials as crayons and paint brushes in the art activities, the manipulation of small blocks in building activities, the manipulation of scissors, puzzles, and pegs, and the use of doll house equipment in dramatic play activities. The outdoor environment provided opportunities for the child to use his whole body, especially his large muscles, since he used large pieces of outdoor equipment such as tricycles, wagons, climbing apparatus, swings, slides and shovels.

When the children first started school, there was available a carefully selected, but limited amount of materials and equipment so as not to overwhelm the children with quantity of materials. Space and order were emphasized. As the program progressed, an increasing number and variety of activities and equipment were provided as the children became ready for them, thus giving a child freedom to explore and experiment.

Emotional Development

The feelings of the young child were kept in mind at all times. Because this was the first school or group experience for the children with unfamiliar children and adults,

it was extremely important that this be a satisfying experience for the children.

Children were helped to learn that they were important and worthwhile individuals by calling the children by their names, using full-length mirrors in the playroom and displaying photographs of the children. Individual attention to a child was given generously.

Materials were provided in the program which helped the children express their feelings, and freedom of expression was encouraged. For example, the children were allowed to paint on paper what they felt the need to express when they felt like expressing it. This was true also of various other media in the program such as block building and doll play.

If the children learned that the nursery school was a place where they could be happy and secure, it not only enhanced their present living, but they would be more likely to have positive feelings towards later school experiences.

Social Development

The program was planned to be conducive to social growth and development. The children had perhaps their first experience and opportunity for supervised play activities with other children like themselves in age and interests.

With the guidance of trained teachers, the children were afforded many socially valuable experiences such as

sharing and taking turns, playing cooperatively, talking with one another, considering the rights of other children, standing up for their individual rights, giving and receiving help and information from other children and adults, learning to be leaders and followers, and learning to play alone as well as with other children. Thus, wise guidance during the program was a means of helping the children learn how to relate cooperatively to their peers and to adults.

Intellectual Development

Because play affords a child an opportunity to try out and experiment with his own ideas and to acquire new information and because he learns best by doing, the program provided adequate time and opportunities for the children to explore, investigate and express themselves through many media. Activities included water play where the children could actually get their hands into water, painting where they could use their arms, hands and fingers, and block building in which they might experience the satisfaction of creating from their own experiences and imagination. Through these and other first-hand experiences, sound intellectual growth was facilitated since first-hand experiences are the foundation for more formal academic learning. Concrete, sensory experiences must precede abstract learning and use of symbols. For example, opportunity for seeing, feeling and smelling a live cow was provided before seeing an illustration of a cow or hearing a story about a cow.

Develop Program from Child's Immediate Interests

A second guideline was to develop the program from the immediate environment of the children and utilize their experiences to extend their knowledge and experience. The plans might develop from various sources.

A pupil-teacher planned program enabled the teachers to extend the children's immediate interests. For example, when the children expressed an interest in fireman play, it was the teacher's role to plan an extension of this active interest by providing equipment and materials, by talking and reading about firemen with the children, or perhaps by taking a field trip to a nearby fire station. In a spontaneous pupil-teacher planned program, the teacher usually extended the interest immediately. For example, when a child expressed an interest in a melting icicle, the teacher responded by asking the child questions and encouraging him to question the occurrence.

In a teacher-planned program, the teacher planned activities which were consistent with the current level of maturation and interest of the children. For example, the teacher might plan to include a planting activity for the children as a science experience.

The long-range program combined the various plans described above. The program was not entirely "teacher-planned," nor entirely "child-planned," but a combination of these two.

Plan A Balanced Program

A third guideline consisted of planning a program in order to achieve a balance among types of activities.

Indoor and Outdoor Play

The time allotment for indoor and outdoor play consisted of large blocks of time of approximately equal length.

Individual and Group Play

The program was structured so that the children could play individually and also in groups with free play activities which facilitated either individual or group participation.

Active and Quiet Play

Both the indoor and the outdoor play periods provided opportunities for quiet and active play. Outdoor play was facilitated primarily through the large muscle equipment; whereas, quiet play was facilitated through more sedentary activities such as sand play. Indoors, large muscle equipment provided active play, and various table activities offered a quieter play. In addition, during the indoor program special daily activities such as a story time or snack time offered a quieter time for the children.

