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A review of special class placement vs. regular class placement and its relationship to academic achievement of the low IQ student

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A review of special class placement vs. regular class placement and its relationship to academic achievement of the low IQ student

Abstract

Since the inception of special education in this country, many educators have elected to serve those children described as mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, learning disabled, etc., ..• This investigation was aimed at those who are low functioning intellectually. Numerous such students have been identified, labeled, and placed in special programs outside of the regular classroom setting. The problem lies in the fact that the majority of special educators have blindly accepted specialized programs as a panacea to an ever-present dilemma. In the face of educators' suggested inability to deal effectively with "low IQ" students, they have been frequently segregated from their normal peer group and placed in an isolated setting where they receive instruction along with other "low IQ" students.

A REVIEW OF SPECIAL CLASS PLACEMENT VS.
REGULAR CLASS PLACEMENT AND ITS
RELATIONSHIP TO ACADEMIC
ACHIEVEMENT OF THE LOW IQ STUDENT

A Research Paper

Submitted to

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Education

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

by

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Entitled: A REVIEW OF SPECIAL CLASS PLACEMENT VS. REGULAR CLASS PLACEMENT AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF THE LOW IQ STUDENT

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I. Introduction

Introduction to the Problem

Since the inception of special education in this country, many educators have elected to serve those children described as mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, learning disabled, etc., . . . This investigation was aimed at those who are low functioning intellectually. Numerous such students have been identified, labeled, and placed in special programs outside of the regular classroom setting. The problem lies in the fact that the majority of special educators have blindly accepted specialized programs as a panacea to an ever-present dilemma. In the face of educators' suggested inability to deal effectively with "low IQ" students, they have been frequently segregated from their normal peer group and placed in an isolated setting where they receive instruction along with other "low IQ" students.

Special programs designed and implemented to assist the "low IQ" student have been in existence for over twenty-five years. Research has shown that mentally retarded children, in regular classes, are typically less well adjusted, have fewer friends and realistic goals than mentally retarded children placed in regular classes. (Elenbogen, 1957) (Kern and Plaeffle, 1962) Characteristics describing the slow learner include the inadequate

ability to organize materials, use of short and simple sentences, the inability to copy from the board, poor handwriting, lack of curiosity and creativity, and limited leadership potential. (Kirk, Kliebhan, and Lerner, 1978)

Specialists in the field of special education find themselves divided on the question regarding the efficacy of the present educational system. Recent research written on this topic indicates the need for an in depth appraisal of current programs. The most noted source urging justification of special classes is Lloyd Dunn (1968), who is making a plea to eliminate the special programs in our schools.

Goldstein, Moss, and Jordan (1965) also presented negative findings concerning the efficacy of special programs. Further studies by Ainsworth (1959), Rasborg (1966), and Tordrup (1968) conclude that special programs have produced little that is superior to what is produced in the regular setting; however, these studies remain inconclusive to date. These opponents of our current special programs state that most of the justification for removal of the slow learner from the regular setting lies in the benefits to the regular classroom teacher and actually does an injustice to the special child in

terms of his peer acceptance, self-image, and academic motivation.

Statement of the Problem

The major research question to be investigated is, the effect of special class vs. regular class placement on the academic achievement of the low IQ student. Literature will be reviewed to determine if research shows a measurable difference in the academic performance of the low IQ student who receives segregated supplementary instruction when compared to a student with similar intelligence who receives normal instruction in the regular classroom setting.

Definition of Terms

Low IQ Student--a student having a score of 70-89 as shown on the Stanford Binet Scale of Intelligence.

Special Program--a program designed for supplemental instruction in either the math or reading areas to those students scoring below the 40th percentile on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, using Iowa norms. (Title One--Charles City Community School District Educational Plan, p. 5)

Academic Achievement--educational progress as indicated on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills.

II. Review of Literature

Introduction to the Literature Review

Human intelligence ranges from the severely retarded to the gifted. Along this continuum lies the student labeled as the slow learner or mildly mentally retarded (79-90 IQ). (Dunlap, 1979)

Since the inception of special education in public schools, many students have been identified as needing special class placement. They have been segregated from regular class members and placed together with other identified students for instructional purposes for all or segments of the school day.

