

ATTITUDES OF FEMALE KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS  
AND THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS  
OF KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN AS RELATED TO  
PRESCHOOL EXPERIENCE

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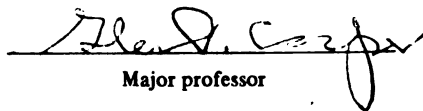


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## ABSTRACT

### ATTITUDES OF FEMALE KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS AND THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS OF KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN AS RELATED TO PRESCHOOL EXPERIENCE

By

Nancy E. Allan

The purpose of this research was to ascertain if the attitudes of kindergarten teachers toward preschool education affect their perceptions of a child's social-emotional adjustment to kindergarten. Specifically, this research examined the following variables relative to kindergarten teachers: attitudes toward preschool education, experience with preschool teaching, percentage of preschool children in kindergarten classes, types of preschools attended by kindergarten children and how these factors affect teacher perceptions of a child's adjustment to the kindergarten program.

The population sampled in this investigation consisted of the kindergarten teachers and their classes in a large suburban school district. The total numbers in the sample included 40 teachers and 1,815 kindergarten children.

Data consisted of: (1) description of the population; (2) description of the three instruments used in the study; a survey to determine type of preschool attendance, a rating of the child's social-emotional adjustment to kindergarten, and

an attitude instrument with a Likert scale.

Correlational analyses, univariate and multivariate analyses of variance used in this research revealed no significant differences.

The main findings of this study may be summarized as follows:

1. Kindergarten teachers who expressed a negative attitude toward preschool (as evidenced by lower scores on the attitude instrument) perceived no significant differences in the social-emotional adjustment to kindergarten between children who had attended preschool and those who had not.

2. Kindergarten teachers who had had preschool teaching experience did not indicate a significantly more positive score on the attitude instrument than kindergarten teachers without preschool teaching experience.

3. Kindergarten teachers with preschool teaching experience did not perceive any significant difference in the social-emotional adjustment to kindergarten between children who had attended preschool and those who had not.

4. Kindergarten teachers did not perceive children from more structured or cognitively oriented preschools as having greater difficulty in adjusting to the kindergarten program than those children from less structured preschool backgrounds.

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5. Kindergarten teachers with a higher ratio of preschool experienced children in their classes did not indicate a significantly more positive score on the attitude instrument than kindergarten teachers with fewer preschool experienced children.

In addition to these findings, implications of this study and suggestions for further research were discussed.



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AS RELATED TO PRESCHOOL EXPERIENCE**

**By**

**Nancy E. Allan**

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**Dedicated**  
**to**  
**Kathy and Sue**

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

"A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops."<sup>1</sup>

Probably no single factor has greater influence on the teaching-learning process than the classroom climate which is created by the attitude and behavior of the teacher.<sup>2</sup> It is within this social setting that the interaction between teacher and pupil is consummated in the act of learning. Curriculum, methodology and instructional activities filter through the value system of the teacher as leader in the educative process.<sup>3</sup>

Further, the multi-faceted role of teaching requires constant adaptation to the diversity in both the human and pedagogical elements encountered daily. Teachers at all

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<sup>1</sup>Henry Brooks Adams, The Education of Henry Adams (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1918), (2).

<sup>2</sup>J. W. Getzels and Herbert A. Thelen, "The Classroom Group as a Unique Social System," Fifty-sixth Yearbook. The Dynamics of Instructional Groups: Part II. (Chicago: National Society for the Study of Education, 1960), chapter 4, pp. 53-82.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



levels are subjected to research data and curricular innovation to which they must accommodate their methodology and program. New directions for education are continually mandated from local to national levels. Special programs are being developed to respond to the needs and interests of children with varying backgrounds and abilities.

Currently the United States is experiencing a burgeoning movement in early childhood education. Two major factors responsible for the emergence of preschool programs are 1) current child development research which underlines the importance of early learning and 2) increased parent demand for child care. These factors have contributed to the establishment of programs to intervene in a child's experiences prior to his entrance into public school. Enrollments in organized nursery school programs have tripled within the past ten years.<sup>4</sup>

If nursery school is becoming the initial rung on the formal educational ladder, consideration must be given to the effects of this education on subsequent schooling and later development. Prior to the proliferation of nursery schools, the home exerted the greatest influence on a child's earliest education. The new experiences that the child from a preschool brings to kindergarten may require adaptations in traditional programs to accommodate and build on this early training.

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<sup>4</sup>United States Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey: Nursery School Enrollments, October, 1974, p.53.

Kindergarten teachers may need to reevaluate both content and instructional strategies to determine whether the programs they are implementing are effectively meeting the needs and complementing the experiences of the preschool educated child.

Early childhood research dealing with teacher preferences for pupils with varying backgrounds, abilities and characteristics indicates that teachers generally prefer students with a diversity of experiences, a familiarity with school routines and ability to respond with "correct" answers.<sup>5</sup> Traditionally, a child's orientation to formal schooling has been the responsibility of the kindergarten. With the emergence of early childhood education programs, however, it is possible that kindergarten teachers may feel that this educational prerogative is being usurped by the preschool. Thus, kindergarten teachers may exhibit negative or unreceptive attitudes toward children who have had experiences in a preschool setting.

The teacher may be unprepared or unwilling to adapt the kindergarten program to provide the individualized experiences necessary to compensate for the entering child's familiarity with school procedures and instructional activities. Also, habits and behavior patterns practiced in a more open and spontaneous preschool milieu may result in non-conforming types of behavior on the part of

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<sup>5</sup>Jere Brophy and Sherry Willis, "Origins of Teachers' Attitudes Toward Young Children," Journal of Educational Psychology, 1974, 66 (4), pp. 520-529.



the preschool educated child operating in a more traditional and structured kindergarten atmosphere. The teacher may believe that these children are having difficulty adjusting to the kindergarten program when, in fact, they may be reacting to repetitious aspects of the curriculum as compared to their preschool experiences in a freer learning environment.

If the teacher lacks insight into her attitudes or biases, or is unprepared to adapt her instruction to the experiences of these children, negative relationships may develop between the attitudes and behaviors of both teacher and child which could ultimately result in an impaired learning experience.

#### Purpose of the Study

The present research was designed to explore four areas of relationship between kindergarten teachers and children with preschool experience. The questions of primary importance, from which five (5) hypotheses emerged, were as follows:

1. What are the attitudes of kindergarten teachers regarding the value of preschool experience for children?
2. Is there a relationship between preschool experience and the social-emotional adjustment of the child as rated by the kindergarten teacher?



3. Is there a relationship between teacher attitude toward preschool experience and her social-emotional adjustment rating of children with and without preschool experience?
4. Does the adjustment rating made by the kindergarten teacher correlate with attitude toward preschool experience?
5. Does the adjustment rating made by the kindergarten teacher differ significantly for preschool and non-preschool children?

Specific aspects of the research are discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

#### Importance of the Study

In the kindergarten classroom a great number and variety of activities and interpersonal exchanges take place within a single day. Jackson<sup>6</sup> has estimated that the elementary teacher engages in as many as one thousand interpersonal interchanges with students each day. The frequency of these encounters underlines the necessity for the teacher to be cognizant of her attitudes and resultant behaviors which influence her relationships with children and affect teaching-learning interaction.

It is intended that this study may assist the kindergarten teacher in examining her attitude toward preschool experience and clarifying her perceptions of children's

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<sup>6</sup>P. W. Jackson, Life In Classrooms (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 63.

social-emotional adjustment to kindergarten. No attempt is made in this research to examine the value of preschool experience on a child's subsequent intellectual or social development. Rather, this research was developed to assist the kindergarten teacher in expanding her self-awareness relative to her attitudes toward preschool education.

In Jersild's study of the relationship between self-understanding and education, he centers on the teacher, of whom he says

. . . understanding and acceptance of himself is the most important requirement in any effort he makes to help students to know themselves and to gain healthy attitudes of self-acceptance.<sup>7</sup>

#### Statement of the Problem

This research addressed the following questions: Do kindergarten teachers who express a negative attitude toward the value of preschool experience report children with preschool experience as having greater difficulty in adjusting to kindergarten? Do kindergarten teachers with preschool teaching experience express a positive attitude toward the value of preschool education for children? Do kindergarten teachers with preschool teaching experience

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<sup>7</sup> Arthur T. Jersild, When Teachers Face Themselves (New York: Columbia University Bureau of Publications, 1955), vii.

perceive children with preschool background as having less adjustment difficulty in kindergarten? Do kindergarten teachers report children coming from a structured type of preschool experience as having greater difficulty in kindergarten? Do kindergarten teachers with smaller percentages of preschool education children express a negative attitude toward the value of preschool experience? To answer these questions, hypotheses were developed, a population of teachers and children was identified, and methodologies were selected using instruments developed by the researcher.

#### Description of the Population

The population studied in this research included ninety (90%) percent of the kindergarten teachers in a large suburban school district. Ninety-one (91%) percent of the kindergarten students enrolled in that district were studied regarding their preschool attendance and their teacher's attitude toward their adjustment to kindergarten.

The city in which this school district is located is classified as an urban fringe city located in the metropolitan area adjacent to a large industrial city. The population is mainly white middle class with less than one percent racial-ethnic minority group representation in the schools.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>United States Department of Commerce: Bureau of the Census. Social and Economic Statistics Administration. General Social and Economic Characteristics: Michigan. 1970 Census Population, issued April, 1972, p. 132.



### Definition of Terms

Preschool: this term will encompass all organized pre-kindergarten programs considered in this study regardless of their sponsorship, specific objectives or professional credentialing. Programs may range from "custodial" type day care services to highly structured cognitively oriented curriculums. For purposes of this research, the terms preschool and nursery school will be used interchangeably.

Nursery or Preschool experience: attendance by a child at an organized nursery or preschool program for a minimum of three months prior to entrance into kindergarten.

Kindergarten: an educational reception center designed to help the child in his initial adjustment to organized schooling. The activities provided are for the purpose of induction and orientation of the child into public elementary school. The kindergarten provides experiences that help the child to increase his familiarity with other children, materials and primary learning activities. It is the part of the elementary school program which provides for children about five years of age.<sup>9</sup>

Early childhood education: this term encompasses education both at home and at school for children eight years

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<sup>9</sup>Edward W. Smith, with Stanley W. Krouse, Jr. and Mark M. Atkinson, The Educator's Encyclopedia (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961), p.78.

of age and under. It considers all aspects of development of the child--psychological, intellectual and physical from infancy through toddler years, nursery school, kindergarten and primary grades.<sup>10</sup>

Adjustment: "a dynamic condition in which the child's behavior fulfills his emotional needs and also is consistent with the demands of his cultural milieu."<sup>11</sup>

Attitude: "a relatively enduring system of evaluative, affective reactions based upon and reflecting the evaluative concepts or beliefs which have been learned about the characteristics of a social object or class of social objects."<sup>12</sup>

Structure: this term will be used to describe a means of classifying program models by curriculum methods. Weikart<sup>13</sup> and Karnes<sup>14</sup> conceptualize differences in curriculum methods

<sup>10</sup>Evelyn Weber, Early Childhood Education (Worthington, Ohio: Chas. A. Jones Publishing Co., 1970), p. 2.

<sup>11</sup>Carter V. Good, ed. Dictionary of Education (New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., Inc., 1959) p. 410.

<sup>12</sup>Marvin E. Shaw and Jack M. Wright, Scales for the Measurement of Attitudes (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, Inc., 1967, p. 3.

<sup>13</sup>David P. Weikart, "Preschool Programs: Preliminary Findings," Journal of Special Education, 1 (1967), pp. 163-181.

<sup>14</sup>M. B. Karnes, "Research and Development Program on Preschool Disadvantaged Children," Final Report, Vol. 1, University of Illinois, U. S. Office of Education (1969), p. 12.

by positing a spectrum of "structuredness". Programs are placed on this continuum according to the degree to which teachers plan or prescribe program activities and sequence presentations relative to a specific developmental theory. For purposes of this research, Montessori, Head Start and private nursery programs are considered to have a structured format.