Play Activities and Routines

Each day the program was planned so that there were daily routines in addition to the play activities. Routines offered the children a sense of security. Once the routines were established the children knew fixed points in the day

and what would be expected of them. The routines each day were: (1) a daily health inspection which was important not only for health reasons, but also because it was a time at the beginning of the day when the teacher and individual children spent some time with one another, (2) the transition periods when the children changed from free play to a snack or group time with children and teacher together putting away the toys and materials, (3) washing hands and toileting, and (4) eating.

Variety and Repetition

Repetition, like routines, offered the children a sense of security. Some activities and materials, such as doll and domestic play, block building, and easel painting, were provided daily for the children. However, it was also important to provide variety and novelty for the children in order to broaden their experiences. For example, special activities, such as children's helping to prepare and serve a simple dish or children's experimenting with hand sewing, provided novel experiences for the children.

Daily and Long-Range Planning

Daily planning involved making plans for the various activities and materials to be used each day and for operationalizing the plan for the day. Specific tasks for the day were assigned to the various adults participating in the program. Long-range planning involved consideration of various goals to be achieved over a period of time (i.e.,

a month, a year). Such goals pertained to growth of the children both as individuals and in the group. Areas of deprivation were of special concern in the long-range and daily planning. For example, a long-range goal was to provide sensory experiences for the children. Within the daily plan would be included materials, such as water or clay, and activities, such as a trip to a nearby farm, which facilitated sensory stimulation and development.

Involve Parents in the Program

Still another guideline in programming was to involve parents as well as all teaching assistants in planning, operating and evaluating the program.

The team approach to teaching was considered invaluable. When parents were not actually involved in the daily program, they offered ideas and suggestions, directly or indirectly, during the home visits. These were incorporated into the program by the teachers. To facilitate maximum cooperation among the participating adults, team planning and evaluation of the program was found important. Included in each daily program was a time for a post-session conference when the adults discussed the days activities, the growth of the children and plans for future programming.

The teachers made visits to the home regularly throughout the duration of the program. These visits were helpful in gaining further insight into the nature of the families and were the primary means of involving parents in

the project. The parents did not generally come to the school, but rather the school went to the parents on an individual teacher-parent basis. However, a few parents did come to the school when specific requests were made. For example, one mother picked several children up from school each day and in this way had contact with the school. In addition, when an informal open-house was planned at the school, one family did attend. Also, on the first day of school over half of the mothers came with their children.

Utilize Community Resources

A final guideline was to utilize the community in program planning.

Various resources in the community were found helpful in the program planning. For instance, a nearby fire station was utilized for a field trip, and a policeman came to the nursery school; thus a special activity at school was provided for the children. In addition, the Michigan State Department of Public Health and the Family Service Agency of Lansing were helpful in gaining insight into the nature of the children's families and in helping the families enhance their daily living through effective utilization of resources in the community.

The following is a sample daily schedule which evolved during the first few weeks of school, after adjustments had been made for time of arrival and the individuals in the group:

2:00 - 2:15 Children arrive. Greet and check health of individual children.

2:00 - 3:00 Free play - indoors.

Doll area set up for domestic and other dramatic play.

Block area set up with small cars.

Easel paints set up.

Play dough on large table.

Playons on small table.

Record player and records available for informal music activity for a small group of children.

Sand toys ready in the sand box.

3:00 - 3:15 Transition.

Start picking up toys and gather together for short story: "Where's the Bunny?"

Wash hands for snack.

3:15 - 3:30 Snack time.

3:30 - 4:00 Outdoor free play.

Wheel toys out on hard surface area (i.e., trikes, wagons, driving cars, etc.).

Other available equipment: swings, a slide, several climbing facilities, a play house with a ladder to an enclosed roof, large boxes, ladders and boards, a sand box, and plenty of space.