The Educators and parents who have a choice in educational placement are challenging the current practice of segregation of "low IQ" students in absence of quantifiable research showing positive effects. Educators now question the intent in allowing these students to be placed in educational programs which have shown no measurable benefit. Allowing current practice to further intrench will result in a waste of teacher resources, student time and self-image, and funding which could be better utilized in some more necessary educational endeavors. Through the review of literature the writer will attempt to demonstrate if there is a measurable

academic difference discernible between students who receive segregated special education and students who remain in the regular classroom for the entire course of study. The following areas will be investigated:

- 1) IQ use as a determinant for educational placement;
- 2) social-personal development of low IQ students placed in segregated educational programs;
- 3) effects of labeling on students' self-image and teacher expectations;
- and 4) academic performance of low IQ students in special programs and low IQ students in regular programs.

Literature Review

The use of IQ test results as a determinant for educational placement of children has been an issue of great controversy over the years. To determine eligibility for placement in special education classes, students often undergo psychoeducational evaluations. Grossman (1973) defines mental retardation as two standard deviations below the mean on an individualized intelligence test and significantly reduced adaptive behavior as mild retardation. Service to the group of learners known as low IQ students, or those falling between one and two standard deviations below the mean, is now in question. A student's intelligence quotient score is not always indicative of that student's learning potential. One factor which may

cloud the student's real potential is the cultural bias of the test. Mercer and Lewis (1977) state that children with cultural backgrounds differing significantly from the population on whom tests were normed may possibly be attaining IQ scores in the range of slow learners while their learning potential is closer to average. It seems that an overwhelmingly large percentage of students classified as "low IQ" come from broken or inadequate homes, poverty level incomes, or low-status ethnic groups.

In 1968 the U. S. Office of Education compiled statistics indicating that there were approximately 32,000 teachers employed by local school districts to instruct the retarded. In these classes, it was suggested that there were 60-80 percent from low-status backgrounds.

This expensive proliferation of self-contained special classes and schools raises serious educational and civil rights issues which must be squarely faced. (Dunn, September, 1968, p. 6)

According to an item in the June 8, 1968, issue of the Los Angeles Times, a suit was filed on behalf of Mexican-American students in the Santa Anna Unified School District asking for an injunction against placement in classes for the educable mentally retarded

provided by the District. The reason stated was the failure of the District to use adequate evaluation techniques for children from differing language and cultural backgrounds.

In a study conducted by Maribeth Gettinger and Mary Alice White (1979) at Columbia University, two correlates of school learning were examined; 1) time-to-learn (TTL); and 2) measured intelligence (IQ). The purpose of the investigation was to develop a behavioral measure of "time-to-learn" (TTL), and then to compare this measure of learning rate with a standardized measure of general intelligence to investigate the respective relationship to school achievement. TTL was measured on the basis of the number of repetitions or trials to reach mastery level on a particular task. Twenty 4th, twenty-eight 5th, and twenty-three 6th grade pupils participated in the study. Pupils were drawn from three classrooms in a predominately middle class, public elementary school in Indiana.

Thirty-two 4th, twenty-eight 5th, and twenty-two 6th grade pupils were in a replication study. These pupils were drawn from three classrooms in a New York City parochial school of mainly Hispanic, lower-class children.

The materials to be learned consisted of six different types of school learning tasks: vocabulary, spelling, mathematics concepts, mathematics computations, reading comprehension, and reading for facts. These were at the appropriate grade levels and each was administered for 45 minutes. The procedure was the same for all three age groups and for all six tasks in both samples.

To summarize these findings, TTL correlates more highly with school achievement than it does with IQ across all six tasks with mean correlational differences of .28 for sample one and .26 for sample two, which are both significant at the .001 level, $t(68)=5.85$ for sample one, and $t(79)=6.13$ for sample two. In addition, when TTL and IQ are compared, TTL is shown to be the stronger correlate of standardized achievement test performance in every instance, with a significant mean correlation difference of .21 for sample one, $t(68)=4.28$, $p<.001$, and .18 for sample two, $t(79)=4.13$, $p<.001$.