Head Start program: created by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, operation Head Start was designed to assist communities in financing child development centers for children of limited opportunity at the pre-kindergarten level. Community Action Agencies organize the programs on a community-wide enrollment basis and sponsoring agencies provide health, social services and educational activities. Broad goals include improving health, confidence, self-respect, dignity and peer relations, strengthening family ties, providing opportunities for meeting various community helpers, broadening horizons and increasing language competencies through varied social experiences.<sup>15</sup> Within this framework, programs are tailored to local needs. Low pupil-teacher ratio (less than ten children per adult) is another favorable factor. The essential distinction between Head Start and most other preschool programs is that it is preventive in orientation and has been specifically undertaken to enhance the development of specific children from poor environmental areas.

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<sup>15</sup>Office of Economic Opportunity, United States Government, Report on Project Head Start, Washington, D.C., 1965, p. 10.

Montessori nursery: this program consists of three broad phases: exercises for practical life, sensory education and language activities. This method strives to develop proficiency with the basic tool subjects and basic concepts earlier than is customary in conventional American schools. The fundamental concept is that mental development is related to and dependent upon physical movement. The major goal is to provide "freedom within limits" for the child to develop mental, physical and psychological abilities. Montessorian preschool education differs from conventional nursery school practices by placing lesser emphasis on group activity, less attention to fantasy play and a stronger orientation to pre-academic and early academic skill development.<sup>16</sup>

Private nursery: a preschool program, sometimes under church or university auspices which enrolls children three and four years of age on a regular basis prior to kindergarten. A continuous and developmental educational program is usually provided under professionally qualified teachers.

Cooperative nursery: a program usually organized by parents who employ a teacher/director and assist in implementing a school program. The advantage of this type of program is the close contact of parents of children of similar age

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<sup>16</sup>Ellis D. Evans, Contemporary Influences in Early Childhood Education (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1975, p. 285.

and stage of development which provides opportunity to talk through problems and share responsibility. Taylor describes cooperative nurseries as "unique educational enterprises" because they include as learners two diverse populations--parents and children, and afford an opportunity for what she terms "practice teaching for parenthood".<sup>17</sup>

Day care centers: traditionally, these programs provide at least full day supervision and an emphasis on custodial care for preschool age children whose mothers are employed or are unable to care for them. At one extreme, day care may be limited to 'child-keeping' where attention is focused on meeting a child's basic physical needs at a private licensed home. The opposite extreme may involve a comprehensive program with a much expanded concept of service to children that includes an educational component, diagnostic services, medical and social services and a nutritional program--often referred to as developmental day care.<sup>18</sup> Swift distinguishes the basic difference between day care centers and nursery schools:

The day nursery serves the function of substituting for maternal care of the child during a major part of the day. It puts its emphasis upon meeting the basic developmental needs of

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<sup>17</sup>Katharine Whiteside Taylor, Parents and Children Learn Together (New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1967), p. 201.

<sup>18</sup>S. Feeney, "Child Care Debate: Key Questions", Compact, July-August, 1973, pp. 25-26.



the child--physical, emotional, social and intellectual--during that period. The nursery school serves as a supplement to the home experience of the child, covers a relatively shorter period of time, and places its primary emphasis upon selective educational experiences.<sup>19</sup>

### Hypotheses

This research tested the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between the attitudes of kindergarten teachers toward preschool experience and their perception of the adjustment difficulty of preschool educated children.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between the preschool teaching experience and the attitude of kindergarten teachers toward the value of preschool experience.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between the preschool teaching experience of kindergarten teachers and their perception of the adjustment difficulty of kindergarten children with preschool experience.

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<sup>19</sup>Joan W. Swift, "Effects of Early Group Experience: The Nursery School and Day Nursery," in Review of Child Development Research, I, ed. Hoffman and Hoffman (New York: Russell Sage Corporation, 1964), pp. 250-251.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference in adjustment ratings by kindergarten teachers between children with preschool experience in a structured learning environment (such as Montessori, Head Start and private nursery programs) and children with preschool experience in cooperative nursery or day care programs with less structured formats.

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant relationship between the percentage of preschool children in a kindergarten class and the attitude of the kindergarten teacher toward preschool experience.

#### Limitations of Study

The following limitations are noted with regard to this study:

1. This study was limited to female kindergarten teachers; thus, inference may not be made to male kindergarten teachers.

2. The subjects for this study were selected from one school district; thus, no generalizations can be made to other school populations.

3. To qualify as a nursery school pupil, the child must have attended an organized preschool program for a minimum of three months prior to kindergarten.

4. Although most of the preschools attended were familiar to this researcher, the type of individual programs



was not considered except in hypothesis four.

5. This study was limited by the inherent weaknesses in instrumentation. The instruments do not correct for the possibility of a false or dishonest response if a) the subject feels coerced or wishes to make a desired impression; b) if the subject lacks sufficient insight to make objective and descriptive responses concerning behavior.

#### Assumptions of the Study

1. A child's preschool experience has some effect on his kindergarten behavior.
2. Preschool and non-preschool children in this study are similar in chronological age and socio-economic status.
3. Kindergarten teachers are not necessarily aware of the preschool background of children in their classes.
4. Teachers' attitudes toward students have an effect on teacher acceptance of the child's behavior.

#### Summary and Organization of the Study

In this chapter, a brief introduction to the study was presented. The purpose and importance of the research was discussed. Problem statements and hypotheses to be tested were identified. The population and sample as well as a definition of terms were presented. Finally, the limitations and assumptions basic to the study were noted.

The format for the succeeding chapters is as follows:

Chapter 2 treats the literature and relevant research which was reviewed for the study. The design of the study including the methodology and the development of the instruments is presented in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4 the analysis and the discussion of the data collected is presented. The final chapter incorporates a summary, conclusions, implications of the study and suggestions for further research based on these findings.

## Chapter 2

### A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

In this chapter, the literature pertinent to the philosophies and specific programs of preschool education, the influence of preschool experience on the social-emotional adjustment of kindergarten children and teachers' attitudes toward preschool education are reviewed. The findings of the studies reviewed are discussed in relation to the investigations undertaken in this study.

It is not within the scope of this research to evaluate the merits of or to identify the range of positions in the controversy over intellectual versus social development in the preschool. Nor is any attempt made to examine the evidence or to substantiate the value of preschool experience and its ultimate contribution to the subsequent development of the child. Rather, this research explored the attitudes of kindergarten teachers regarding preschool experience and the consequent adjustment of the preschool trained child who may enter the kindergarten with a variety of new experiences, knowledge and skills.

### Early Childhood Research

In 1926, Bertrand Russell stated

The nursery school if it became universal, could in one generation remove the profound differences in education which at present divide the classes, could produce a population all enjoying the mental and physical development which is now confined to the most fortunate, and could remove the terrible dead weight of disease and stupidity and malevolence which now makes progress so difficult.<sup>1</sup>

In the fifty intervening years since Russell's statement, the United States has witnessed the ascendancy of preschool education as a national concern. The proliferation of types of nursery schools range from public supported programs to franchised-for-profit day care centers. The federal government has subsidized, and hence regulated to some degree, an increasing number of early childhood programs designed to establish standards of quality regarding licensing, programs and facilities. Local, state and national legislation is affecting the education of preschool children and regulating the quality and preparation of those who will teach them.

Between 1964 and 1974 enrollment in nursery schools tripled from approximately 470,000 to 1.6 million. During that period the total population of three and four year olds decreased from 8.4 to 7.0 million, but the proportion enrolled in school

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<sup>1</sup>Bertrand Russell, Education and the Good Life (London: Horace Liveright, Inc. 1926), pp. 229-230.

increased from ten percent to twenty-nine percent of the age group. Current enrollment based on total population is as follows:<sup>2</sup>

Three year olds:  
                   males     - 15.8%  
                   females - 15.3%

Four year olds:  
                   males     - 33.3%  
                   females - 33.8%

Recent research has indicated the importance of providing experiences to stimulate the intellectual and social-emotional growth of children during their earliest childhood years. Among scholars in the fields of education, measurement and developmental psychology there are those who posit that education in the earliest years is vital to the foundation of a child's intellectual and social growth. Jensen states

Our present knowledge of the development of learning abilities indicates that the preschool years are the most important years of learning in the child's life. A tremendous amount of learning takes place during these years; and this learning is the foundation for all further learning.<sup>3</sup>

Bloom's<sup>4</sup> child development research indicates that I.Q. is quite variable early in life and stabilizes after four to five years. Thus, he contends, these early years are the

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<sup>2</sup>United States Bureau of the Census, loc. cit.

<sup>3</sup>Arthur R. Jensen, "Learning in the Preschool Years," Journal of Nursery Education, 1963, 18 (2), p. 133.

<sup>4</sup>Benjamin S. Bloom, Stability and Change in Human Characteristics (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1964), p. 26.

period of greatest intellectual growth and the optimal time for intervention programs.

Two extreme positions in the controversy over the long term intellectual effects of preschool training are stated respectively by Deutsch and Elkind each with opposing views. Results of experiments conducted by Deutsch<sup>5</sup> have indicated that preschool experiences are associated with higher scores on intelligence tests and that cognitive advantages of such training are increasingly evident as the child proceeds through the grades. Elkind,<sup>6</sup> on the other hand, affirms that there is no evidence that preschool education has any lasting effects on mental growth and development. He warns that too much formal instruction too early may result in "intellectually burned children".

Most of the early nursery school research as reported in the yearbook of the National Society for the Study of

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<sup>5</sup>Martin Deutsch, "The Disadvantaged Child and the Learning Process," pp. 163-181, in A. H. Passow (ed.), Education in Depressed Areas (New York: Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1963).

<sup>6</sup>David Elkind, "Interpretive Essays on Jean Piaget," Children and Adolescents (Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 132.

Education (1940)<sup>7</sup> is expressive of these divergent positions on intellectual effects of preschool training. More current research edited by Hoffman and Hoffman<sup>8</sup> is directed primarily at measuring the intellectual growth and long term cognitive effects resulting from nursery school training.

Attempts to measure the social-emotional development of children resulting from preschool experience have also yielded inconsistent or contradictory results. The inherent difficulty in defining and measuring aspects of human behavior has hampered research in this area.

Regardless of the educator's position on the eventual results of early intervention, education at the preschool level is rapidly becoming a fact of life and the effects of this education on the child's later development must be considered.

### Influences of Preschool Education

In an important early investigation, Walsh studied the personality traits of nursery and non-nursery school children comparable in age, intelligence, general physical development

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<sup>7</sup>W. C. Olson and B. O. Hughes, "Subsequent Growth of Children With and Without Nursery School Experience." Intelligence: Its Nature and Nurture. Thirty-ninth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II. Edited by G. D. Stoddard. Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Co., 1940.

<sup>8</sup>Martin L. and Lois W. Hoffman, eds., Review of Child Development Research (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1966).

and home background over a six month period. She found that

. . . the nursery school children became less inhibited, more spontaneous and more socialized with training. They developed more initiative, independence, self-assertion, and self-reliance than the control group. They showed a greater increase of curiosity and interest in their environment.

. . . the nursery group was less inhibited than the controls. Types of behavior on which this judgment was based involved initiative, curiosity, and self-assertiveness. Specific items included: "does not wait to be told", "climbs for objects", "insists on rights", "resents interference", "self-dependent in play", "tendency to argue", "has fewer fears", "asks questions demanding explanations", and "finds how mechanical toys operate".<sup>9</sup>

Consonant with this view, Moustakas surveyed and evaluated personality investigations conducted in nursery schools. His findings showed that with increasing nursery school attendance children made higher scores on emotional maturity scales, exhibited more persistent, aggressive behavior, displayed more hostility, were less sensitive to suggestion and criticism and offered more resistance to authority.<sup>10</sup>

Similarly, Green in comparing two groups of kindergarten children, one with and one without nursery school background, concluded that

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<sup>9</sup>Mary Elizabeth Walsh, "The Relation of Nursery School Training to the Development of Certain Personality Traits," Child Development II, (1931), pp. 72-73.

<sup>10</sup>C. E. Moustakas, "Personality Studies Conducted in Nursery Schools," Journal of Educational Research, 46. (November, 1952), pp. 161-177.