Further Developments of the Project

During the twenty months since the commencing of the program in April, 1965, several expansions of the program have occurred. The original group of children continued in

school after the close of the 1965 academic year. Two children who were eligible to attend kindergarten in the fall of 1965 were incorporated into an eight-week Head Start Program conducted by the child development staff during the summer of 1965. The remaining twelve children, plus two additional disadvantaged children, remained together in a group and attended school for three weeks after the close of the academic year.

In the fall of 1965 the group of fourteen children from the previous three-week summer session continued in school throughout the 1965-66 academic year. In addition, three other groups were formed. Each group consisted of five disadvantaged children integrated with ten children from middle and upper middle class families enrolled in the laboratory schools. A total of twenty-nine disadvantaged children in four groups were in school for the 1965-66 academic year.

In the fall of 1966 three groups of disadvantaged children were formed with a total of thirty-one children. With the exception of eight children, all of the children were new to nursery school. One group consisted of fifteen disadvantaged children, all of whom were new to nursery school. A second group consisted of five disadvantaged children, all of whom were new to nursery school, integrated with ten children from the middle-class laboratory nursery schools. The third group consisted of eleven disadvantaged

children, eight of whom had been in the program during the previous year and three of whom were new to the nursery school, plus four children from the middle-class laboratory schools. All groups were racially and ethnically integrated and had equal sex distributions.

In addition to the increased number of disadvantaged children in the programs, during the academic years of 1965-66 and 1966-67 a lunch program was incorporated into the daily schedule. During the 1965-66 academic year a light lunch was provided for the children upon their arrival at school in the early afternoon. Some of the children were apparently coming to school without having had sufficient food at home. In addition to supplementing the daily diets, the lunch program provided an additional group period of socialization for the children. Starting in the fall of 1966, the light lunch was expanded into a complete warm meal for the children because of the reasons mentioned previously and also in order to further supplement the diets.

The daily instructional program during the ensuing academic years of 1965-66 and 1966-67 has been conducted according to the guidelines previously described for the first group. It is varied only according to the individual needs of the children in each group.

With the additional number of children incorporated into the project during 1965-66 and 1966-67, the staff

working with the groups increased. As a consequence of this expansion, a weekly meeting for the project staff to discuss and to evaluate daily and long-range programming was started in October, 1966.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Summary of Review of Literature

A review of the literature disclosed that physical, sociological and psychological factors were aspects of a meager environment adversely affecting the development of the deprived child. Physically, the child was deprived of adequate food, clothing and shelter. Sociologically, the family of the disadvantaged child was characterized by instability as exhibited in the high incidence of desertion, separation, divorce, illegitimacy and excessive family size. The inadequate educational backgrounds of the parents also contributed to the child's deprivation. Psychologically, the subtle and discreet aspects of the interaction within the impoverished home affected the child. Such homes had minimal shared family activity, and children had little sustained contact with adults.

The way in which parents spend time with their children at meals, in play and at other times during the day have been found to be central factors in developing skills which prepare children for school (6).

In regard to learning patterns affected by cultural deprivation, the literature showed that the lower-class child, as compared with his middle-class peers, was found to

be deprived in sensory-perceptual stimulation and general experiences within the home environment which are basic prerequisites for language development and cognitive learning. Deprivation of sensory-perceptual stimulation was due to an absence of physical and material stimuli or to the child's lack of meaningful interaction with such stimuli and with individuals in his environment. In language development the vocabulary of the deprived child was deficient both quantitatively and qualitatively. His language lacked abstract-categorical usage and was restricted to expressing simple, concrete needs; it was not elaborated and was not used as a means of self-expression. The intelligence level of the lower-class child was hampered by his constricted encounter with the world. He was deficient in his ability to abstract and generalize. However, some of these deficiencies appeared to be partially "functional" disability rather than lack of ability. Correlation between preschool enrichment training programs and improved cognitive functioning was manifested on tests of learning abilities.

Socially the lower-class child was found to be handicapped in school primarily because he was oriented toward the present rather than the future and therefore had not developed delayed gratification patterns. In addition, the disadvantaged child was often unfamiliar with the general expectations of the school which tend to be those of the middle-class.

