

## CHAPTER VII

### PROBLEM OF EDUCATION OF DULL BACKWARD CHILDREN

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#### NEED

No country can probably justly claim that it has already achieved whatever is possibly achievable for its handicapped children, either physically handicapped or mentally or of any type. What is more important, however, is how a country is moving in that direction. The need for providing adequate facilities for the children below average in intelligence and attainments has been well realised all over the world. In all educationally progressive countries, including our country, institutions for handicapped children are found.

During the post war period, in most of the advanced countries, there has been a rapid expansion of social as well as educational programmes for all levels of mental retardation<sup>1</sup> and in India too during the last decade or so.<sup>2</sup> It is not very long ago that mostly mentally retarded children were generally considered as idiots. This outlook

<sup>1</sup>P.D.Sharma, Education of the Handicapped in Australia (Delhi:C.I.E.Studies in Edu. and Psy.,Publication No.20,1957),p.15

<sup>2</sup>Government of India, Ministry of Edu.,'Education in India' 1958-59,Vol.I,Publication No.618,1962,p.266.

is changing as the time passes. The idea that mentally retarded children are totally ineducable has been given up. Now they are classified according to the various levels of intellectual ability. All the educationists and psychologists of the world are unanimous with regard to the need for the education of the children who are below average either intellectually or academically or by both.

#### IMPORTANCE OF THE PROBLEM

The importance of the problem of educating dull backward children or failing pupils lies in the facts noted below :

In the first place, as described in the introductory chapter, page 2, of this study, there is considerable wastage in education at the Secondary Education level. Even at the primary level wastage is not less. The statistics<sup>1</sup> of enrolments in Std.I in 1956-57 and in Std.IV in 1959-60 and of enrolment in Std.I in 1958-59 and in Std.IV show that wastage at the primary stage in Gujarat was about 64.5% in 1959-60 and 61.3% in 1961-62. The all India percentage of wastage was 33.2% in 1960-61. It will be seen that the wastage at the primary stage in the Gujarat State is of much larger dimension than the all India average. To lessen the wastage at both the levels- Primary as well as Secondary - some kind of education for

<sup>1</sup>D.M.Desai, Some Problems of Education in the Gujarat State(Baroda: Faculty of Education and Psychology, M.S. University of Baroda, 1967), pp.12-13.

the dull backward children is a prerequisite.

Secondly, backwardness and dullness are related to delinquency and researches<sup>1-6</sup> by C.Burt, W.Healy, Mann and Mann, M.A.Merrill, Goddard and the like have shown that there is a high percentage of dull and backward children among the young delinquents. This gives added importance to the need for special attention to the education of dull backward children.

The last but not the least important factor is the present educational situation in India. At present, education from 6 to 14 years is compulsory and pupils come to school from all strata of society. So, naturally, individual differences show themselves still more widely; and if, some adjustment to the educational needs of individual children is not planned soon, the result may be further deterioration in school success and further wastage of efforts on every front.

#### EFFORTS IN 19th CENTURY

For many centuries children having mental deficiency

<sup>1</sup>Cyril Burt, The Young Delinquent (London: Univ. of London Press Ltd., 1938), p. 428.

<sup>2</sup>William Healy, The Individual Delinquent (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1915), p. 162.

<sup>3</sup>Mann C.W. and Helene Mann, 'Age and Intelligence of a Group of Juvenile Delinquents', Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1930-34, pp. 351-360.

<sup>4</sup>Maud A. Merrill, Problems of Child Delinquency (New York: Haughton, 1947), p. 167.

<sup>5</sup>H.H. Goddard, Human Efficiency and Levels of Intelligence (Princeton: N.Y. Princeton Univ. Press, 1920), p. 73.

<sup>6</sup>A.E. Tansley and R. Gulliford, The Education of Slow Learning Children (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1960), p. 11.

were neglected and maltreated instead of being given help and education. Mental illness was shrouded in mystery for years. More attention was paid to the deaf-mute and blind children rather than the mentally deficient.