. . . the group with nursery school experience was more independent, showed more poise, and needed less control in choice of activities, choice of routines, and the making of social contacts than did the other children.<sup>11</sup>

It must be pointed out that these more independent behaviors and personality traits of preschool educated children may be interpreted by the kindergarten teacher as resistant or aggressive and may negatively affect both her perceptions of the child's adjustment and their interaction in the teaching-learning environment. The paradox inherent in the results of the research reveals a difference in perception of what constitutes positive personality characteristics among children.

More recent studies such as those by Swift using sociometric techniques to determine whether social adjustment in the elementary school years is related to nursery school attendance report

In general, there are no clear-cut findings which reflect superior social adjustment on the part of children who have attended nursery school over those who have not.<sup>12</sup>

Swift believes that the inconclusive results of research on the global effects of nursery school experience are frequently due to the failure of researchers to relate

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<sup>11</sup>Katherine B. Green, "Relation Between Kindergarten and Nursery Schools," Childhood Education, 7 (1931), pp. 352-355.

<sup>12</sup>Swift, op. cit., p. 255.

expected changes (e.g., sensory-motor, social or intellectual) to specific features of the programs which are thought to be relevant antecedents. Further, she notes that most nursery studies suggest that effects depend largely upon the extent to which a program supplements (rather than duplicates) the experiences that children receive at home or elsewhere. Swift also suggests that nursery programs depend for their effectiveness upon the skill of the individual teacher and the socio-emotional climate in which activities are pursued. She concludes that diffuse programs leave a substantial degree of potential effectiveness to chance.<sup>13</sup>

Jersild noted that children who have had nursery school experience enter into a decidedly larger number of social contacts than do children who have not attended nursery school.<sup>14</sup> According to his findings, the opportunities for social participation afforded by the nursery school do not submerge the young child's individuality. Rather, the child, although participating fully in social intercourse with his fellows and avoiding unprompted aggressions, increasingly defends his own interests, property and activities against exploitation by

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Arthur T. Jersild and Mary D. Fite, The Influence of Nursery School Experience on Children's Social Adjustments (New York: Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1939) p. 100.

others.<sup>15</sup> Jersild cautions, however, that the pattern of social adjustment may vary considerably from child to child. In appraising the condition of a given child, or the effect of the nursery school environment upon him, it is necessary to consider his various acts in relation to the record of his behavior as a whole.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to affecting the quality of his relationships with his teacher, the influence of preschool experience may cause the child to interact in a less submissive and dependent manner in his relationships with his peers.

Peterson's study of the effects of previous nursery school attendance upon five year old children entering kindergarten, found that the preschool group revealed a more outgoing, affectionate and sociable nature as well as being more independent, aggressive and selfish. Five year old children evidenced a greater degree of the development of such traits as initiative, self-reliance, decisiveness and tact to inspire others to follow and cooperate. They were more responsible both for themselves and for the other children. They displayed greater independence of adult attention to provide activities for them; sought more commendation, notice and sanction; worked with others to a greater degree; evidenced a greater desire

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 108.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 109.

to defend rights in which property rights were involved; were more actively defensive of themselves when crossed; and displayed more rivalry as well as a greater disposition to do good.<sup>17</sup>

In contrast the non-preschool children exhibited more retiring behavior in such traits as submission to authority, respect of other's property rights, sympathetic response and respect of individual rights in regard to their own behavior. These children were also found to be more critical of the behavior, actions, words, attitudes and work of others. They displayed more maternal types of behavior and were more sensitive and polite.<sup>18</sup>

In an independent review of nursery research, Sears and Dowley state

It is clear that attendance at nursery school, in and of itself, does not radically alter personalities of children. The evidence suggests, but not strongly, that certain social participation skills are enhanced by a good nursery school experience and that in certain cases these effects can be observed several years later.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Theresa J. Peterson, "A Preliminary Study of the Effects of Previous Nursery School Attendance Upon Five-year-olds Entering Kindergarten" unpublished master's thesis, University of Iowa, 1936.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>P. Sears and E. Dowley, "Research on Teaching in the Nursery Schools," in N. Gage (ed.) Handbook of Research on Teaching, (1963), p. 850.

### Teacher Evaluation of Preschool Experience

Results of studies dealing with the social-emotional adjustment of preschool trained children in kindergarten and early elementary grades often vary considerably depending upon the objectivity of the researcher. Generally, in studies conducted by an independent researcher, the preschool experienced group are rated superior on social adjustment criteria. However, when the rating is conducted by the kindergarten teacher, the preschool trained child is often perceived as less socially adjusted--an attitude directly related to teacher response to the strongly assertive characteristics of these children.

In the first of three studies which compared children on their social status and acceptability in later years, Angell<sup>20</sup> cited that pupils who had attended nursery school received more approval and were more accepted by their classmates than non-nursery pupils. But they received a more positive rating in only one out of five traits from their classroom teacher.

In contrast Bonney and Nicholson<sup>21</sup> found that children with preschool experience showed no clear advantage over non-preschoolers. This view is mitigated, however, by their

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<sup>20</sup>Dorothy B. Angell, "Differences in Social Behavior Between Elementary School Children who have Attended Nursery School and those who have not attended Nursery School," unpublished master's thesis, North Texas State College, 1954.

<sup>21</sup>Merl E. Bonney and Ertie Lou Nicholson, "Comparative Social Adjustments of Elementary School Pupils With and Without Preschool Training," Child Development, XXIX (1958), p. 126.

suggestion that since the children were rated by their elementary teachers and tested by sociometric techniques, it is possible that the preschoolers received benefits not valued or amenable to measurement by elementary school standards.<sup>21</sup>

Lamson<sup>22</sup> found that the personality rating of a group of nursery and non-nursery children was judged by teachers in the areas of self-service, emotional control and social adjustments. The variation between the nursery group and the non-nursery group with reference to eighteen variables on the scale was treated by the statistical procedure of analysis of variance. She found no significant difference between the two groups with reference to chronological age, height, weight, intelligence quotient or reading achievement. However, there was a significant difference between the groups with reference to personal adjustments as measured by teachers' judgments recorded on a rating scale. The superiority was in favor of the non-nursery group.

Weller also conducted a study to determine the effects of pre-kindergarten experience on the behavior and performance

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<sup>22</sup>E. E. Lamson, "A Follow-up Study of a Group of Nursery School Children" in Intelligence: It's Nature and Nurture, (ed.) Guy Montrose Whipple, National Society for the Study of Education (1940), XXXIX, No. 2, pp. 231-236.

of children enrolled in a regular kindergarten program. She concluded that kindergarten teachers do not consider children who have attended preschool more mature in five major areas of adjustment to kindergarten--social, intellectual, emotional, interests and skills.<sup>23</sup>

Eighty-four children were studied by Brown and Hunt with respect to the relationship between nursery school attendance and teachers' ratings of adjustment to kindergarten. In this work, much supportive evidence for the hypotheses developed and the research undertaken in this study was found. The basic structure followed a paired replicates model. Each pair consisted of two children drawn from the same kindergarten class, one who had attended nursery school for at least one year and the other who had not. Each pair was matched for social status, age, sex, ordinal position in the family, and I.Q. Four independent graphic rating scales were constructed to determine adjustment in the following areas:

1. child's adjustment to kindergarten activities
2. child's adjustment to his peers
3. general level of adjustment exhibited by the child in his routine relations with his teacher
4. child's personal or "inner" adjustment

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<sup>23</sup>Mary Alice Weller, "An Analysis of the Effects of a Formal Pre-kindergarten School Experience on the Adjustment of Children Enrolled in a Regular Kindergarten Program," University of Iowa, 1968, pp. 125-127.

Twenty-three kindergarten teachers were involved in rating these children. The results of this study indicate that

. . . with respect to personal adjustment, participation in group activities, and relations with other children, non-nursery school children are rated by their teachers as better adjusted than those who have attended nursery school.<sup>24</sup>

In discussing this study, Brown and Hunt point out that their results (reflective of teacher attitudes) quite clearly fail to support the hypothesis that nursery school attendance will enhance later school adjustment, at least relative to comparable non-attending children. On the contrary, the indications are that children who have not been to nursery school are perceived by their teachers to be generally better adjusted than are children who have attended such schools.

This study did not demonstrate "absolute" differences in adjustment, but differences that are reflected in the way that the observer (teacher) perceives the child. (Italics mine.) Further, they point out that judgments of adjustment obtained by simply summing a number of segmental attributes may be quite different from a judgment which takes account of the gestalt of such attributes in a given individual. A

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<sup>24</sup>Ann Wilson Brown and Raymond G. Hunt, "Relations Between Nursery School Attendance and Teachers' Ratings of Some Aspects of Children's Adjustment in Kindergarten," Child Development, XXXII, 3, (September, 1961), p. 589.



particular collection of traits, taken individually, may suggest "good adjustment", but combined in an individual it may not be optimal for "good adjustment". Thus a global rating may yield very different results from a simple set of attributes.

Brown and Hunt conclude:

While it is not at all simple to account for the results obtained in this investigation, we might note some of the seemingly more plausible hypotheses. Firstly, it is generally true that nursery school offers to the child a freedom and lack of restriction which may run counter to the somewhat greater conformity demanded in the kindergarten. The use of individual initiative seems to be stressed in many nursery schools whereas in kindergarten there are more directed types of activity. Those behavior patterns acquired in nursery school could influence the kindergarten teacher's perception of the child's adjustment.

It is also possible that redundancy of kindergarten and nursery school activities may lead to some primitivation of behavior. A child may become a problem in kindergarten, who has not been one before, because of the repetition of games, songs, naps, art, rhythms, etc. He may show problematic behavior because he is sincerely bored or because this previous knowledge of the curriculum may make him want to show his classmates that he knows all about it and variously try to enhance his status.<sup>25</sup>

As a related point, Brown and Hunt consider that nursery school may foster development of habit patterns which appear to have negative qualities and which may, in a very

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 593.

young child, lead to behavior which is perceived by the teacher as indicative of poor adjustment. They point out that the child may not actually be less well adjusted but may appear so to the teacher because of his seeming nonchalance and/or independence. The researchers conclude that these perceptions may be the reasons that teachers rated nursery children lower in group, personal and activity adjustment. They further note the possibility that nursery school attendance may not be the only variable related to the observed social difficulties of these children. They suggest that the nursery child may have been less well-adjusted originally than the others and this factor may have precipitated his enrollment in nursery school.<sup>26</sup>

Ezekiel<sup>27</sup> has noted a child's egocentricity to increase with length of stay in nursery school which may account for negative reactions from teachers. There is also a greater frequency of fights and quarrels among children with preschool experience according to Jersild's<sup>28</sup> research. He suggests that it may be habits such as these on which the teacher is basing her opinion of poor social adjustment.

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>L. F. Ezekiel, "Changes in Egocentricity of Nursery School Children", Child Development (1931), 2, pp. 74-75.

<sup>28</sup>A. Jersild and M. Fite, "Children's Social Adjustment in Nursery School, Journal of Experimental Education (1937), 6, pp. 161-166.

In her study of the influence of nursery school training upon kindergarten adjustment as reported by kindergarten teachers, Cushing posited that

Derogatory remarks concerning the adjustment of nursery school children to kindergarten on the part of kindergarten teachers may frequently emanate from experiences with isolated cases to which any of the following factors may be contributory:

1. The lower chronological age of the nursery child combined frequently with high intelligence--such a child tends to present a problem in a conventional school group at any level.
2. The freedom and lack of restriction in the nursery school which may run counter in some instances to the greater conformity demanded in the kindergarten.
3. The use of initiative stressed in nursery school as against passive participation in the more directed types of activity of the kindergarten.
4. The fact that it is highly probable that a selective behavior factor influences enrollment in the nursery schools, that is, a higher proportion of "difficult" children probably find their way to nursery schools as they are set up at present.
5. A certain antagonism and distrust of the nursery school on the part of the kindergarten teacher, so that she may unconsciously be more highly critical of the nursery trained child.
6. The fact that the term 'nursery school' is used at present to convey a variety of situations and a varied length of training. There is a current tendency to loosely characterize any child who has ever attended any sort of preschool group for any length of time as a 'nursery school' child.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Hazel M. Cushing, "A Tentative Report of the Influence of Nursery School Training upon Kindergarten Adjustment as Reported by Kindergarten Teachers," Child Development, V, (1934), p. 306.