Emotionally, the deprived child was generally characterized by a lack of self-confidence and often had a negative self-image. Racial discrimination, lower socio-economic status, and past experiences with failure were found negatively to affect the child's aspirational and academic achievement levels.

Of the three preschool projects reviewed, each had specific purposes and curricula. The Preschool Enrichment Program (Deutsch, New York City) was designed to develop and evaluate an enrichment program in which specified areas of cognitive functioning and school orientation and motivation were emphasized. The curriculum stressed language, concept formation and perceptual discrimination, "with development of a positive self-image underlying each of these areas" (24). Preliminary reports from the teachers in the project suggested gains in the children's cognitive functioning and in the interest and enthusiasm toward school-oriented activities of both the children and their parents. However, no quantitative evaluation data regarding the program were available.

The Early Training Project (Gray, Murfreesboro-Nashville, Tennessee) was designed as an intervention project to "offset the progressive retardation commonly observed in the schooling" (29) of culturally deprived children. The project was designed to facilitate systematic research. The group was divided into four treatment groups; two were

experimental groups receiving enrichment training and home visits, and two were control groups. The curriculum for the experimental groups was focused around two specific classes of variables--attitudes (motivation) towards achievement and aptitudes towards achievement. Research related to the aptitude variables suggested positive trends in increased achievement; however, no data were available regarding the attitude variables.

The Experimental Nursery School Program (School District of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) was designed to train teachers, contribute to the cognitive and affective development of deprived children, gain insight into educating the disadvantaged child through experimentation and research, develop parent-teacher interaction, and to help parents enhance family living by encouraging the effective utilization of community resources. The curriculum of the program was that of a conventional preschool program with special emphasis on language development, visual and auditory discrimination, listening and paying attention, conceptualization and information regarding the environment, and self-image. No data regarding the effectiveness of the program were available at the time of this writing.

Summary of the Michigan State University
Project for Preschool Children From
Deprived Environments

The Michigan State University Pilot Project for Children from Deprived Environments was established in response to the expanding concern in Michigan regarding the training of teachers for compensatory preschool education programs. The project was incorporated into the Home Management and Child Development Department's already existing preschool teacher-training program to include specific experience with disadvantaged preschool children and families for both the staff and the students.

The description of the procedures and the results of the project were written to provide information to aid others in establishing future compensatory preschool education programs.

Following a review of literature, the staff sought first-hand information on preschool programs for disadvantaged children through visits to existing programs in the state of Michigan. Information regarding the project's purposes, personnel, populations, programs and methods, and transportation proved helpful in setting up the pilot project.

On the basis of findings from the literature and from visiting various on-going compensatory preschool projects, parameters in the areas of family economic status, race, family stability, age and sex of the children, and

of the class were specified for admitting children to the pilot project.

After delineating the criteria for the enrollees, various community resources were contacted for information regarding location of disadvantaged preschool children living in the areas near the university.

With the admission criteria established and the areas located, a plan was needed for securing children for the project. On the basis of findings from the literature and from personnel in various on-going projects, the staff concluded that face-to-face communication, in contrast to written communication, was a good means of contacting the families. Furthermore, face-to-face communication would constitute a beginning in building good rapport with parents of prospective enrollees. The contact was made by a personal visit to the home of each prospective enrollee.

A state law in Michigan required children to have a physical examination prior to entering school. Because many low-income families were probably financially unable to secure a physical examination for their children, community resources were consulted for ways to provide such an examination. Two physicians in the community volunteered to do the medical examinations of the children without charge.

Since the families were unable to provide transportation for the children, it was necessary to arrange transportation for them. After contacting several possible sources

of transportation, the decision was made to accept the offer of the Red Cross to provide cars and volunteer drivers each day.

The group of enrollees consisted of fourteen pre-school children: eight boys and six girls ranging in age from three years to five years and two months. There were four white children, four Mexican children, four Negro children and two children of racially mixed parentage, Negro and American Indian.

The intellectual level of the children ranged from 74 to 109 on the Stanford Binet Intelligence Score and from 69 to 105 on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. The mean I.Q. for the group ranked in the lowest quarter of the average range.