In the 19th century many research workers like Itard, in France(1810), Edward Seguin in Paris(1837), Dr. Guggenbahl in Switzerland(1841), Maria Montessori in Italy(1897), Dr. O. Decroly in Belgium started experiments educating mentally deficient children. In India, early efforts have been made in educating physically handicapped children. The credit for pioneering work in this direction goes to the Christian Missionaries. Miss Annie Sharp, Miss A.J. Askwith and others established schools for blinds.

Briefly, all the efforts in the 19th century, in Western countries and in India clearly point out that these efforts were made either to educate physically handicapped children or the children who were severely mentally deficient. The efforts demonstrated that to a certain extent, even mentally retarded children can be taught and practically nobody is entirely uneducable.

#### EFFORTS IN 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

In the 20th century many problems such as delinquency, wastage and stagnation in education, etc., have been posed by those children who are neither physically handicapped nor severely mentally retarded. These children are just

below average in the scale of intelligence and in scholastic achievements.

In the Western countries, the failing students have attracted the minds of the educationists and psychologists. A good number of researches have been done in the 20th century and institutions for educating the failing students have been instituted in the western countries.

After independence, in India too, the work in this direction has been initiated. In 1955-56, a National Advisory Council for the Education of the Handicapped has been appointed. It makes provision for the establishment, supervision and control of the institutions for educating handicapped. As far as institutions for mentally handicapped children are concerned, only 4 schools (1958-59) were reported.<sup>1</sup> As shown in Chapter II, the backward children or the failing students have already drawn attention of the research workers and the educationists of the country. In the following paragraphs, some views regarding the provision of the education of the backward children have been cited.

#### EDUCATION OF THE FAILING STUDENTS

In any book on the education of the backward child, generally three alternative plans are suggested keeping in view the different categories of the backward children.

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<sup>1</sup>S.N.Mukerji, Education in India - Today and Tomorrow, (Baroda: Acharya Book Depot, 1960), p.321.

They are as follows :

- (a) To keep the child under a specialist or in a clinic;
- (b) To transfer the child to a special class, school or institution; and
- (c) To place the child in a regular classroom with a modified curriculum.

Let a look on some of the views of educationists regarding the placement of the backward child be made.

Sir Cyril Burt, while discussing the educational provision for a backward child states :

'The first and most important step is segregation, the formation of separate classes or schools expressly for the educationally subnormal. Segregation sounds a drastic measure; yet it is needed in the interests alike of the other children, of the teachers, and of the backward themselves.'<sup>1</sup>

Favourising special education of the mentally retarded (I.Q. below 70), Sparks and Blackman opine:

'Special education is firm rooted in American education and has evolved, essentially, from the democratic idea of equal opportunity for all people. The ultimate goal of special education, as with all education, is to prepare children through appropriately planned programs for successful and satisfying living.'<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cyril Burt, The Backward Child, Loc.Cit., p.574.

<sup>2</sup> Haward L.Sparks and Leonard S.Blackman, 'What is Special about Special education revisited: The Mentally Retarded' Journal of Exceptional Children, Vol.31, No.5, Jan.1965, p.242.

Keeping in view the needs of a retarded child, Austin A.D'Souza favours the special arrangement for his education. According to her :

' The mentally defective, dull or retarded child, unlike the backward child, has never been nor will be exactly like normal children.. his parents should send him to special institutions for proper education for him. It is true that his inborn mental power cannot be substantially altered by education and environmental influences. But the right type of education and care can help him to realise his limited potentialities and to develop intellectually to a degree commensurate with his inborn capacity. The education of the retarded child is best carried out in a special school or in a special class in an ordinary school. Either method can function successfully provided the right atmosphere exists, specially trained teachers are available and suitable methods and materials are used to promote the all-round development of the child.'<sup>1</sup>

Talking about arrangement of the education of slow-learning children in ordinary schools, ~~Transley~~ and Gulliford present their views as below :