Cushing addressed herself sensitively to the concerns of kindergarten teachers relative to the adjustment of pupils with nursery school experience. She noted

Frequent fears have been voiced by kindergarten teachers and also by parents to the effect that children experiencing nursery school might be 'spoiled' for kindergarten, that they would be more or less blase because of the similiarity of materials presented at both levels, that the greater freedom granted in the nursery school environment would militate against cooperative behavior in the more restricted and directed atmosphere of the kindergarten, that parents would be less satisfied with the kindergarten regime, that they would tend to expect much more personal consideration for themselves and their children than is possible for the kindergarten teacher to grant in view of the large number of children committed to her care.<sup>30</sup>

Yet another study by Sutton-Smith concurs with Cushing. He notes that in the kindergarten adjustment patterns of the child who has attended nursery school there is an additional consideration. It is possible that kindergartens and elementary schools may stress and attempt to develop different qualities and attitudes from those which the nursery school encouraged in the child. For example, the freedom and spontaneity, so valued in some nursery schools may not be so highly regarded by some kindergarten and elementary teachers. The teacher in a structured and traditionally rigid elementary school may highly value conformity and compliance and hence

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 311.

perceive any deviation from these standards as disruptive to the classroom environment.<sup>31</sup>

### Teacher Attitude and Behavior

It is generally agreed by educators that with all children, but especially the very young, the teacher assumes monumental importance in establishing the classroom atmosphere in which attitudes about self and school evolve. The teacher's attitude toward the child's abilities, background and experiences, along with the teacher's role perception are of paramount significance. These attitudes and perceptions are a reflection of the complex facets of the teacher's personality.

The educational significance of the direct influence of the teacher's personality upon the impressionable personalities of children is discussed in Thompson's observations of the dynamic structure of teacher-pupil interaction.

. . . Although there are many different sources of social influence within the classroom, the teacher's behavior tends to establish the key note of this "social climate." The teacher, like any other person, has a complex personality. His psychological needs, attitudes, prejudices, conflicts and personal-social values are translated into behavior patterns which become potent influences on his pupils' social growth.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Brian Sutton-Smith, Child Psychology (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1973), p. 350.

<sup>32</sup>George E. Thompson, Child Psychology (New York: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1952), p. 667.

Further evidence relative to teacher influence on student behavior is cited by Ryan:

. . . In general, psychiatrists and mental hygienists agree that teachers play an important part in determining children's behavior. Many of them put the school with the childhood associations next to the home as a significant factor in the development of personality, and consider the teacher second only to the parent in influencing for good or evil the mental health of the child.<sup>33</sup>

The expression of the teacher's personality in interaction with students points out the vital importance of assisting the teacher in self-analyzing behaviors to gain insight into personal attitudes and emotions.

In exploring the hypothesis that the style of teaching is an expression of the teacher's basic personality reactions, Symonds concluded that teaching is essentially an expression of personality. He states that the teacher adapts himself to teaching in a manner that is harmonious with his expression toward life in general. Methods and procedures learned may influence teaching superficially but they do not determine the nature of the relation of a teacher to his pupils or the teacher's basic attitude toward teaching.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> W. C. Ryan, Mental Health Through Education (New York: The Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publications, 1938), p. 315.

<sup>34</sup> P. M. Symonds, "Evaluation of Teacher Personality," Teachers College Record, 48:21-34, October, 1946.

An extensive study by Silberman examined the extent to which attitudes toward students and perceptions of their abilities and interactions are evidenced in the teacher's classroom behavior. This work points out that "teachers' attitudes are revealed in their actions in spite of the many forces operating to contain their expression".<sup>35</sup> Teachers' attitudes correlate closely with differential teacher behavior and significantly affect the quality and quantity of contact they have with their students. Further, they affect the sense of community and psychological safety which they engender in the classroom.

Studies by Buswell<sup>36</sup> and Kasper<sup>37</sup> have indicated that the basic assumption underlying most research in teaching is the pedagogical truism that teachers' attitudes are highly significant for student learning.

A series of research projects by H. H. Anderson and his colleagues analyzed the influence of teacher attitude and behavior upon primary and elementary school children. These research efforts produced a series of internally consistent

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<sup>35</sup>Melvin L. Silberman, "Behavioral Expression of Teachers' Attitudes Toward Elementary School Students," Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 60, 1969, p. 402.

<sup>36</sup>M. M. Buswell, "The Relationship Between the Social Structure of the Classroom and the Academic Success of the Pupils," Journal of Experimental Education, 1953, 22, pp. 37-52.

<sup>37</sup>A. A. Kasper, "A Study of the Relationships Among Classroom Climate, Emotional Adjustment and Reading Achievement," Dissertation Abstracts, 1956, 16, pp. 1399-1400.

findings. One research project significant to this study concluded that the dominative and integrative contacts of the teacher with the students set a pattern of behavior that spreads throughout the classroom. Thus, the behavior of the teacher, more than that of any other individual, sets the climate of the class.<sup>38</sup>

In discussing the relationships of instructor to student and factors influencing predispositions to learn, Bruner emphasized that

The regulation of this authority relationship affects the nature of the learning that occurs, the degree to which a learner develops an independent skill, the degree to which he is confident of his ability to perform on his own, and so on. The relations between one who instructs and one who is instructed is never indifferent in its effect upon learning.<sup>39</sup>

In these situations, the reliability of role behavior (that is, the conformity of students to the role expectations of the teacher) serves as the major source of control to avoid chaos and accomplish the school's goals.<sup>40</sup> Early in their school experience, students become aware of teachers'

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<sup>38</sup>H. H. Anderson and Helen M. Brewer, "Studies of Teachers' Classroom Personalities. I: Dominative and Socially Integrative Behavior of Kindergarten Teachers", Psychological Monographs, 6: 1945, p. 278.

<sup>39</sup>Jerome S. Bruner, Toward a Theory of Instruction (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1966) p. 42.

<sup>40</sup>David W. Johnson, The Social Psychology of Education (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970), p. 50.



expectations, assume the legitimacy of those expectations and adjust their behaviors to fulfill them to the best of their ability. Although the flow of role expectations goes both ways, the greatest degree of influence lies in the downward communication of role expectations in a hierarchy. That is, the expectations of the teacher toward the role behavior of the students tend to carry the most weight in the classroom.<sup>41</sup>

Attitudes, like expectations, may be communicated to another, and once a teacher forms a particular attitude toward a child, the teacher is likely to treat this child in individualized ways. The child, then, may begin to respond differentially and in ways that will tend to complement and reinforce the teacher's attitudes. Thus, attitudes, like expectations, have the potential for affecting students and for functioning as self-fulfilling prophecies. Brophy and Good<sup>42</sup> contend that teachers' attitudes can affect teacher-student interaction in much the same way as teachers' expectations can.

A student is aware of whether the teacher likes or dislikes him--and so are his classmates. This awareness is likely to affect the responses of the student to the teacher, probably causing the student to behave in ways that will reinforce the

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>42</sup>Jere E. Brophy and Thomas L. Good, Teacher-Student Relationships: Causes and Consequences (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1974), p. 130-131.

teacher's attitudes. Thus, a student who enjoys the teacher's approval will, in all likelihood, behave in ways designed to make the teacher like him even more. One may then assume that rejected students may begin to respond in ways that will increase the teacher's degree of rejection.<sup>43</sup>

Jersild and Fite note that the influence of teacher attitudes on the child's adjustment at the earliest school levels is both direct and indirect. Directly, teachers' influence comes through the personal contact which they have with their children and the techniques which they use in handling (or ignoring) the various difficulties which arise; indirectly, through the kind of environment they set up and the influence of their attitudes toward any child on the attitudes of all the other children toward him. They note that, to a large extent, behavior acceptable to the teacher becomes the behavior acceptable to the children in the group, and what the teacher disapproves of will invariably be disapproved of by the children.<sup>44</sup>

Findings of studies to determine teacher's preferences toward qualities and types of student behavior indicate that, in general, teachers prefer conforming and orderly students. The next most favored group are dependent, passive and

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Jersild and Fite, op. cit., p. 101.

acquiescent students followed by flexible and non-conforming students. The least preferred group were the independent, active and assertive students.<sup>45</sup>

These findings suggest that there is some consistency in the personality configuration of those who choose to become teachers in our society, and/or the type of training which that person receives at teacher education institutions which causes teachers to value compliance and conformity over independence and creativity.<sup>46</sup>

A research study on the characteristics of teachers was directed by Ryans. He noted tendencies for teachers with extended teaching experience (and likewise age) to score significantly lower than younger, less experienced teachers on variables such as flexibility, adaptability, understanding, friendliness, imagination, stimulation and enthusiasm.<sup>47</sup>

Thus, teachers' attitudes, behaviors, experience and role perception are factors which influence the classroom climate and have significant impact on the teaching-learning environment.

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<sup>45</sup>Brophy and Good, op. cit., p. 18.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>David G. Ryans, Characteristics of Teachers: Their Description, Comparison and Appraisal (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1960), p. 391.

### Preschool Programs

Sigel defines the preschool environment as a group setting away from home for children under public school age; i.e., children ranging in age from two to five years, under the guidance of teachers. He describes the ambiguity of the educational component in terms of substantive areas because preschool programmers have not yet agreed upon a body of knowledge or set of skills that is expected to be transmitted to children. The nature of programs and behavioral objectives are usually determined by the bias and perspective of the preschool educators--thus it is very difficult to compare the effectiveness of various programs.<sup>48</sup>

Preschool programs vary widely in the specifics of their educational philosophy and the content of their curricula. Because of the variety of sponsoring agencies which establish programs to meet their individual needs and goals, there appears to be no single approved pattern for preschool education. Many program descriptions, however, reveal similarities in an educational plan that creates an environment which provides varied experiences for children to develop mentally, socially, emotionally and physically.

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<sup>48</sup>Irving E. Sigel, "Developmental Theory and Preschool Education: Issues, Problems and Implications," Early Childhood Education, National Society for the Study of Education, Seventy-first Yearbook, Part II, 1972, p. 15.

Weikart groups preschool teaching methods on the basis of their specific curriculum orientation. They may be summarized as follows:

1. Traditional nursery school methods. "Watching and waiting for the child's needs to emerge and determine the timing of different activities." The primary goals are for social, emotional and motor development.
2. Structured nursery school methods. Carefully sequenced presentations of teacher-planned activities according to a specific developmental theory. The primary goals are cognitive and language development. Traditional nursery school materials and activities are frequently employed, but used to achieve pre-determined goals.
3. Task-oriented nursery school methods. Carefully sequenced presentations of teacher-planned program activities to accomplish specific pre-determined goals such as reading, arithmetic or logical thinking. New specifically designed, task-related activities and materials are employed; those of the traditional nursery school are not.<sup>49</sup>

Types of preschool programs at either extreme are defined by Moore and Kilmer:

The traditional nursery school emphasizes social skills, the learning potential of play, and the value of creativity in the use of materials and equipment, placing relatively little emphasis on formal instruction. Montessori schools and many of the demonstration experimental nursery schools, on the other hand, provide highly structured learning materials to be used by the child in prescribed ways, placing relatively little emphasis on the free exploration of materials and equipment and informal social interaction. Many contemporary programs for preschoolers are someplace between these two extremes . . . an attempt

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<sup>49</sup>Weikart, loc. cit.

to provide a balance of informal social experiences and challenging intellectual experiences. Learning opportunities are at times structured, teacher-directed activities but at other times the children are encouraged to explore and investigate on their own without direct teacher instruction.<sup>50</sup>

The Chamberlains delineate the functions of the preschool emphasizing that the preschool is best used for the development of security, initiative, individual capacities, social consciousness, responsibility and joy with self and the group. They stress that it is NOT designed to usurp the program and intentions of the kindergarten, but rather to give children the experiences in the reality of happy social living.<sup>51</sup>

Ultimately, the decisions related to the conceptual and theoretical bases for preschool programs will reflect variations in philosophical and psychological conceptions of child development and learning.