During the testing situation these children, as contrasted generally with middle-class children of the same age, appeared to have less familiarity with common objects in the environment. They were less free in expressing their imaginary activities, were more uncomfortable with unfamiliar activities, and tended to avoid new learning situations rather than learn from them. They reasoned more on a concrete, functional basis. However, in the areas of rote memory, ability to follow directions, hand-eye coordinative tasks and simple tasks requiring a type of convergent reasoning, these children compared favorably with their peers representing different socio-economic levels.

The median educational level of the children's parents was 9.0 years. The occupations of the parents ranged from unemployed and recipients of welfare to skilled laborers. Except for one family, all the parents were married and living together. The number of children per family ranged from three to twelve.

The school personnel consisted of a director experienced in nursery school administration, one head teacher with previous training and experience with culturally deprived children and families, one graduate teaching assistant and one undergraduate teaching assistant (both in the field of child development and preschool education), one aide with nonprofessional experience in a preschool and one graduate student in speech therapy.

The daily and long-range program was planned and operated on the basis of five guidelines. The first guideline, promoting the growth of the whole child, emphasized physical and motor development and emotional, social and intellectual development. According to the second guideline, the program was developed from the child's immediate interests. The third guideline, planning a balanced program, provided for indoor and outdoor play, individual and group play, active and quiet play, play activities and routines, variety and repetition, and daily and long-range planning. Following the fourth guideline, parents were involved in planning, operating and evaluating the program. And finally,

community resources were utilized in daily and long-range planning. As the project continued throughout the ensuing years, further developments were incorporated. These included an increased enrollment of children, provision for a lunch program and a weekly staff meeting for discussion and evaluation of the program.

Suggestions for Further Study

Cultural deprivation is currently one of the most urgent and complex problems faced by professional educators. Further study is necessary regarding all phases of deprivation. Although studies have been made in many areas, the data are not so conclusive as to preclude additional research.

In particular, the behavior of lower-class children has been predominantly oriented toward aspects of "deprivation" at the expense of the consideration of possible "strengths." Observations by project personnel suggest that lower-class children are perhaps more physically adept than middle-class children. Systematic studies might validate these observations and reveal presently unexpected strengths.

The presence of classes which are both integrated and segregated with respect to economic background facilitates the use of socio-metric tests to evaluate the relative merits of mixed groups upon the social development of the children from both backgrounds.

The relative lack of effective techniques for working with lower-class parents makes this a critical area for study. The educational deficiencies of the parents themselves suggest that a first step would be an evaluation of their attitudes towards formal education and specifically, the characteristics which they most strongly like and dislike. On the basis of these data more effective techniques might be formulated.