'... there was yet no unanimity of view about how ordinary schools can best make arrangements for their backward children, and that how this can be done must be found by experiment. There has certainly been a growing interest in the problems presented by backward children in ordinary schools and an increased awareness of the size of the

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<sup>1</sup>Austin A.D'Souza, The Retarded Child (Orissa Education Magazine, 7(1) March, 1964), p.8.

problem. More special classes with a manageable number of pupils have been started, but these are often the first victims of staff shortages. There is often, too, a shortage of teachers who are interested in backward children and knowledgeable about the methods of dealing with them.<sup>1</sup>

All the above-cited educationists emphasize the need of special class and education for the backward children.

It will be interesting, at this juncture, to study the results of some research studies related to the arrangement for the education of the below average students.

Bennett, as cited by Sparks and Blackman<sup>2</sup>, in 1932 compared 50 mentally retarded and dull normal children placed in special classes with 50 mentally retarded and dull normal children in regular classes. She found out that achievement was significantly better for the children who remained in the regular classroom.

In 1957, Elenbogen M.E.A.<sup>3</sup> in a smaller study found better social adjustment, more realistic vocational goals, more friends and more after school jobs among the mentally retarded children(I.Q. below 70) placed in the special class. Again it was found that performances on standardized achievement tests were significantly better for the children in the regular classes.

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<sup>1</sup>A.E. Tansley and R.Gulliford, Loc.Cit.,p.11.

<sup>2</sup>H.L.Sparks and L.S.Blackman,Loc.Cit.,Vol.31,No.5,January, 1965,p.243.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.,p.243.



Baldwin W.K.<sup>1</sup> in a study to determine the social position of Mentally Retarded Children in regular public school classes found a low degree of social acceptance among MRC in regular classes.

In 1958, B.Blaff<sup>2</sup> found more social maturity and better emotional stability among special class MRC than among regular class MRC.

Cassidy and Staton, as cited by Sparks and Blackman<sup>3</sup>, in 1959, compared 100 special class MRC with 94 MRC in regular grades and found that the regular group had higher achievement, but that the special class group had a better social adjustment.

In 1959, Thurstone, as cited by Sparks and Blackman<sup>4</sup> in a study involving approximately 1300(MRC) children found that the MRC enrolled in special classes were inferior in their academic work, but again, the MRC in special classes were found to be better adjusted and with an increased number of friends.

To conclude, the evidence based upon available research findings obtained in studying the placement of MRC or dull children, is decidedly in favour of placement in regular

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<sup>1</sup>W.K.Baldwin, 'The Social Position of Mentally Handicapped Children in the Regular Classes in the Public Schools,' Journal of Exceptional Children, 25, 1958, 106-112.

<sup>2</sup>B.Blaff, 'The Physical Personality and Academic Status of Children who are mentally retarded attending special classes as compared with children who are mentally retarded attending regular classes,' American Journal of Mental Deficiency, 62, 1958, 810-818.

<sup>3</sup>H.L.S.Sparks and L.S.Blackman, Loc.Cit., Vol.31, No.5, January 1965, p.243.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p.243.

classes if evaluation is based solely on academic achievement. When the factors of personal and social adjustment are introduced, it appears from the evidence that placement in special classes may be superior to placement in regular classes.

#### THE PROBLEM IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT

Pointing out the controversy as to the merits of the above mentioned two types of organisations, viz., placement in regular classes and in special classes, the First All-India Seminar on the Education of the Backward Child concluded :

'There is still a great controversy as to the merits of the two types of organisations. In Western Europe, generally the separate special school is still very much in vogue, while in America, it is said to be on the way out. There is much to be said in support of both in meeting the needs of the mentally-handicapped, and all that can be concluded at present is that each individual country should adopt the organisation which suits best its own needs and resources.'<sup>1</sup>

At present India is not in a good position to afford provision for educating dull backward students in a special class in an ordinary school or in a special school or institution on a large scale. The reasons are many. Some of

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<sup>1</sup> N.C.E.R.T. Report, Loc.Cit., p.90.

the most important are as described below :

In the first place, financing education is a difficult problem for the local or private managements implementing primary and secondary education. It is a well known fact that the resources of private managements are limited and so they do not find enough money to invest in making special arrangement for dull backward students.