The significance of this study is the value of using TTL as a predictor for school learning, rather than relying on IQ measures alone. These would help educators in identifying students who need extra time and help to reach mastery of skills taught during the school year. With TTL there are no biases or assumptions about

intelligence, but rather, performance under normal conditions.

The noted Illinois study concerning efficacy of programs for educable mentally retarded children also produced an apparent interaction effect between IQ and educational placement. (Goldstein, Moss, and Jordan, 1965) An intersection of regression lines occurred at about IQ 80, suggesting that children below IQ 80 achieved academically at a superior level when in the special curriculum, while those with IQ's above 80 were better off in the regular program.

Further work in this area produced the conclusion that the selective factors involved in determining the placement of educable mentally retarded in special classes, or their retention in regular classes is critical. (Robinson and Robinson, 1965) "One of the greatest errors in education is that general or broadband variables such as IQ scores which predict academic achievement moderately well in almost all situations, are overused in educational decision-making." (Zubin, 1967, p. 373) This statement by Zubin is confirmed in studies done by Sears (1963), Flanders (1964), and Thelan (1967), when it was suggested that differential effects may be found when groups are patterned on criteria other than ability, per se; yet the

strongest arguments for grouping the handicapped together have been based on ability.

Another consideration of IQ testing is the effect of test-taking anxiety and labeling as academic and intellectual retardation. Hill and Saronson (1966) conducted a study using forty-one male and twenty-seven female underachievers in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Chi-square analysis revealed that test anxiety is a significant factor in underachieving males ($p < .05$), but not females ($p < .10$). Hope of success was significantly associated with high or superior academic achievement, while fear of failure was significantly associated with underachievement. High achievement motivation with low test anxiety is indicative of high academic achievement, while high test anxiety combined with low need to achieve is characteristic of underachievement.

Special class programs initiated based on the belief that both the special needs children and the normally functioning children would benefit by removing the special needs children from the regular classroom. Teachers often refer a low functioning student for evaluation based on some kind of social maladjustment. Such maladjustments caused the low functioning student to present a problem in the classroom. The teacher had to divide time and

attention between high functioning, normal, and low functioning students. The low functioning student was also on a competitive basis with every child in that class on a social, and personal level.

In an investigation conducted in Ohio, Stanton and Cassidy (1964) found that although the special needs students were identified on the basis of chronological age and intelligence quotients, there was in reality, a hidden factor in the selection process. The authors pursued this by sampling school systems from different areas of Ohio for the purpose of studying the selection factors for educational placement of students 12 to 14 years of age. The authors tested the differences in achievement and adjustment of educable mentally retarded students in the regular class and in the special classes. The authors found that the difference between the regular class groups and the special class groups was superior social adjustments of the special class group. This result must be viewed with caution because it assessed the special needs students in a protected environment when contrasted to the unprotected environment of the regular class group. The segregated environment accepted the student unequivocally and did not make unreasonable demands; this produces a more comfortable social

situation, but may fail to challenge the student.

In the area of general personality characteristics, the literature seems to agree that the mentally retarded child has more personality problems than typical children. However, these are some conflicting reports. Blatt (1958) reported better social and personal adjustment by low functioning students who were in special classes when compared to low functioning students not in special classes.

Seventy-five special class children were chosen as subjects, along with fifty regular class children to participate in a study by Blatt (1956). The two groups were equated on chronological age, intelligence, mental age, and sex. Subjects were identified as educable mentally retarded in both groups. The subjects in the regular class did not have access to a special program. Several areas of concern were explored; one of which was the comparison of the personality status of mentally retarded children attending regular classes and mentally retarded children attending special classes.

Tables XII (figure #1 appendix) and XIII (figure #2 appendix) show that special class children are more socially mature and emotionally stable than regular children. Critical ratios of 5.80 and 6.71 indicate these differences to be significant at the .01 level of

confidence. Table XIV (figure #3 appendix) shows that special class children and regular class children do not differ significantly in terms of personal or social adjustment. However, the scales used have no proven validity, thus the findings may have been influenced by subjective feelings of the teachers or actual differences among the children. The authors also noted that when compared to norms for typical children, the subjects in this study had more personal and social adjustment problems than typical children did.