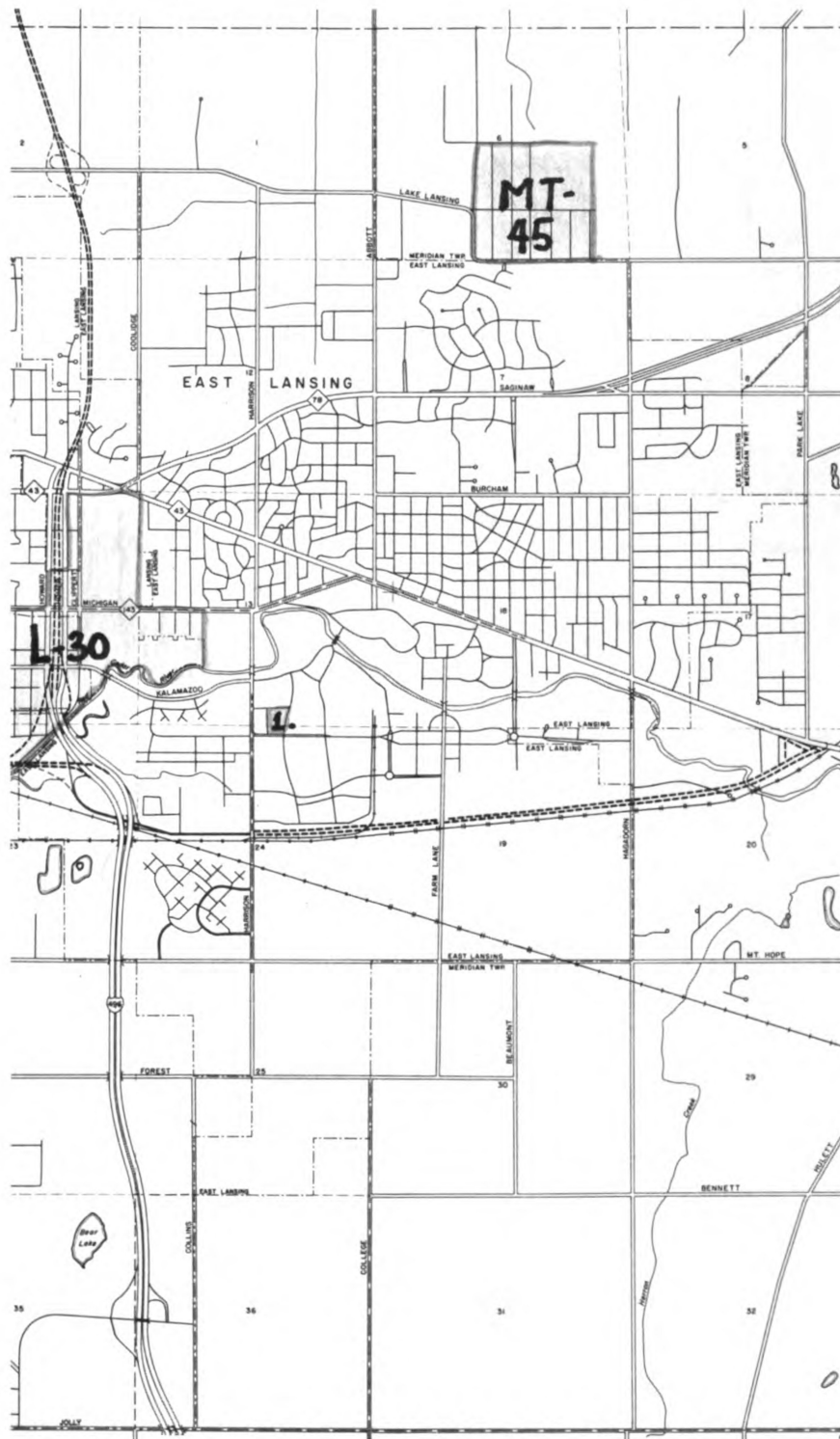
Further study of the causation and alleviation of negative attitudes of middle-class parents regarding the incorporation of lower-class children into nursery schools is warranted.

APPENDIX

TABLE 1
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY PILOT PROJECT GROUP COMPOSITION