Secondly, specially in rural area it is very difficult if not impossible to get well qualified and experienced teachers even for the regular classes in the ordinary schools. At present, indeed, it is beyond imagination to think of getting special teachers who are not only well trained and experienced but also interested in dull backward children and have knowledge about the methods of dealing with them.

The N.C.E.R.T. Report<sup>E</sup> has also raised the voice of dispair while discussing the provision for the education of the dull backward group. It states :

'The provision described for the education of the dull group of slow-learners, desirable though it may be, seems impossible of fruition under present conditions. This organisation presupposes a freedom with regard to content and methods of teaching which the Indian teacher does not enjoy at present, and in addition, is impossible of implementation so long as the system remains examination-dominated and promotion is by attainment and not by age.'

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p.92.

'Again, the project method of teaching requires a special orientation in teacher-training and the ordinary teachers in our schools today do not possess the necessary skills.'

' Objections would also be raised by parents who are so conditioned to the academic aspects of education with its traditional book-learning, that they would regard any system which did not have examinations and lead on to certificates of some kind as being completely useless. Broader, more liberal concepts of the aims and purposes of education in a democratic community have not yet won acceptance among ordinary people in our country and they are not yet ready to accept education as an end in itself.'

Under such circumstances the investigator felt more practicable to think of the problem of education of dull backward children as placed in the regular classes in ordinary schools and under available ordinary teachers.

#### THE PROBLEM IN THE CONTENT OF PRESENT STUDY

The work done in the present study may be divided into three major sections, viz.,

- A. A Critical study of the character traits of the dull backward students.
- B. A study of the background factors such as home and family, personal information and life, life at school.
- C. A study of the difficulties with respect to the education of the dull backward children.

Before pointing out any suggestion with reference to the education of the dull backward children, it will be helpful to have a glance at the observations made in the above cited three sections.

As regard to the study of character traits, the following four traits have been observed as the differentiating traits in the dull backward children included in the present study:

- (1) Tardy
- (2) Truant
- (3) Unpunctual
- (4) Non-talkativeness (related to the study matters)

These character traits may not be built up due to genetic factors. More probably, they may be built up due to environmental factors. Moreover, these undesirable traits observed in the dull backward children may not be the problems of discipline, they may be the problems of mere habit. So, if, environmental conditions be changed, the undesirable traits may be reduced to their minimum. In the following pages, some suggestions are made to make changes in the environments and teaching approach so as to help the dull backward students in their education.

The study of the background factors has revealed that the dull backward students get less comforts and conveniences at home for study. Their families tend to be large and poor. They have less educated parents.

Reviewing the opinions of the teachers, the parents and the dull backward students regarding the difficulties of education of the dull backward students, some of the common factors observed may be repeated as follows :

1. The dull backward students are slow-learners.
2. These students are careless about their studies.  
They are irregular and poor in attendance, spend less time after study at home and play truant.
3. Home-work is not systematically and scientifically given.
4. Wrong study habits are observed in failing students.
5. The failing students are disturbed while studying at home due to factors like illness in the family, more members in the family, lack of facilities for study etc.

On the basis of these observations made in the present study, the following suggestions with reference to the education of the dull backward children are made.

#### SUGGESTIONS

Some concrete suggestions with regard to the education of the dull backward children have been made here. How the different factors like school management, teachers, Education Department, Teachers Training Colleges, Extension Service Centres etc. can contribute to the education of the dull backward students is pointed out in the following paragraphs :

### 1. The Identification Phase

One of the basic premises of all education for backward children is that of early discovery. It is essential that educational and treatment services be brought to the backward child at the earliest possible time in his life in order to ensure that he will reach his optimum development during his schooling. Programmes for slow learners or dull backward children should be planned to begin as soon as they enter primary school and should continue until the end of the secondary education. In other words, planning should be for the total programme.