#### Preschool Daily Schedules

A typical daily schedule of nursery school activities was outlined by Moore and Kilmer. Flexibility is built into the program so that approximately one half of the child's school day is spent in free or unstructured play or activity.

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<sup>50</sup>Shirley G. Moore and Sally Kilmer, Contemporary Preschool Education: A Program for Young Children (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1973), p. 7.

<sup>51</sup>Orlo R. and Robert R. Chamberlain, "Do Children Need Preschool Experiences?" Childhood Education, April, 1956, p. 373.

The school day may begin and end with a free-activity time, while routines (such as clean up and snack) and some of the more formal group activities occur in the middle segment of the session. During free-activity time much of the basic equipment of the nursery school is made available to the group, and children are permitted considerable freedom in activities. Choices available during this time include play materials, table activities, stories and art materials. Each day one or two more formal teacher-directed activities are offered to several children at a time throughout the free activity time. Each child is invited to these activities some time during the morning. Balance and variation in the school program are accomplished in part by regulating the availability of materials and equipment. Most days include a time--possibly midsession--when all of the children come together for a group activity that may involve story telling, music, films or some special event such as a visit from a guest.

Within this framework of scheduled and unstructured time, most children participate in four to six different activities each day. Most voluntarily balance out their day with a variety of activities--some social, intellectual, aesthetic and teacher-directed, and some self-initiated. If a child consistently restricts his participation to a few activities, ignoring whole segments of the nursery school

program, his teacher is likely to intervene to encourage him to try some of the neglected activities. She also helps to ensure that the new experiences he tries are satisfying and rewarding, so that he will choose to try new ones at other opportunities.

Although the children do participate in some full group activities, much of their participation is with small subgroups. Play groups are typically composed of from two to five or six children. Table games that require turns, music or art activities that require supervision, and social studies or science projects that require teacher direction are usually offered to five or six children at a time so that each child has ample opportunity to hear, see, touch, try or comment. A ratio of three adults to twenty children makes it possible to offer activities to two or three small groups simultaneously. It also permits maintenance of an activity for an hour or two until all of the children have participated--four or five at a time. In this way, curriculum can be offered to groups of the optimum size for the particular activity, and individual differences in interests, skills and attention span can be accommodated.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Moore and Kilmer, op. cit., pp. 9-10.



### Kindergarten

In the United States, a kindergarten program is generally restricted to five year old children who spend eight to ten months in activities which precede formal academic work.<sup>53</sup> According to Headley,<sup>54</sup> forty to fifty percent of a typical kindergarten day is devoted to specific creative activities (art work, model building), music (singing, listening and rhythmic activities) and language based activities (story listening and telling, poetry, show and tell). The remaining time is distributed among self-care, free play and rest periods.

The kindergarten time schedule suggested by the school district studied in this research is as follows:<sup>55</sup>

9:15 - 9:30	Attendance, calendar, weather, sharing time
9:30 - 10:30	Work period, free play
10:30 - 10:40	Clean up
10:50 - 11:00	Story
11:00 - 11:15	Singing, rhythms, dramatics
11:15 - 11:25	Games
11:25 - 11:35	Special activities (audiovisual, science, readiness activities)
11:35 - 11:45	Preparation for going home

In describing the flexibility and the eclecticism of individual kindergarten programs, Evans cautions that the

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<sup>53</sup>Evans, op. cit., p. 44.

<sup>54</sup>Neith Headley, The Kindergarten: Its Place in the Program of Education (New York: The Center for Applied Research in Education, Inc., 1965) pp. 46-49.

<sup>55</sup>Kindergarten Idea Book, (Livonia Public Schools, Livonia, Michigan, 1967), p. 7.

broad parameters of curriculum, along with the characteristics of the kindergarten setting may simultaneously represent both a boon and a hazard to young children in allowing each kindergarten teacher to "do her own thing".<sup>56</sup>

Davis suggests that most kindergarten programs probably represent a fusion of three curriculum patterns: 1) the socialization pattern emphasizing social development and responsible group interaction, 2) the developmental pattern which is based upon "levels of experiences that permit growth to proceed at its normal rate and direction" and 3) the instructional pattern in which selection and sequencing of subject matter content are emphasized.<sup>57</sup>

The articulation and continuity of goals between nursery school and kindergarten constitute the introductory paragraphs of the bulletin of the National Council of State Consultants in Elementary Education. One of the basic concepts of this research is stated here:

Nursery school and kindergarten can provide a continuity of experience which can promote growth, challenge thinking, and encourage the development of many new skills--physical, social and mental. In a setting geared to children and under the guidance of a qualified and sensitive teacher, children can deal with the world on their own level and at their own

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<sup>56</sup>Evans, op. cit., pp. 45-46.

<sup>57</sup>D. Davis, Patterns of Primary Education (New York: Harper and Row, 1963) p. 35.

pace. Here is the opportunity to stimulate excitement in learning and to keep it alive; to encourage exploration, experimentation and discovery; and to build in children positive self-concepts and a growing sense of competency and worth.

Nursery schools and kindergartens which broaden and enrich a child's experience provide a strong, realistic and meaningful base on which next steps in education can be built.<sup>58</sup>

Experts studying various aspects of the kindergarten milieu agree that the teacher is the most important single element as a determinant of the classroom environment. Nixon states that what the teacher does in the classroom cannot be separated from her attitude. Her attitude needs to be one that not only includes kindness and concern, but also respect for the child and his abilities. Such an attitude is conducive to the active involvement of the child in the learning process.<sup>59</sup> The subject of this research is the description of these attitudes and their effects on student adjustment.

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<sup>58</sup>National Council of State Consultants in Elementary Education, Education for Children Under Six, 1968, p. 1.

<sup>59</sup>Ruth H. and Clifford L. Nixon, Introduction to Early Childhood Education (New York: Random House, 1970) p. 76.

### Summary

This chapter presented a review of literature and research related to attitudes of kindergarten teachers toward preschool experience for children and their perception of the adjustment problems of children with and without preschool experience. Preschool education and various programs were defined, diverse research on early child development was presented, and the effect of the relationship between teacher attitude and behavior upon student-teacher interaction was discussed.

In the following chapter, the description of the sample, the methodology, the development of the instruments, the design of the research and the testable hypotheses are discussed.

## CHAPTER 3

### DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This research was an outgrowth of concerns expressed by school district personnel relative to the current proliferation of preschool education and the potential effect of this growth on existing kindergarten programs. School administrators were interested in examining the attitudes of kindergarten teachers toward the concept of preschool education and the extent to which present kindergarten curriculum and instructional procedures might be influenced by these factors. A preliminary investigation revealed a dearth of current research describing the attitudes of a child's subsequent teachers toward his preschool background or the possible effects of this experience on existing school programs.

This study was designed to examine the attitudes of kindergarten teachers in this district toward preschool education and to determine whether these attitudes affected their perception of the preschool educated child's adjustment to kindergarten.

The remainder of Chapter 3 will describe the following aspects relevant to the research design:

1. Description of population

2. Methods of data procurement
3. Data processing
4. Testable hypotheses
5. Summary

### Description of Population

The school district from which the kindergarten teachers and pupils were selected for this study is located in a large suburban city in southeastern Michigan and encompasses approximately thirty-six square miles. The population is mainly middle class with about sixty percent of the wage earners being in professional, technical, supervisory occupations or employed as skilled craftsmen or small business entrepreneurs.<sup>1</sup>

The school system includes 34,413 students in four senior high schools (grades 9-12), ten junior high schools (grades 7-9), and thirty-three elementary schools (grades K-6). Minority students comprise less than 1 percent of the school population and the teaching staff has a 1.4 percent racial-ethnic minority representation.<sup>2</sup> Differences in socio-economic status and racial-ethnic representation for this population were not considered as variables for purposes of this study.

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<sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of Commerce: Bureau of the Census. Social and Economic Statistics Administration. General Social and Economic Characteristics: Michigan. 1970. Census of Population, issued April, 1972, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare: Office for Civil Rights. Directory of Public Elementary and Secondary Schools in Selected Districts, Fall, 1972, p. 169.

Ninety percent (90%) of the school district's kindergarten teachers participated in this study. All of the teachers were female. Specific data shown in Table 3.1 refer to years of teaching experience, years of kindergarten teaching experience and years of preschool teaching experience for the kindergarten teachers studied.

Table 3.1

## Range of Age and Experiential Levels of Kindergarten Teachers

	Minimum Value	Maximum Value	Mean	Standard Deviation
Age	27.0	59.0	42.3	9.5
Total Teaching Experience (years)	3.0	24.0	12.5	5.5
Kindergarten Teaching Experience (years)	1.0	21.0	10.3	5.7
Preschool Teaching Experience (years)	0.0	6.0	1.0	1.6

Data procured on ninety-one percent (91%) of the children enrolled in the district's kindergarten classes were used in this research. Kindergarten classes which included a very high or very low ratio of preschool educated children were not considered. It was the opinion of this researcher that a valid comparison between groups could not be made in a kindergarten class with either a very high or very low ratio of preschool educated to non-preschool educated children. The two percent (2%) of kinder-

garten children in special education programs were not considered because factors other than preschool attendance may have had an effect on their adjustment to kindergarten.

#### Methods of Data Procurement

In order to fulfill the requirements demanded by the hypotheses of this study, it was necessary for this researcher to develop three instruments to be used as data gathering methods. These were distributed to kindergarten teachers throughout the school year. Each instrument was collected and evaluated before the next was submitted.

The first instrument was a preschool attendance survey to determine the percentage and types of preschool attendance in each kindergarten class. This initial survey was conducted at the parent-teacher conference early in the school year. Because of the number of children involved in this study a questionnaire developed by the researcher was distributed to each parent attending the conference. It was comprised of a check list indicating attendance at three or more months of organized preschool and specification of the type of preschool attended. Preschool information on approximately three percent (3%) of the children whose parents did not complete a form was obtained through personal interviews or school records. Permission was granted by building principals and central office administrators to survey parents and collect pertinent data from kindergarten teachers. Letters were sent to each kindergarten teacher requesting cooperation in determining preschool attendance. Samples of the preschool survey questionnaire and letters requesting permission to collect data for this study are included in Appendices B and C.



Forty-nine percent of the 1,815 parents surveyed reported that their child had attended three or more months of some type of organized preschool before entering kindergarten. Table 3.2 delineates percentages of attendance and district totals for each type of preschool surveyed.

Table 3.2

## Preschool Attendance of Kindergarten Children

Type of Preschool	Number of Children	Percentage of Total Preschool Enrollment	Percentage of Total Kindergarten Enrollment
Title I or Head Start Program	180	20%	10%
Cooperative Nurseries	225	26%	13%
Day Care Centers	184	21%	10%
Montessori Schools	22	2%	1%
Private Nurseries	213	24%	12%
Other	58	7%	3%
Totals	882	100%	49%

Following the preschool attendance survey, a list of her class members was submitted to each kindergarten teacher. She was asked to evaluate each of her pupil's social-emotional adjustment to kindergarten in terms of the child's cooperativeness, eagerness to participate and learn, and willingness to conform to school routines. The check list ratings for the child's social-emotional adjustment to kindergarten on this instrument were weighted as follows:

- 1 - more than average difficulty in adjusting
- 2 - average difficulty in adjusting
- 3 - little or no difficulty in adjusting

Kindergarten teachers completing this rating scale were asked to judge the child's adjustment based on his or her behavior during the first weeks of his kindergarten year. At the time of this evaluation, the kindergarten teacher was simply requested to rate the child's adjustment based on her perceptions. She was not aware that the child's prior attendance at preschool was to be considered as a variable in this study.

In order to generate a statistical measure of each kindergarten teacher's evaluation of the social-emotional adjustment of children with and without preschool experience, a positive or negative difference was obtained by subtracting the mean scores of the non-preschool children from those of the preschool children.