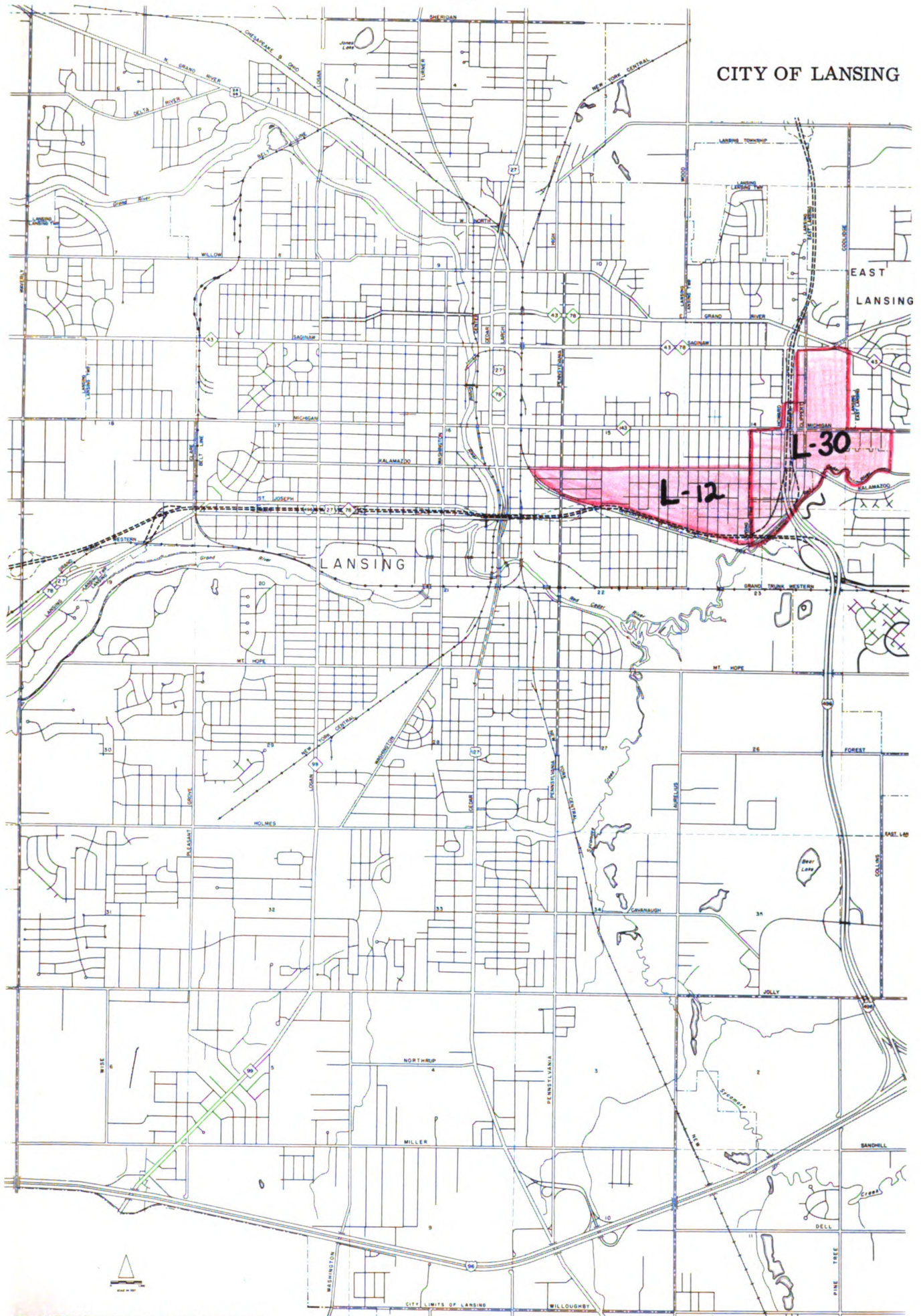
Child	Sex	Race	Residential Location	Parent's Education Father Mother	Age	Stanford Binet M.A. Score	Peabody Score	Number of Children Per Family
1.	M	White	MT-45	12. 12.	3-11	4-0 100	103	3
2.	F	White	MT-45	12. 12.5	3-11	3-5 86	87	3
3.	F	White	MT-45	8. 10.5	3-6	3-11 109	105	9
4.	M	Negro/Indian	L-30	5. 8.	3-6	3-11 109	96	6
5.	F	Negro/Indian		Same as #4	5-2	4-6 86	89	Same as #4
6.	F	Mexican	L-30	4. 4.	3-5	3-0 87	76	7
7.	M	Mexican	L-30	3. 9.	3-9	3-6 92	85	4
8.	M	Mexican	L-30	0.0 0.0	3-2	Unable to Test	69	8
9.	M	Mexican	L-30	8. 11.	4-3	3-6 81	90	4
10.	F	White	L-30	11. 8.	3-0	2-9 89	87	4
11.	M	Negro	L-30	10. 9.	3-11	2-11 74	75	12
12.	M	Negro	L-30	8. 10.	3-5	2-8 78	84	5
13.	F	Negro	L-30	12. 12.	3-3	2-9 83	80	4
14.	M	Negro		Same as #13	4-8	4-3 90	90	Same as #13
Total	M=8 F=6	W=4 N=4 M=4 N/I=2	MT-45=3 L-30=11					
Range				0-12 0-12.5	3-0-5.2	2.8-4.6	69-105	3-12
Median				8.0 9.5	3.75	3.6	87	4.5
Mean				7.75 8.83	3.10	3.6	87.5	5.75