Dull backward children or slow learners may not be identified or become acute problems in the beginning of the elementary education. Again, all dull backward children may not be identified at a particular age or grade level. Usually such children may be identified or become acute problems to the schools in the upper elementary grades or in the secondary schools. It is at this time that they should not escape unknown.

Experts agree that every school should conduct a planned continuous search for backward students. One of the first step is to set up an identification system. Identification of children to be included in the programme should extend through all levels of the school no matter what particular ages or grade levels are to be involved in the initial programme.

With the help of school Educational Psychologist, the criteria to be adopted in selecting dull backward children may be decided upon. Every school - Primary or Secondary - should set up a permanent register of the children who are identified as dull backward in order to keep track of the children year by year through school. This record can be used as the basis for conferences and discussions with the school staff. The teachers should have a <sup>crystal</sup>clear picture of dull backward children so that they may treat them properly and sympathetically. It will be very much useful for the teachers while determining the method of teaching.

Continuous re-assessment of dull backward children and re-evaluation of school programmes are essential to progress.

## 2. Remedial Education Centre

At present, in the Indian situation, it is completely out of scope to dream having a Child Guidance Centre attached to each Primary and Secondary school in the rural area. It would seem an adoptable, economical and beneficial scheme for Education Authorities to start districtwise Remedial Education Centre attached to the Department of Education. Education Department, through Remedial Education Centre, should take an active part in developing programmes for dull backward children in conjunction with school people in local communities.

The Remedial Education Centre may appoint a team of Educational Psychologists - may be called Visiting Remedial



Teachers. The designation of the Educational Psychologist should be equivalent to Deputy Educational Inspector. As regards his qualifications, it may be suggested that he should be a matured person having profound knowledge of psychology and philosophy of education. He must be interested in the educational programmes for the dull backward children. He must have sympathetic attitude towards the dull backward children and their parents too.

Some of the activities of the Educational Psychologist may be listed :

1. He locates dull backward children with the help of criteria already decided. He investigates the child's level of intelligence and other aptitudes or special abilities, his scholastic attainments or failures with the help of standardised tests.
2. He organises the testing programme with the help of the teachers. The diagnosis has more value than mere placement. A programme for dull backward children should be based upon a good diagnostic programme.
3. He helps teachers in making the concept of remedial teaching in basic skills like reading, writing and Arithmetic, more clear. He arranges short lectures courses for teachers to make them understand that the remedial programme should be considered a continuous and an integral part of the educational programme for the dull backward children.
4. He, as a well qualified person, should be made responsible for seeing to the direction and counseling of dull backward children all the way through school.

5. He advises parents how to encourage their child for making good progress in education, to inculcate right type of study habits etc.
6. He can guide the school staff in keeping systematically the record of the family background, social background and personal data of the dull backward students, which can very easily referred to by the teaching staff whenever needed.
7. He takes active part in any activity, related to the education of the dull backward children, organised by the Extension Service Centre or the Teachers' Training Institutions.

### 3. Extension Service Centre

It may be suggested here that the Extension Service Scheme recently launched in India can be of immense help in the direction of educating the dull backward children.

It can organise seminars and workshops to acquaint teachers with the nature of the programme, to explore possibilities and provide training programme on remedial education, with reading, observation, demonstrations and other features. This would go a great way in building up professional opinion in favour of making an intensive effort for the care of the dull backward children and meeting the needs of the problem adequately.

It can start circulating library for school teachers, providing audio-visual aids to schools, etc.

### 4. Teachers' Training Institutions

Now-a-days many Training Colleges have included

'Education for the Handicapped' as one of the subjects. But, as it is an optional subject, only a small group of teachers offer it. It may be suggested that this subject should be made compulsory to facilitate all the trained teachers to have the real knowledge to tackle the problem of education of the gifted and the backward children. This will also give a general orientation to the future teachers on these aspects of class organisation and child care which are related to the problem.