In another study by Walker (1971) 29 students were placed in a supplementary resource program for special help, while 41 students, comprising the control group, received instruction in a self-contained setting. Control and experimental groups were matched on chronological age, IQ, and reading level. A single and repeated analysis of variance was performed on the data at the end of the first and second year respectively. There was no significant difference found between the residual gains of both groups over the two year period in self-concept and social adjustment.

The assessment of educational potential has been left to school psychologists, who generally administer a battery of tests including those of social and personal

adjustment. The purpose of this is to label the child and make him/her eligible for special services. This procedure has served to damage many children by using an IQ score to justify the label "mentally retarded". Many educators now view this term as a "self-fulfilling prophecy". Pupils are identified and consequently segregated from typical children. This label is treated as a sanction for assigning children to special classes. These students form a feeling of inadequacy which comes from being singled out for special treatment. They fail to develop a feeling of security from belonging to a group of typical children.

Segregation of regular and exceptional children in public schools has a detrimental effect on the exceptional children. The impact is greater when it has the sanction of the law; for the policy of separating the students is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the exceptional group. A sense of inferiority affects the motivation of a child to learn. Segregation with the sanction of the law, therefore, has a tendency to retard the educational and mental development of exceptional children

and to deprive them of some of the benefits they would receive in a totally integrated system. (Christoplos, Renz, 1969, p. 10-11)

Putting a label on a child does not contribute to educational advancement of a student. It is merely an administrative action, or justifies a move from one classroom to another.

Some authors contend that teachers demonstrate more negative attitudes toward various groups of exceptional children than normal children. Parish and Copeland (1978) with Parish, Dyck, and Kappes (1979) agreed to this finding. In addition Parish, Eads, Reese, and Piscitello (1977) reported similar findings for future teachers. Some authors feel that the negative attitudes influence the achievement of the low functioning child in the regular classroom. Few research studies have been conducted which casually relate: 1) Measured teacher characteristics; 2) observed classroom process; and 3) pupil product.

A study done by Cantrell (1977) combines these three criteria to determine whether teacher's behavioral knowledge and attitudes were systematically related to classroom verbalizations and thus to pupil achievement gains. It was found that the teacher most effective in

dealing with low and middle IQ first grade pupils was: 1) More positive, supportive, and comfortable with the pupils; 2) more likely to use a higher rate of praise or encouragement statements; and 3) more knowledgeable of behavior principles. These teacher characteristics seemed to produce the greatest pupil gain for the borderline student.

Coopersmith (1967) found that the degree of an individual's self-concept and self-esteem generally is thought to be directly related to one's performance. Since a child spends so many formative years in school it was necessary to determine what relationship, if any, existed between school performance and placement to self-concept. Consistent evidence has been reported on the relationship of self-concept and academic achievement. Coombs (1964) explored differences in the way under-achievers and achievers perceive themselves and their relationship to the world around them.

Two groups of 25 high school junior boys were administered an apperceptive device. Underachievers showed significant and consistent differences from achievers. They viewed themselves as less adequate and less acceptable to others. Coombs concluded that there is a direct positive relationship between one's feeling of

capability and one's performance. Brookover, LaPere, Hamachek, Thomas, and Erickson (1965) reached similar conclusions for normal learners.

O'Such, Havertape, and Pierce (1979) studied sample groups of educable mentally retarded, normal, gifted, and emotionally handicapped with the purpose of determining what effect educational placement has on self-concept. Self-concept was measured through use of the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale, or "The Way I Feel About Myself" (1969). Differences between the groups, and in the groups, and for the interaction of groups by age, were analyzed using a two-factorial analysis of variance. Significance was obtained ($p \leq .001$) for differences between groups. An analysis of the data revealed that normal and gifted children achieved higher self-concept scores than the comparable mentally retarded and emotionally handicapped groups.