The final instrument used in this research was developed by the investigator to measure the attitudes of the kindergarten teachers toward preschool education for children. This instrument consisted of ten statements each of which was followed by a Likert<sup>3</sup> scale and required one of five possible responses: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree. Five of the statements were considered to express a positive attitude toward preschool education and five expressed a negative posture. The person taking the test reacts to every statement by marking one of the five possible responses. The responses have weights of 5,4,3,2 and 1 for favorable statements and 1,2,3,4 and 5 for unfavorable ones.

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<sup>3</sup>Shaw and Wright, op.cit., pp. 195-197.

The subject's score is the sum of the weights of the responses checked. A high score indicates a highly favorable attitude, a low score, the opposite.<sup>4</sup> The range of possible scores on this survey was ten to fifty points. The preschool attitude survey is included in Appendix C.

Prior to distribution to the kindergarten teachers, a preliminary study of the attitude survey was conducted to eliminate ambiguity in the language of the instrument. A professional jury of twenty early childhood educators at both classroom and administrative levels offered critique and suggestions. Eleven of these people were directly involved in preschool programs and nine had experience in early childhood education beginning at the kindergarten level. Their recommendations were reviewed and analyzed and the instrument was revised to implement the proposed modifications before the teachers were surveyed. To determine the internal consistency reliability, scores on the instrument were analyzed. A coefficient alpha of .89 was calculated. A reliability of approximately .75 is considered sufficient in a measure classified as an attitude scale.<sup>5</sup> This analysis established the reliability of the instrument thus eliminating any need for further alteration.

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<sup>4</sup>Rensis Likert, "A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes," Archives of Psychology, Volume 22, No. 140 (1932).

<sup>5</sup>W. A. Mehrens and I. J. Lehmann, Measurement and Evaluation in Education and Psychology (Chicago: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1973), p. 570.

### Data Processing

The following data were transferred to IBM cards for statistical processing: demographic data on kindergarten teachers, their experiential levels in general teaching, kindergarten teaching, preschool teaching, scores obtained on both attitude and adjustment instruments and types of preschool (structured or unstructured) attended by their kindergarten children.

The statistical treatments used in this research were correlational analyses, univariate and multivariate analyses of variance.

### Testable Hypotheses

The primary purposes of this study were to assess the attitudes of kindergarten teachers in this district toward preschool experience and to determine the relationship, if any, of these attitudes to their perception of the social-emotional adjustment difficulty of their students.

The following null hypotheses were tested:

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between the attitudes of kindergarten teachers toward preschool experience and their perceptions of the social-emotional adjustment difficulty of preschool educated children.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between the preschool teaching experience and the attitude of kindergarten teachers toward the value of preschool experience for children.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship

between the preschool teaching experience of kindergarten teachers and their perception of the social-emotional adjustment of kindergarten children with preschool experience.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference in the adjustment ratings by kindergarten teachers between children with preschool experience in a structured learning environment (such as Montessori, Head Start and private nursery programs) and children with preschool experience in cooperative nursery or day care programs with less structured format.

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant relationship between the percentage of preschool children in a kindergarten class and the attitude of the kindergarten teacher toward preschool experience for children.

### Summary

In this chapter, the design of the study was presented and discussed. The population researched included the majority of kindergarten teachers and kindergarten students in a large suburban school district. The measurement instruments included a preschool attendance survey completed by parents, a kindergarten adjustment rating for each child and a preschool attitude survey--both completed by the kindergarten teacher. Results of the reliability analysis of the attitude instrument indicated that the instrument was acceptable. Correlational analysis, univariate and multivariate analysis of variance were used for the statistical analysis of the research data. Finally, the

testable hypotheses were presented.

In the following chapter, Chapter 4, an analysis and discussion of the research data will be presented.

## Chapter 4

### ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH DATA

The purpose of this chapter is to present, analyze and discuss the data relevant to each hypothesis. Simple correlations and analyses of variance were the statistical methods employed to analyze the data.<sup>1</sup>

A population of 40 kindergarten teachers was studied. Factors relevant to the study included their attitudes toward preschool education, their preschool teaching experience, the ratio of preschool educated children in their classes, and their perception of the adjustment of their students to kindergarten. All subjects were female.

A sample of 1,815 children from the district's total kindergarten enrollment was used. Attendance at organized preschool for three or more months prior to kindergarten and the child's adjustment to kindergarten as perceived by the teacher were the factors relevant to this study. It should be noted that the pupil-teacher ratio for kindergarten classes will be approximately double that of other elementary grades because kindergarten teachers meet with two classes of children on half-day sessions.

Kindergarten children of the teachers studied had varying types

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<sup>1</sup>In this study, statistical significance will be specified at the .05 level of confidence.

of preschool background from custodial type day care facilities to highly structured, cognitively oriented programs. In hypotheses 1,2,3 and 5, all types of preschool experience were considered together. In hypothesis 4, preschools were studied in two major divisions based upon the degree of structure in their program.

All findings were based on the results of measurement instruments developed and validated by the researcher.

Appendix A includes tables depicting the data gathered for this research and the relationships between the variables.

Table A-1 displays the raw data collected for analyses. This includes: a) age, b) teaching experience, c) kindergarten teaching experience, d) preschool teaching experience, e) score on attitude survey, and f) percentage of preschool educated children in each class for each of the forty kindergarten teachers studied.

Table A-2 indicates the correlation between the variables of: a) age, b) attitude score, c) percentage of preschool children, d) adjustment score of preschool children, e) adjustment score of non-preschool children, f) adjustment score of children from structured preschools, and g) adjustment score of children from non-structured preschools.

Table A-3 depicts the means, variances and standard deviations for each of the above variables.



The following hypotheses stated in null terms were tested:

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between the attitudes of kindergarten teachers toward preschool education for children and their perceptions of the social adjustment to kindergarten of the preschool experienced child.

The research question underlying this hypothesis was:

Will kindergarten teachers who express a negative attitude toward the value of preschool education report that children with preschool experience have greater difficulty in adjusting to kindergarten?

The analysis of the data for this hypothesis revealed a correlation of  $r = -.13$  which was not statistically significant - ( $p < .05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis of no relationship cannot be rejected. Table 4-1 delineates the mean adjustment scores of the preschool and the non-preschool children as rated by the kindergarten teacher. The mean difference between the two groups was .14 which further indicates that kindergarten teachers perceived little differences in adjustment between preschool and non-preschool groups.

This analysis may suggest that kindergarten teachers who expressed a negative attitude toward preschool (as evidenced by low scores on the attitude scale) perceived no significant differences in the adjustment to kindergarten between children who had attended preschool and those who had not.

TABLE 4-1

COMPARISON OF MEAN ADJUSTMENT SCORES OF PRESCHOOL  
AND NON-PRESCHOOL CHILDREN AS RATED  
BY KINDERGARTEN TEACHER

Sample N=40	Preschool $\bar{x}$ (PS)	Non-Preschool $\bar{x}$ (NPS)	Preschool - Non-Preschool $\bar{x}$ (PS-NPS)
1	2.54	2.62	-.07
2	2.64	2.22	+.42
3	2.77	2.71	+.06
4	2.23	2.38	-.15
5	2.29	1.94	+.36
6	2.33	1.71	+.63
7	2.33	2.43	-.10
8	2.25	2.46	-.21
9	2.27	2.06	+.21
10	2.83	2.20	+.63
11	2.30	1.91	+.39
12	1.79	1.75	+.04
13	2.18	2.16	+.02
14	2.31	2.36	-.05
15	2.83	2.65	+.18
16	2.57	2.43	+.14
17	1.86	2.00	-.14
18	1.50	1.83	-.33
19	2.58	1.81	+.77
20	2.33	2.33	.00
21	1.93	1.66	+.27

TABLE 4-1--Continued

Sample N=40	Preschool $\bar{x}$ (PS)	Non-Preschool $\bar{x}$ (NPS)	Preschool - Non-Preschool $\bar{x}$ (PS-NPS)
22	2.76	2.42	+.34
23	2.37	2.43	-.06
24	2.43	2.56	-.13
25	2.40	1.95	+.45
26	2.82	2.08	+.74
27	1.89	2.19	-.30
28	2.21	2.27	-.06
29	2.35	2.20	+.15
30	2.79	2.60	+.19
31	2.42	2.26	+.16
32	1.83	2.22	-.39
33	1.63	1.70	-.07
34	2.41	2.35	+.06
35	2.43	2.41	+.02
36	2.21	1.80	+.41
37	2.27	2.17	+.10
38	1.81	1.78	+.03
39	2.33	2.21	+.13
40	2.08	1.69	+.38

Note: Discrepancies in differences of  $\bar{x}$  (PS-NPS) are due to rounding to two decimal places.



Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between the preschool teaching experience and the attitude of kindergarten teachers toward the value of preschool education for children.

To test this hypothesis, correlation was calculated between the number of years of preschool teaching experience and the scores on the attitude instrument among kindergarten teachers who had had one or more years of preschool teaching experience. Sixteen of the forty kindergarten teachers had preschool teaching experience ranging from one to six years. These teachers scored between 24 and 46 points out of a possible range of 10 to 50 points on the attitude instrument.

Teachers who had had preschool teaching experience scored an average of 1.2 points lower on the attitude scale than did those teachers without such experience ( $p < .54$ ). The .09 correlation between preschool teaching experience and attitude of kindergarten teachers was not statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Table 4-2 compares the mean, variance and standard deviation of preschool teaching experience and attitude scores of kindergarten teachers.

These results indicate that kindergarten teachers who have had preschool teaching experience express no more positive attitude toward the value of preschool for children than kindergarten teachers without preschool teaching experience.



TABLE 4-2

## COMPARISON OF PRESCHOOL TEACHING EXPERIENCE AND ATTITUDE SCORE

	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>V</u>	<u>SD</u>
Years Preschool Teaching Experience	16	2.50	2.88	1.75
Attitude Score	16	32.19	35.28	6.13
Correlation = 0.09				

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between the preschool teaching experience of kindergarten teachers and their perception of the adjustment to kindergarten of children with preschool background.

In analyzing the difference in means of the adjustment scores it was observed that kindergarten teachers with preschool teaching experience rated the adjustment of children with preschool background an average of .16 of a point higher than children without preschool background. This difference is not significant ( $p < .45$ ). The null hypothesis, therefore, cannot be rejected.

In table 4-3 a comparison of the mean adjustment scores for preschool and non-preschool children is shown. The preschool educated children have a combined means score of 2.25; and the non-preschool children have a score of 2.09. This indicates that there was no significant difference in the perception of adjustment to kindergarten of either group of children by teachers who had had preschool teaching experience.

TABLE 4-3

COMPARISON OF MEAN ADJUSTMENT SCORES OF PRESCHOOL  
AND NON-PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

N=16	Preschool Teaching Experience (Years)	Mean Adjustment Score (PS)	Mean Adjustment Score (NPS)	Mean Adjustment Score (PS-NPS)
1	5	2.29	1.94	+.36
2	3	2.33	2.43	-.10
3	1	2.30	1.91	+.39
4	1	1.79	1.75	+.04
5	5	2.18	2.15	+.02
6	3	2.31	2.36	-.05
7	1	2.58	1.81	+.77
8	6	2.33	2.33	.00
9	3	1.93	1.66	+.27
10	1	2.82	2.08	+.74
11	1	1.89	2.19	-.30
12	1	2.79	2.60	+.19
13	1	1.83	2.22	-.39
14	3	2.27	2.17	+.10
15	1	2.33	2.21	+.13
16	4	2.08	1.69	+.38



Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference in kindergarten teachers' adjustment ratings of children with preschool experience in a structured learning environment and those with preschool experience with a less structured format.

Preschools with a structured learning environment include Montessori schools, Head Start and private nursery programs. Those with a less structured format include cooperative nurseries and day care centers.

Comparison of adjustment scores for children who attended the two types of nursery school programs revealed a mean adjustment score of 2.25 for those children from a structured learning environment and 2.34 for those from a less structured preschool background. The .09 difference between these means was not significant, therefore the null hypothesis was not rejected ( $p < .25$ ). In table 4-4 the mean adjustment scores of kindergarten children from structured and unstructured preschools are compared.