With the help of Education Department and Extension Service Centre, the Training Institutions can do a lot in the direction of education of the dull backward children. For example,

1. To trace the progress of the child, attainment tests in series may be locally developed.
2. A committee may be assigned to work on the problem of instructional materials. In-service courses dealing with instructional programmes for the dull backward students may be organised.
3. Research experiments related to different aspects of work done with the dull backward students may be designed.

#### 5. School Examination System

A pen picture of prevailing examination system at present may be given briefly as follows :

1. At least two examinations are held during the year; Terminal Test held before Winter Vacation and Annual Examination before Summer Vacation.

2. All the students in one standard have to attempt the same question paper irrespective of their abilities and achievements.
3. These are not only Power Tests but Speed Tests too.
4. Same promotion rules are applied to all the students in the same standard.
5. All the students, particularly in the rural area, spend their vacation time almost in idleness.

To avoid all the above mentioned defects which are positively harmful, at least to the slow learners or the failing students, the following plan may be tried out :

The Terminal and the Annual Examinations be divided into two parts, viz.,

- (i) Terminal Test in October, before Winter Vacation.
- (ii) Terminal Test in November, after Winter Vacation.
- (iii) Annual Examination in March-April, before Summer Vacation.
- (iv) Annual Examination in June, at the end of Summer Vacation.

On the recommendation of the teaching staff, the average and the above average students be asked to appear at the Terminal Test in October, and at the Annual Examination in March-April. While the dull backward or slow learners be advised to appear at the Terminal Test in November and the Annual Examination in June. The parents of these dull backward students be convinced accordingly.

During the holidays Winter/Summer Camp be arranged in

the school itself or a proper place nearby. The dull backward students be asked to join the camps, so that they may utilise the vacation time in some activities and may not spend it idly. Daily only one or two hours teaching may be arranged. The students should not feel that they are over-burdened with learning. Even average or above-average students be asked to join the camps to utilise their time properly in various hobbies and in interesting activities. Evening sports may be organised.

Enough number of teachers may be invited to solve the difficulties of the dull backward students and help them in revising their course.

Naturally the question papers for different examinations will be different. The question papers for the dull backward students would be comparatively less lengthy and more objective-centred and in accordance with their abilities and achievements.

The promotion rules for the dull backward students be confined to the minimum or must.

In the rural high schools, there is no terrible rush for the admission in the school in June when the First Term begins. So, the above mentioned arrangement will not in any way come in the way of smooth administration of the school. When the teachers in India at present, are not in a position to modify the curriculum suited to the failing

students, this type of arrangement will be more practicable.

The above mentioned plan may be justified on the following ground:

1. It is a recognised fact that the dull backward students are generally slow learners. They need more time to grasp and digest the matter than the normal ones. They do not quickly comprehend the matter. In the plan suggested above, they are getting more time for study, 20 to 25 days more for terminal test and nearly two months more for the Annual Examination. By this type of arrangement, if properly planned, the dull backward students will get enough time to solve their difficulties and revise the course.
2. In the rural area, the students have generally no outings or trips during vacations. So, the students will be ready to join the camp. Their parents may also be easily convinced for the scheme.
3. The Winter/Summer camp scheme provides first hand experience to teachers for handling the problems of the failing students. It also helps in creating the necessary climate in the country for making necessary adequate provisions for the education of the dull backward students. It may provide the necessary basis for organising systematic and scientific research on the education of the failing students.
4. As far as time factor is concerned, the question paper for the dull backward students be set in such a way that they find little more time to attempt a question.

## 6. Home Visits

A vast literature can be had now<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>a-days explaining the importance of 'Parent-Teacher Relationship', its advantages and various means to strengthen this relationship. The only point the investigator wants to discuss here is related to 'home visits.' While collecting data of the present study, the investigator had a chance for 'home visits' of the normal and dull backward students. By his own experiences, he is in a position to advocate 'home visits' as one of the most effective factor in strengthening Parent-Teacher-Relationship.