Adults convey a learner's probability of success by issuing expectancy statements to the learner. Gagné, Moore, Hauck, Hoy (1973) conducted a survey to determine whether or not expectancy and feedback statements interact in producing effects on student performance. Forty-eight high IQ fourth graders and forty-eight low IQ fourth graders were randomly selected from a population of high

achieving fourth graders in a Pennsylvania school district. The experimental design was a 3 x 2 x 2 factorial design with three expectancy levels: (high, low, or no); two levels of feedback (positive or negative); and two levels of IQ (high or low). It was found that low IQ children's performance under negative feedback ($M_N=7.48$) was consistently higher than performance under positive feedback ($M_P=5.50$) irrespective of expectancy. The authors contend that these results may indicate that high expectancy statements are not credible to low IQ children and are therefore ignored, while low expectancy statements are perceived as normal rather than a low level of adult expectations.

Mentally handicapped pupils have been the receivers of special programs taught by specially trained instructors. They have been enrolled in classes with fewer children and a curriculum to fit their unique needs. At the time some developments are being examined which indicate that retarded children make more academic progress in a segregated class than in the regular classroom.

Blatt (1965) conducted a survey to evaluate two diverse methods of education for children who are mentally retarded through a comparison of the physical, personality, and academic status of children who are mentally retarded attending special classes with children who are mentally

retarded attending regular classes. "On the basis of this study, it was found that special class children and regular class children do not significantly differ in physical, personality, and academic status." (Blatt, 1956, p. 818)

Goldstein, Moss, Jordan (1965) controlled for methodological inadequacies which had characterized previous investigations and conducted what was perhaps the most definitive study to date concerning the efficacy of special class training for the mentally retarded with respect to intellectual development, academic achievement, and social-personal development. What emerges from this study is the same type of negative findings that researchers have been seeing for thirty years. The academic consequences of special class placement on educable mentally retarded children have also been found to be negligible in the studies of Bacher (1965), Carroll (1967), Cassidy and Stanton (1959), Mayer (1966), Meyerowitz (1962) (1967b), Porter and Milazzo (1958), and Thurstone (1959).

A regular class group was compared to a special class group in terms of academic achievement in a study by Stanton and Cassidy (1962). Educable mentally retarded students 12-14 years of age were selected as subjects. It was shown that the educable mentally retarded students

in the regular class exhibited superior academic achievement over the special class. This level of achievement is modest when compared to a typical student of the same chronological age. Compared with the 7.0 level of achievement typical of the average 13 year old, the special class children at 2.7 on the Stanford Achievement Test and the regular class children at 3.1 are almost equally deficient.

Blatt (1956) indicated that the special class children were not significantly different from the regular class children in terms of achievement in reading, arithmetic, and language. The study showed one academic improvement area from one year to the next. In the academic area of reading, the special class children exhibited greater gains than those who were members of a regular class.

Ainsworth (1959) compared the relative effectiveness of the special class versus itinerant special educators of the retarded and found that neither group showed great progress.

III. Summary

A review of past and current research was examined to investigate what, if any, educational purpose was accomplished by placement of low functioning students in segregated special classes. The purpose of the investigation was to ascertain whether there is a difference in measurable academic performance of low IQ students who receive segregated supplementary instruction compared to low IQ students who receive instruction in the regular classroom.

For many years, educators have considered it a duty to provide different programs for the student identified as "special". They were supported by parents and government in the quest for a better educational program for special students. Funding was relayed to local school districts across the country, children were identified and placed in programs designed to meet unique needs, and their programs were staffed by educators who were specially trained to instruct such students. The project was launched with great urgency but little consideration for the efficacy of the system. In the search for so-called equality among students, educators have diminished the right of the student to be considered as a normal child in a regular class along with a peer group.

The review of literature revealed four areas of concern in the practice of special placement. They are:

- 1) IQ use as a determinant for educational placement;
- 2) social-personal development of low IQ students placed in a specialized educational program;
- 3) effects of labeling on students self-esteem and teacher expectations;
- 4) academic performance of low IQ students in special programs and low IQ students in regular programs.

The review of literature provided little evidence to justify placement of low IQ students in special classes.