Interpretation of these data indicates that there appears to be no evidence to suggest that kindergarten teachers perceive children from more structured or cognitively oriented preschools as experiencing greater difficulty adjusting to the kindergarten program than children from less structured preschool backgrounds.

TABLE 4-4

MEAN ADJUSTMENT SCORES OF KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN FROM  
STRUCTURED AND UNSTRUCTURED PRESCHOOLS

Sample N=40	Structured Preschool		Unstructured Preschool	
	$\bar{x}$ Adjustment Score	Number of Children	$\bar{x}$ Adjustment Score	Number of Children
1	2.33	9	2.67	15
2	2.50	6	2.75	8
3	2.87	15	2.69	16
4	2.00	7	2.50	6
5	1.00	1	2.38	16
6	2.67	6	1.67	3
7	2.20	5	2.50	4
8	2.17	6	2.50	2
9	2.00	2	2.31	13
10	3.00	3	2.78	9
11	2.25	4	2.38	16
12	1.60	15	1.94	18
13	2.31	13	2.10	21
14	2.22	23	2.67	6
15	2.69	13	2.45	11
16	2.25	4	3.00	3
17	1.71	7	2.00	7
18	1.75	4	1.00	2
19	2.50	10	2.64	14
20	1.33	3	2.48	21

TABLE 4-4--Continued

Sample N=40	Structured Preschool		Unstructured Preschool	
	$\bar{x}$ Adjustment Score	Number of Children	$\bar{x}$ Adjustment Score	Number of Children
21	2.50	2	1.88	26
22	2.80	5	2.75	16
23	2.00	8	2.55	11
24	2.50	6	2.41	17
25	2.33	3	2.50	2
26	2.80	10	2.86	7
27	2.13	15	1.58	12
28	2.25	12	2.14	7
29	3.00	1	2.31	16
30	2.00	1	2.85	13
31	2.43	7	2.42	19
32	3.00	1	1.76	17
33	1.33	3	1.75	8
34	2.29	7	2.50	10
35	2.33	6	3.00	1
36	2.20	41	2.50	2
37	2.27	22	2.27	11
38	1.75	12	1.86	14
39	2.33	9	2.33	21
40	2.22	9	2.00	17

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant relationship between the percentage of preschool children in a kindergarten class and the attitude of the kindergarten teacher toward preschool experience for children.

Analysis of these data revealed a correlation of  $-.23$  between the percentage of preschool children in a kindergarten class and the teacher's attitude toward preschool experience. This correlation was not significant ( $p < .05$ ). Table A-1 depicts the scores on the attitude instrument and the percentage of preschool educated children in the kindergarten classes.

There is no evidence to indicate that kindergarten teachers with greater percentages of preschool educated children in their classes displayed a more positive attitude toward the value of preschool education for children.

#### Interaction of Variables

The data were analyzed for the interaction of the variables. The variables tested for interactions included the preschool teaching experience, attitude score, percentage of preschool children in class and the adjustment rating of the kindergarten teachers, and the type of preschool attended by the kindergarten child. The analysis indicated some differences in each interaction, however, no specific directional differences were revealed. The differences were not significant in any interaction of the variables.

#### Summary

In this chapter, the analysis of data was presented. Obtained results for each of the five hypotheses revealed no significant

differences in comparison of factors such as attitudes of kindergarten teachers toward preschool, their perception of childrens' adjustment to kindergarten, their preschool teaching experience or the type of preschool attended by a child.

In the final chapter, chapter five, the summary, conclusions and implications for further research are presented.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A summary of the research is presented at the beginning of this chapter followed by the conclusions, implications of the study and suggestions for further research.

#### Summary

This research was conceived and designed to explore the attitudes of kindergarten teachers toward preschool education and the question of whether kindergarten teachers perceive children with preschool experience as having greater difficulty in adjusting to kindergarten programs.

The sampled population for the study included the kindergarten teachers and their classes in a large suburban school district. The total numbers in the sample consisted of 40 kindergarten teachers and 1,815 kindergarten children.

Instruments used to collect the data included a questionnaire to determine the type of preschool each child attended, a check list evaluating the kindergarten teacher's perception of the adjustment of her students and a Likert scale to explore the attitudes of kindergarten teachers toward preschool education.

The data collected for this research were analyzed through the use of appropriate statistical techniques with statistical significance established at the .05 level of confidence.

Specifically the following research hypotheses were tested:

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between the attitudes of kindergarten teachers toward preschool experience for children and their perceptions of the adjustment of children with preschool experience.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between the preschool teaching experience and the attitude of kindergarten teachers toward the value of preschool experience.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between the preschool teaching experience of kindergarten teachers and their perception of the adjustment of kindergarten children with preschool experience.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference in the kindergarten teacher's ratings of the adjustment of children with preschool experience in a structured learning situation versus those from a less structured preschool environment.

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant relationship between the percentage of preschool children in a kindergarten class and the attitude of the kindergarten teacher toward preschool experience for children.

Simple correlations and univariate and multivariate analyses of variance used for the statistical analyses of the data revealed no significant relationships among the variables.

### Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of data:

1. The fact that a child attended preschool had little or no effect on the kindergarten teacher's rating of adjustment to kindergarten.
2. Although attitude toward preschool experience was positive among kindergarten teachers surveyed, there appeared to be no statistically significant relationship between the kindergarten teacher's attitude and her perception of the child's adjustment to kindergarten.
3. The preschool teaching experience of the kindergarten teacher had little or no influence on her attitude toward preschool experience for children.
4. The preschool teaching experience of kindergarten teachers had little or no influence in her perception of the adjustment to kindergarten of the preschool educated child.
5. The type of preschool attended by the child had little or no influence on the kindergarten teacher's perception of the child's adjustment to kindergarten.
6. The number of preschool educated children in a kindergarten class did not significantly affect the teacher's attitude toward preschool experience for children.

The overall findings of this study indicated that most kindergarten teachers expressed a positive attitude toward preschool education for children and that they did not perceive any significant differences in the adjustment to kindergarten between children who had attended preschool and those who had not. Other researchers investigating the effects of teacher attitude and preschool experience on the



the behavior and performance of kindergarten children present findings which both corroborate and refute the specific data presented here.

Weller's<sup>1</sup> study which investigated the effects of a pre-kindergarten experience on the later behavior and performance of children concluded that kindergarten teachers did not consider children who had attended preschool more mature in five major areas of adjustment to kindergarten--social, emotional, intellectual, interests and skills.

Research by Green<sup>2</sup> and Moustakas<sup>3</sup> supported the opposite position that with increased nursery school attendance, kindergarten teachers perceived children as exhibiting more mature and socially acceptable behavior.

Several factors emerge which may contribute to the inconsistency of results of research in this area. These relate to: (1) the content of kindergarten programs, (2) the reasons for preschool attendance, and (3) the problems with the reliability and validity of measurements of this type. These considerations are discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

Data provided by Cushing<sup>4</sup> and Sutton-Smith<sup>5</sup> reported findings to support the premise that kindergarten teachers' attitudes can influence her perceptions and may unconsciously affect interaction with the

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<sup>1</sup>Weller, op. cit.

<sup>2</sup>Green, op. cit.

<sup>3</sup>Moustakas, op. cit.

<sup>4</sup>Cushing, op. cit.

<sup>5</sup>Sutton-Smith, op. cit.

preschool educated child.

Cushing<sup>6</sup> also stressed the fact that kindergarten teachers have expressed the opinion that preschool educated children appear blase in kindergarten because of their previous experiences with kindergarten materials and types of activities. If this response is typical of preschool children, one must consider the activities which kindergarten curriculums are providing. If these activities are repetitious of those presented in the preschool or are not sufficiently challenging to the child to hold his interest, he may exhibit negative or socially unacceptable behavior in the kindergarten. This negative response may affect teacher attitude and inhibit effective interaction between pupil and teacher. With an increase in the number and types of pre-kindergarten programs the formulation of an integrated program for the preschool, kindergarten and early elementary grades is vital.

Despite the lack of statistical significance with regard to the variables of teacher attitude and student adjustment, several other factors must be evaluated before de-emphasizing or disregarding the role of preschool education and its effect on teacher attitude. A primary factor to be considered may be the reason for a child being placed in a preschool setting. Parents have often regarded preschool as an educational panacea. Examination of the function of preschools in the community reveal that these institutions have been utilized by parents for both constructive and practical purposes. For years they

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<sup>6</sup>Cushing, op. cit.

have served a variety of purposes. They have been used as a "baby sitting" service for the working mother, a depository for problem children, a substitute for family life in the broken home, a source of supplementary peer associations that were unattainable in the neighborhood, as preparatory training for the transition from home to school and for countless other purposes. The diverse purposes served by the preschool are contributing factors which must be considered in evaluating the role of the preschool in a child's social development and his subsequent behavior which may influence a teacher's attitude toward him. A child may have been placed in a preschool setting specifically because of his social-emotional problems and these negative traits may have carried over into the kindergarten. This parallels the research of Brown and Hunt<sup>7</sup> who point out the negative traits in a child's personality which may have precipitated his enrollment in preschool.

The problems of definitive measurement inherent in studying human reactions and behavior must also be considered. In a study of this type it is usually not possible to obtain direct estimates of the reliability of teachers' ratings. However, in the question of teachers' ratings of pupil adjustment, a reasonably safe assumption of reliability can be made because: (1) the kindergarten teachers were rating children well known to them, and (2) the dimensions of the adjustment criteria were familiar to their perceptions of these children.

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<sup>7</sup>Brown and Hunt, op. cit.

### Implications of Study to Education

Within the past ten years, preschool education has witnessed widespread popularity. Many public school districts are including nursery school programs in their curriculums and several governmental agencies are sponsoring preschool programs throughout the country. It is possible, therefore, that the kindergarten teachers included in this study responded to the preschool attitude survey in a positive manner which they believed to be more acceptable rather than expressing biases or negative feelings toward preschool education and its effects upon children entering kindergarten.

Further, a difference in the kindergarten teacher's perception of the adjustment of the preschool educated child may have been noted if the specific type of each child's preschool background had been studied separately. Each preschool program might have been examined to determine requisite qualities. Many preschools are operated by trained personnel and offer well-rounded programs for the participants. Others offer merely custodial care and supervised play areas where children are "tended". A wide range of programs may be classified under the general heading of preschool. Although an attempt was made in this study to make a general distinction between more structured or cognitively oriented programs and custodial type preschools, there are many finer distinctions between specific types of curriculums within these two divisions and to equate all of these groups in terms of social structuring may distort the contributions of such institutions to the social development of the child.

Factors such as the above--the purpose for which the preschool is

used, the requisite qualities of each program and the problems of measurement—may compliment or distort the role that these institutions play in influencing the social development and adjustment of the child and consequently the teacher's attitude toward him. Research must yield more information regarding the role and function of these factors before the influence and significance of preschool education can be ascertained. Although researchers in early childhood education generally agree that teacher attitude influences her perception of behavior and interaction with children, the question of whether the teacher perceives preschool education as a contributing or inhibiting factor in adjustment to kindergarten remains largely unresolved.

Considering the current proliferation of preschool education, what are the effects of these early experiences on school programs and personnel generally? In conducting this research, some of the responses of individuals directly involved in the study were noted. These were administrators and kindergarten teachers in the school district, and teachers and directors in the pre-schools contacted.

The administrators interest in the research was positive. In fact, the impetus for the study originated from concerns of central office personnel regarding attitudes of teachers toward preschool educated children and the inherent problems of continuity of curriculum between preschool and public school programs. Administrators felt that this study could be of special interest and importance in raising the consciousness of all district personnel concerned with early childhood

education and serve as an impetus in formulating an integrated and continuous program for preschool, kindergarten and early elementary grades.

Kindergarten teachers in the participating schools cooperated fully in the study and some expressed a desire to learn the results of the surveys conducted. Several teachers partaking in the study offered comments on the attitude survey. Some of the more portentous reactions to support the hypotheses of this research are as follows:

Preschool seems to take away the thrill of kindergarten.

(Preschool educated) children are more "active" and less interested in kindergarten material presented to them.

(Preschool educated) children are generally more destructive and more active.