As it is expected from the parents to visit the school occasionally, it should be equally expected from the teachers to have occasional visits of the home of the dull backward children. The Head of the school should expect from each teacher to arrange for at least <sup>2 or 3</sup>/<sub>home visits</sub> per month, at his convenience. In the rural area this is not impossible. During the visit the teacher may gather information about students home and family background, social influence of the family, socio-economic condition of the family, students' study habits etc. He may also report the parents about their child's progress in the school, his regularity in attendance etc.

The Head of the school should arrange a meeting, once in a month, for the teachers to report their experiences .

during home visits. This type of discussion may be very much useful for all the teachers to understand the dull backward students.

A systematic approach to 'home-visits' may prove its usefulness in strengthening Parent-Teacher relationship and also Teacher-Student-Relationship.

Teachers may find necessary, therefore, to take the initiative to establish a personal and direct contact with the parents of dull backward children. The Education Department must insist upon the formation of Parent-Teacher-Association in every school and keep a watch on its effective working.

Truancy, the worst enemy of school children, can be checked to a great extent, if parents and teachers co-operate. Furthermore, it will help to solve many a problem of individual children such as non-attendance, irregular attendance, unpunctuality, home-work, wrong study habits etc.

#### 7. School Health Unit

In every school, School Health Unit should be established. Over and above the First Aid Box, the unit should provide some medicine (Tablets) for common sickness, headache, cough and cold, etc., which will be extremely useful for the dull backward children who are poor in health. If possible, mid-day meal should also be provided to the students who are needy.

School Medical Examinations should be made more comprehensive. Parents should be encouraged to attend the



school when their child is being medically examined. At that time, it may be possible for the Headmaster to discuss with the parents about remedial measures to be adopted to safeguard the health of the child. Follow up work should be much insisted upon.

### 8. Home-Work

With reference to Home-work, the following suggestions should be kept in mind:

1. The first and the most important suggestion is that the Home-work to be given should be discussed in the class before giving it. It is of no use or of little use for the 'dull backward children to say 'Work out at home from example number this to that,' or 'attempt answering questions given at the end of the chapter,' etc. Instead of adopting this method, the teacher should spare a few minutes to get clues to the solutions or suggestions about the Home work.

If the dull backward students get an idea as how to do the Homework, they will try to do it individually at home. Not doing of Home work may inspire them to play truant. So, when they are helped in doing Homework, truancy may be checked to a certain extent.

2. Home work given to the students should be broken up into short and simple units.
3. Sufficient 'drill' work should be given which will be of great help to the dull backward students.
4. Ample time should be given to dull backward students to complete the Home-work.

5. Frequent summaries of the important points of discussion should be utilized in Home-Work.
6. Last but not the least important suggestion is with regard to the checking of Homework. It may be said that checking of Homework is more important than giving Home-work. In checking, if the teacher finds no time, the help from the clever students in the class may be invited. Regular checking of the Homework may inspire students to be punctual. Dull backward students should be praised occasionally when they do their Homework and bring it regularly.

#### 9. Study Habits

Efforts in scholastic achievements become fruitless if adequate study habits are not inculcated. Not only the dull backward students but even average and above average students also have habit to read and work hard when the Annual examination approaches very near. Average and above average students may cope up revising the course, but the dull backward students who are mostly slow learners cannot revise the course at the last moment. So, they are the losers. At the eleventh hour they have to read till very late<sup>at</sup>/night. Such undesirable habit may affect their health also.

The only remedy to get rid of this habit is to make the students busy in reading during the whole year. Studying should be a continuous process. In this direction, 'one-period-test' may help a lot. After teaching each unit one

period should be allotted for testing. The subject teachers may easily arrange for a 'one-period-test' in his subject in his own period, without disturbing the time-table. Care should be taken that this type of ~~testing~~ should be evenly distributed during the month. A programme for the whole term may be planned out quite from the beginning of the term, with the help of the subject teachers. The students may be informed accordingly.