IQ use as a determinant for educational placement was the first area to be examined. Human intelligence spans a wide range of abilities from severely retarded to gifted. Approximately one-half of the population falls in the range of average intelligence (90-110). A quarter on the right are of superior intelligence, while the remaining quarter is to be found in the IQ range below 90. The slow learner (70-90 IQ) is in this range and is the student with which this study was concerned.

We now have what may be called a six hour retarded child-retarded from 9-3, five days a week, solely on the basis of an IQ score, without regard to his behavior which may be exceptionally adaptive to the

situation and the community in which he lives. (Presidents' Committee on Mental Retardation, 1970, preface)

Research by Mercer and Lewis (1977) concluded that children with cultural backgrounds differing significantly from nationally normed tests may be attaining IQ scores in the range of slow learners when, in actuality, their learning potential is closer to average. In 1968 the U. S. Office of Education compiled statistics indicating that in classes for the retarded, 60-80 percent of the students were from low status backgrounds. Litigation has been issued on behalf of students from low status backgrounds stating that the evaluation techniques are unfairly biased toward them. One such lawsuit was filed against the Santa Anna Unified School District in 1968 by the parents of a Mexican-American child. Another correlate of academic performance was identified in a study done by Gettinger and White. The investigators measured TTL (time-to-learn) and compared it with IQ in relation to measured academic performance. It was found that TTL correlates more highly with school achievement than it does with IQ. In addition, when TTL and IQ are compared, TTL is shown to be the stronger correlate of standardized test performance in every instance.

The much cited Illinois study done by Goldstein, Moss, and Jordan (1965) concerning the efficacy of special programs produced an interaction effect between IQ and educational placement. This study suggested that children with IQ scores above 80 were better served in the regular program.

Further work produced the conclusion that the selective factors determining placement of students are critical. (Robinson and Robinson, 1965), (Zubin, 1967), (Sears, 1963), (Flanders, 1964), (Thelan, 1967)

Students are generally administered one of two standardized achievement tests; the Stanford Binet, and/or the WISC to determine intelligence quotients. This introduces the influence of test anxiety on the test-taking performance of underachievers. Hill and Saronson (1966) conducted a study with underachievers in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades which showed test anxiety to be a significant factor in underachieving males, but not females. Fear of failure was significantly associated with underachievement as was low need to achieve combined with high test anxiety.

Next, the writer reviewed literature concerning the social-personal development of low IQ students placed in a special program. A hidden factor was noted in the

selection process in a study done by Stanton and Cassidy (1964). The authors found that the difference between the regular class group and the special class group was the superior social adjustment of the special class group. Authors Stanton and Cassidy (1964) warn of taking this finding too seriously considering the contrasting environments in which the students were placed.

The personality of mentally retarded subjects was the concern in an investigation by Blatt (1956). Two groups were matched by chronological age, intelligence, mental age, and sex. Significant differences in social maturity and emotional stability were noted with the special group demonstrating better adjustment. However, when both groups were compared to the norm for typical children, it was found that the subjects experienced more personal and social maladjustment than did typical children.

Residual gains in self-concept and social adjustment over a two year period were investigated by Walker (1971). A control group was matched with an experimental group on IQ, age, and reading level. An analysis of variance was performed on the data at the end of the first and second year. No significant differences were found between gains made by the two groups.

The third area to be examined was the effect of labeling on student esteem and teacher expectation. Some authors contend that teachers demonstrate more negative attitudes toward various groups of exceptional children than they do towards normal children. Several studies were examined which supported this contention. (Parish and Copeland, 1978), (Parish, Dyck, and Kappes, 1979)

A study by Cantrell (1977) combined three criteria: 1) Measured teacher characteristics; 2) observed classroom process; 3) pupil product, to determine whether teacher's behavioral knowledge and attitudes were systematically related to pupil achievement gains. It was found that certain teacher characteristics produced greater pupil gain, these were: 1) More positive, supportive, and comfortable with the students; 2) more likely to use a higher rate of praise or encouragement; and 3) more knowledgeable of behavior principles.