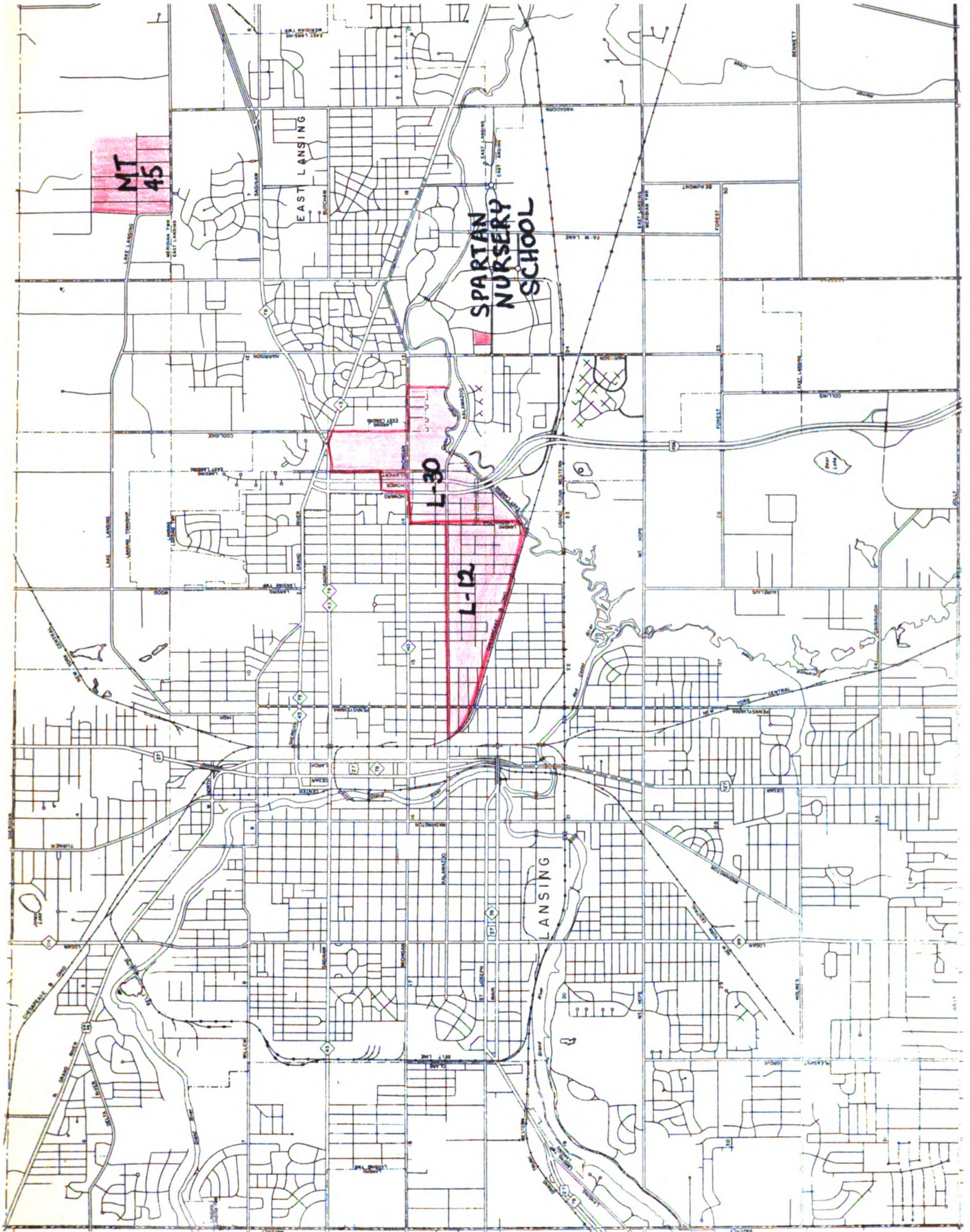
CITY OF EAST LANSING



1. Spartan Nursery School, Michigan State University.

CITY OF LANSING





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