Much of the so-called learning that takes place (memorization in the preschool) merely feeds the parents own ego.

Preschool does not teach children manners and how to behave.

These comments would appear to indicate that there is some feeling on the part of the teachers that preschool may negatively affect a child's adjustment or progress in kindergarten.

A limited number of preschool directors in the area wrote comments on letters and brochures which indicated the educational philosophies of the various programs. These people also manifested a desire to know the results of the study.

Educators at all levels surveyed indicated an interest in the project and a desire to rectify some of the inconsistencies in early

childhood programs.

Educators, especially at the earliest levels, must become aware of the types of preschool programs being made available and particularly of the feelings and attitudes of kindergarten and public school personnel toward them. Inservice training programs involving preschool teachers and directors, kindergarten and early elementary teachers and administrators should be provided to raise consciousness levels and assist in formulating meaningful and continuous educational programs.

Inservice training and content study related to early childhood programs and teacher attitude might include: (a) an investigation of the basic goals and objectives of the various programs, (b) an examination of the curriculum and sequence of skills of diverse programs at each level, (c) development of plans to individualize instruction to meet the educational needs of kindergarten children both with and without preschool experience, (d) analysis of staffing and administrative organization to determine whether educational objectives are being met at all levels, (e) development of programs including affective components to clarify values and attitudes and to promote awareness and interaction with personnel at all levels.

#### Suggestions for Further Research

A major goal of educational research is to provide empirical and experimental data to evaluate educational programming as an instrument of closing the gap between various curriculums at different instructional levels.

Through the process of this study, several questions arose. These

questions are included as suggestions for further research.

1. Replication studies using larger samples and/or comparison of diverse socio-economic groups may yield additional data for support or rejection of these results.

2. Utilization of the current design but expansion of the instruments to include data on different types of preschool programs and attitudes toward each.

3. Replication study comparing attitudes and perceptions of male to female kindergarten teachers.

4. Expansion of the instruments to include personal interviews of kindergarten teachers to more specifically determine the origins and dimensions of their attitudes toward preschool education.

5. Research identifying teacher attitude toward preschool education and the causative factors underlying behavior and interaction with students also merits continuing attention.

6. Comparison studies of teacher attitudes should be undertaken using school districts in which preschool, kindergarten and early elementary educators who have established educational objectives and curriculum together are compared to districts who have not evolved such a program. Such research could compare attitudes of kindergarten teachers toward preschool education in each instance.

7. Research should be undertaken to compare the professed behavior of kindergarten teachers with their demonstrated behavior with regard to preschool educated children.



8. Research should be undertaken to examine the personality characteristics of teachers who work with very young children and other personnel who administer these programs.

Since it is widely agreed that teacher attitude is one of the most significant determinants in pupil-teacher relationships, it is incumbent on educational researchers to continue to investigate those areas of the psychological, sociological and philosophical aspects of teacher attitude and behavior which affect the teaching-learning process.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### TABLES

TABLE A-1  
RAW DATA COLLECTED FOR ANALYSIS

Sample N=40	Age	Teaching Experience (Years)	Kindergarten Teaching Experience (Years)	Pre-School Teaching Experience (Years)	Score on Attitude Survey	Percentage of Pre-School Educated Children in Class
1	39	16.0	12.0	0	28	45%
2	33	10.0	10.0	0	39	61%
3	58	24.0	14.0	0	35	65%
4	31	7.5	7.5	0	27	25%
5	55	19.0	15.0	5	36	37%
6	33	8.0	1.0	0	31	36%
7	57	19.0	19.0	3	34	39%
8	54	19.0	19.0	0	34	38%
9	53	21.0	21.0	0	38	29%
10	43	18.5	18.0	0	29	21%
11	32	7.0	7.0	1	33	49%
12	46	17.5	17.0	1	28	63%

TABLE A-1--Continued

Sample N=40	Age	Teaching Experience (Years)	Kindergarten Teaching Experience (Years)	Pre-School Teaching Experience (Years)	Score on Attitude Survey	Percentage of Pre-School Educated Children in Class
13	33	10.0	10.0	5	28	73%
14	46	13.0	8.0	3	27	75%
15	28	5.0	5.0	0	30	46%
16	27	5.0	1.0	0	29	58%
17	29	3.0	3.0	0	28	47%
18	52	13.5	9.0	0	27	43%
19	27	3.5	3.5	1	28	40%
20	45	16.0	15.0	6	40	23%
21	52	18.0	18.0	3	24	51%
22	28	4.0	4.0	0	36	46%
23	42	11.0	9.0	0	40	65%
24	49	16.0	7.0	0	37	48%
25	34	9.5	5.0	0	27	30%

TABLE A-1 --Continued

Sample N=40	Age	Teaching Experience (Years)	Kindergarten Teaching Experience (Years)	Pre-School Teaching Experience (Years)	Score on Attitude Survey	Percentage of Pre-School Educated Children in Class
26	33	5.5	5.0	1	27	37%
27	44	18.0	16.0	1	46	55%
28	45	9.0	9.0	0	46	41%
29	59	14.5	12.0	0	36	32%
30	41	15.0	15.0	1	28	63%
31	42	7.0	7.0	0	37	64%
32	45	13.5	6.5	1	41	51%
33	48	16.0	7.0	0	39	31%
34	46	8.0	1.0	0	39	34%
35	49	11.5	8.0	0	31	29%
36	53	20.5	20.0	0	20	75%
37	46	18.0	18.0	3	28	74%
38	35	12.0	10.0	0	38	46%

TABLE A-1 --Continued

Sample N=40	Age	Teaching Experience (Years)	Kindergarten Teaching Experience (Years)	Pre-School Teaching Experience (Years)	Score on Attitude Survey	Percentage of Pre-School Educated Children in Class
39	33	9.0	7.0	1	32	51%
40	47	13.0	13.0	4	35	49%
Means	42.30	12.61	10.56	1.00	32.90	47.13%

TABLE A-2  
CORRELATION MATRIX

	Age	Attitude	Percentage of Pre-School Children	Adjustment-- Pre-School Children	Adjustment-- Non Pre-School Children	Adjustment-- Structured Pre-School Children	Adjustment-- Non Structured Pre-School Children
1. Age	1.000						
2. Attitude	.189	1.000					
3. Percent Pre-School Children	.004	-.230	1.000				
4. Adjustment Pre-School Children	-.268	-.134	-.008	1.000			
5. Adjustment Non Pre-School Children	.012	.170	.098	.595	1.000		
6. Adjustment Structured Pre-School Children	-.140	-.104	.097	.512	.273	1.000	
7. Adjustment Non Structured Pre-School Children	-.179	-.186	.032	.849	.585	.269	1.000



TABLE A-3  
MEANS, VARIANCES AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF RESEARCH DATA

Variable	Means	Variance	Standard Deviation
1. Age	42.30	92.989	9.643
2. Attitude	32.90	36.002	6.000
3. Percent Preschool Children	47.88	267.915	16.368
4. Adjustment Preschool Children	2.30	.112	.334
5. Adjustment Non-Preschool Children	2.17	.087	.295
6. Adjustment Structured Preschool Children	2.25	.209	.457
7. Adjustment Non-Structured Preschool Children	2.34	.184	.429

**APPENDIX B**  
**PRESCHOOL SURVEY**

**PRESCHOOL SURVEY  
INSTRUCTIONS**

Dear Kindergarten Teacher,

I would like to enlist your cooperation in determining the number of children presently attending kindergarten who have had some type of preschool experience.

Would you please take a couple of minutes during this teacher-parent conference to ask each parent to complete the attached check list? Your building principal has been contacted and has approved this survey.

At the end of conference weeks, I would appreciate it if you would fill in the blanks below with names of any children in your classes whose parents did not complete a survey sheet so that I may obtain this information through another source.

Please return the packet of completed forms with this cover letter through the inter-school mail as soon as possible after the completion of your last conference.

If you are interested in the results of this survey, please indicate at the bottom of this letter, and I will be happy to share this information with you.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Nancy Allan  
Michigan State University

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Names of kindergarten students whose parents did not complete a survey questionnaire:


Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of students in your classes: A.M. \_\_\_\_\_ P.M. \_\_\_\_\_

## PRESCHOOL SURVEY

Dear Parent,

We are interested in finding out if your child has had any school experience before entering kindergarten.

Did your child attend 3 OR MORE MONTHS of any type of preschool program\* before entering kindergarten?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If so, please check type of program:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Title I - Preschool
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Head Start Program
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Cooperative Nursery School
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Private Day Care Center
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Montessori School
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Private Preschool - but housed in a public school building
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

\*Please do not include babysitting services provided by churches, bowling establishments, etc.

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your cooperation.

**APPENDIX C**  
**KINDERGARTEN ADJUSTMENT RATING**

DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

TO: Elementary Principals  
FROM: Department of Elementary Education  
SUBJECT: Kindergarten Rating Instrument

We are cooperating with Michigan State University in a study to gather information to assist in determining possible new directions for early childhood programs.

It would be most helpful if you could give your kindergarten teachers the attached class lists. They are asked to rate their students according to each child's difficulty in adjusting to the kindergarten program. It should be a brief task, since they only need to check one response for each student.

Once the profiles are determined, all reference to school, student, teacher, etc. will be eliminated.

Please have the completed lists returned through inter-school mail.

Thank you for your cooperation.

## DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

TO: Kindergarten Teachers

FROM: Department of Elementary Education

SUBJECT: Rating of Kindergarten Pupil Adjustment

In cooperation with Michigan State University, information is being gathered to assist in determining possible new directions for early childhood programs.

Your perception of the degree of adjustment difficulty experienced by the pupils in your classes during the first months of the school year is needed to assist in these studies. Criteria on which to base your rating of each child are indicated at the top of the attached class lists. Refer to anecdotal material you may have recorded at the beginning of the year, if needed, to help you. It should be a brief task, since you will only need to check one response for each student.

The names of pupils are for purposes of your identification. After profiles are determined on the basis of sex, birthdates and related data, the names will be discarded. Please add names and ratings of children not included in these lists.

Return the completed class lists through the inter-school mail.

Thank you for your cooperation.

**APPENDIX D**  
**PRESCHOOL ATTITUDE SURVEY**



## PRESCHOOL ATTITUDE SURVEY

Name \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Kindergarten Teacher,

Recognizing the differences in philosophies and approaches of preschool programs, please consider an overview of preschool experience to encompass all types; i.e., cooperative programs, Title 1, Head Start, Day Care, Montessori schools, private nurseries, etc. and check the column on the attached form that most closely describes your general attitude. Please respond to all items.

Thank you

Indicate your number of years  
of kindergarten experience. \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate number of years  
involvement in preschool  
programs. \_\_\_\_\_

## PRESCHOOL ATTITUDE SURVEY

	Strongly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>
1. With very few exceptions, all children should attend preschool.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Preschool generally pro- duces children who are more independent than children without preschool experience.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Preschool experience gener- ally makes no difference in a child's intellectual readiness for kindergarten.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Generally, preschool experi- ence makes no difference in a child's ability to inter- act more effectively with other children.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Preschool experience inter- feres with "orientation to school" and "readiness" role of the kindergarten program.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Preschool usually produces children who have fewer problems of a social- emotional nature than children without preschool experience.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Generally, preschool experi- ence produces children who are more difficult to work with in kindergarten.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Generally, preschool pro- duces children who relate more effectively with adults than children with- out preschool experience.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

	Strongly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>
9. Generally, preschool teachers and administrators are not well trained and educated in principles of child growth and development.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. Most children would benefit from a full year or more of preschool experience.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

**APPENDIX E**  
**PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS**

Dear Preschool Director:

As an educator interested in early childhood education, I am attempting to compile data on preschool programs in this area.

Primarily, I am interested in determining the educational and/or child development philosophies on which local nursery programs are based.

If you have a printed brochure explaining your school or will take a moment to briefly outline the goals and objectives of your program and forward it to me, it would be appreciated.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Nancy E. Allan

Dear Preschool Director,

Thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to send me the information I requested regarding your nursery school.

This will be most helpful to me in determining the philosophical bases on which preschool programs in this area are built.

I appreciate your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Nancy Allan



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