Coopersmith (1967) found that the degree of an individual's self-esteem is generally thought to be directly related to one's performance.

Coombs (1964) explored differences in the way under-achievers view themselves and their relationship to the world around them. Underachievers showed consistent

and significant differences from achievers in that they perceived themselves as less adequate and less acceptable to others. Similar conclusions were reached for normal learners by Bookover, LaPere, Hamachek, Thomas and Erickson (1965).

In a further study on self-concept, O'Such, Havertape, and Pierce (1979) used four groups of subjects: 1) Educable mentally retarded; 2) normal; 3) gifted; and 4) emotionally handicapped. An analysis of the data revealed that the normal and gifted children achieved higher self-concept scores than the comparable mentally retarded and emotionally handicapped groups.

The interaction effect between expectancy and feedback statements was studied by Gagné, Moore, Hauck, and Hoy (1973) to determine the effect on student performance. It was found that the performance of the low IQ children under negative feedback was consistently higher than performance under positive feedback irrespective of expectancy.

The fourth consideration addressed by this investigation was the academic achievement of low IQ students in the special class and the regular class.

The physical, personality, and academic status of mentally retarded students attending regular classes was

compared to the like status of mentally retarded students in special classes to evaluate two diverse methods of instruction for these subjects. (Blatt, 1965) No significant differences were noted in the status between groups.

In a definitive study Goldstein, Moss, and Jordan (1965) studied a similar population with regard to: 1) Intellectual development; 2) academic achievement; and 3) social-personal development. The academic consequences of the special class for the mentally retarded were found to be negligible. The same findings emerge from the studies of Bacher (1965), Carroll (1967), Cassidy and Stanton (1959), Mayer (1966), Meyerowitz (1962) (1967b), Porter and Milazzo (1958), and Thurstone (1959).

In a further study Stanton and Cassidy (1964) revealed that the educable mentally retarded students in the regular class had superior achievement over the special class.

Still, Blatt (1956) indicated that the special class children were not significantly different than the regular class in the areas of reading, arithmetic, and language achievement. One area of exception was reading gains from one year to the next, in which the special class was found to make greater gains.

Itinerant educators and special class educators were compared for relative effectiveness by Ainsworth (1959). It was found that neither group accomplished much in pupil progress.

Discussions and Conclusions

These studies have produced some conflicting evidence concerning the efficacy of programs that provide for segregation of special students from normal students. However, the conflict is minimal with the greatest amount of the research supporting the argument that special programs have produced little that is superior to regular class programs. The first responsibility of educators is to provide for the less fortunate children. In the haste to accomplish this, educators have failed to view the self-perpetuation of special classes and the level of stagnation the system has reached. How can special education clamor for more funding from the government to finance programs, that if were successful would be serving fewer students today than yesterday? As it is, students are being identified needlessly for the purpose of funding! Educators have not been totally honest in identifying students for referral to special programs. The IQ score is an umbrella that educators use to protect themselves and their judgment. In reality, it has been shown that the disadvantaged, low status, and minorities are comprising a large percentage of special classes. In examining classrooms more closely, examples of un-social behavior, slow learning rates, short attention

span, and language difficulties can be noted. Requests to test these children and to thereby segregate them seems meaningless and without real educational value or purpose. What incentive is there for a child to work in improving behaviors when the results are removal from the best possible role models schools could provide? These students feel inadequate and insecure as children, as students, . . . as people! They are deprived of the social experience which could, itself, serve as a stimulus for further development. It is concluded that the area of special education is in need of restructuring its philosophy, methods, and programs. This must occur in order for the field to advance and accurately deal with all children in the schools today. Currently educators supporting a failing system because teachers and state and local directors of special education have a personal stake in maintaining programs they have created over the years.

Special education can make this kind of advance part of it's responsibility to (a) sort out which children from the mainstream ought to be able to handle from those who need services the regular program cannot reasonably be expected to supply and

(b) sort out which of the most disabled children are able to benefit from instruction at all. (Deno, 1970, p. 232)

Several different authors contend that special help should be given to the child needing it, by a specially trained support person, in the classroom. This emerges as the most justifiable course of action which would in turn minimize the labeling stigma and limit cost of the special program. This enables students to remain with typical students, with whom they will eventually have to coexist.

Limitations of the Study

This investigation was limited to a review of literature to examine the problem. Some sources were secondary; thus there is a possibility of incorrect quoting, or inaccurate paraphrasing. Limited research is available which deals primarily with the low IQ group which was the primary focus of this study; thus some of the findings of other related studies were adopted by the researchers for the purpose of review.

Implications for Further Research

The quantitative research that has been undertaken to demonstrate the educational value of special class placement for low IQ students is minimal compared to

other areas of educational concern. The literature that this writer found was scattered and dealt with several different types of special class programs along with several varying degrees of mental retardation. There does need to be further research concentrating solely on the low IQ (70-89) students and their performance in regular and special classes. More research dealing with this concern in different age groups would aid in generalizing the findings over a total school curriculum.

Other significant research could be undertaken controlling for socio-economic level, sex, and race. Careful consideration must be given to the objectivity of measuring devices such as standardized intelligence tests, apperceptive devices, and teacher surveys; in order to allow for accurate, unbiased findings. When dealing with the degree of social adjustment students acquire in a special class opposed to a regular class, one must be cognizant of the two totally different environments. The findings should be qualified accordingly. Vertical studies following low IQ students after they have graduated from school could show us if any marked differences appear in life style, personality, self-esteem, occupation, social-adjustment, and further education between special and regular class students.

Implications

Considering the findings of the past and current research justifying special programs for the low IQ child, this writer takes the following position.

It is recommended that schools and educators evaluate the present special programs and needs of students in those programs. The total student must be evaluated on the basis of several selection factors, i.e., TTL (time-to-learn), need to learn, self-esteem, social adjustment, socio-economoc level, and intelligence quotient. Educators must not overlook the possibility that identification of a student attaches a permanent stigma to that child and influences learning expectations from that time forward. The classroom teacher must be willing to meet the needs of every child in the classroom instead of trying to eliminate all the problem children by referring them for special help.

However, it is evident that all students do not function at the same level, or acquire mastery of skills at the same time. Because of this, support teachers having special training in diverse methods of instruction may be called upon to work side-by-side with the regular teacher in the classroom. Small group work could be accomplished this way, much the same as children are

grouped by different reading rates. No child would be regarded as inferior because of selection for a segregated environment. It is the opinion of this writer that segregated special classes should be abandoned for all but the severely retarded, severely emotionally disturbed, multiple handicapped, or obviously deviant student who would never benefit from a regular school program. Low IQ students must not be barred from the interaction and socialization which fosters learning in the regular classroom.

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Appendix

Figure #1

Status of Children

Table XII

The Social Maturity Scale Score of the Special Class Children as Compared with the Social Maturity Scale Score of the Regular Class Children as Measured by the New York City Scale of Social Maturity.

Group	N	% Girls	M	$M_1 - M_2$	σ	σ_m	σ_d	C.R.	P
S	75	29.33	3.16	1.16	1.17	.14	.20	5.80	.01
R	50	30.00	2.00		.89	.13			

(Blatt, 1956, p. 816)

Figure #2

Table XIII

The Emotional Stability Scale Score of the Special Class Children as Compared with the Emotional Stability Scale Score of the Regular Class Children as Measured by the New York City Scale of Emotional Stability.

Group	N	% Girls	M	M ₁ -M ₂	σ	σ_m	σ_d	C.R.	P
S	75	29.33	3.32		1.05	.12			
R	50	30.00	2.18	1.14	1.11	.16	.17	6.71	.01

(Blatt, 1956, p. 816)

Figure #3

Table XIV

The Total Adjustment Raw Score of the Special Class Children as Compared with the Total Adjustment Raw Score of the Regular Class Children as Measured by the California Test of Personality.

Group	N	% Girls	M	M ₁ -M ₂	σ	σ_m	σ_d	C.R.	P
S	72	26.39	63.58		10.93	1.29			
R	47	27.66	64.02	.44	10.80	1.57	2.03	.22	.50

(Blatt, 1956, p. 816)