Moreover, the teachers should often discuss about how to build up proper study habits. Discussions may be held upon the topic. Even a psychologist working in the field of education may be invited to talk to the students on 'study habits'. The parents may be invited to attend such talks, because it is essential to invite co-operation from the parents to inculcate right type of study habits in the dull backward students.

#### 10. Method of Revision

The teachers of the dull backward children should realise the need and importance of revision of the course at the proper interval. The teacher's duty is not to finish the course any how but to see that whatever is taught is grasped and assimilated by the students. A method of revising the course utilised by the investigator as a teacher, may be pointed out.

While revising the course, the teacher should talk less and give chance to the students to talk more. The

class should be divided into two groups. Each student should be compelled to raise a question from the course. The answer should be expected from the other group. The teacher should see that every student especially dull backward takes part in the programme. This will help the students and the teacher. e.g.,

- (a) The students will encourage to speak in the class.
- (b) To defeat the other group, the students will come fully prepared.
- (c) Automatic revision of the course will be done.

#### 11. Provision of Hostel

It may be emphatically suggested that hostel accommodation with arrangements for supervision and guidance for the dull backward students should be made. Only those dull backward children, having broken or unsatisfactory home, should be admitted in the hostel. In the beginning as a tryout one hostel among 4 or 5 nearby secondary schools should be instituted with the target of having such hostel for each secondary school. While recognising new schools, Education Department should consider as one of the important factors for recognition that adequate hostel accommodation is planned for the dull backward students. While admitting the children in the school, their parents should be well informed that if the student is found dull and backward

and if the home circumstances are found unsatisfactory, the child would be asked to stay in the hostel compulsorily.

Following is given the general pattern of the hostel:

1. Only dull backward or failing students having unsatisfactory home should be admitted.
2. Adequate number of teachers (say one teacher per 15 to 20 students) should be asked to stay in the hostel. They will render personal guidance to students and maintain the proper atmosphere in the hostel.
3. The hostel should function as a unit for activities such as social service camps. Suitable types of services like cleaning, kitchen service, washing etc., may be given by the students. They should be given a fair share of the routine tasks that ensure the smooth running of the hostel.
4. Creative activities which provide outlets for the excessive energy of the children should be properly planned. These activities are very much helpful in sublimating instincts.
5. It should provide simple but nourishing food.

The advantages of such hostel accommodation may be enumerated as follows:

1. The child is observed very closely. The teachers will get chance to come in personal contact with children and know them at close quarters. Concentrated individual consideration of their problems quickly brings many of them upto a level.
2. The children will find ample time for study. They will spend more time after study. They will be guided by

the teachers. Their difficulties will be solved by the teachers. 'Drill' in every subject will be possible. As a result, they will not lag behind in study.

3. Formation of Flexible Groups for the different subjects within the hostel will be proved a more scientific treatment for the failing students. Teachers who can make it convenient to spare extra time should volunteer to take extra classes of dull backward students and help them in coping up with normal ones of the class.
4. The students will not be disturbed in their study due to domestic reasons like illness in the family, looking after younger brothers and sisters, helping father in his occupation etc.
5. It will help to save the child from unhealthy influence of his associates outside the school. They will become careful about their studies. The problem of irregularity in attendance and playing truant will be solved to a greater extent.
6. If any sign of truancy is detected, it may be checked very promptly and steps can be taken to reduce it to its minimum.
7. Right type of study habits may be inculcated by regulating Time-table in the hostel. Supervision by the teachers will help in eliminating wrong study habits.
8. They will be encouraged to do Home-work individually, by their own efforts and with the help of the guiding teacher.

9. By arranging debates or talks related to study matter or some general topic, the dull backward students will get chance to speak to a small group of students, who are of the same ability and achievements. Motivation for talkativeness may be induced.
10. The habit of 'Tardiness', 'unpunctuality' 'Truancy' may be reduced to its minimum by giving the students some responsible duties. They may be involved in the smooth administration of the hostel. Students' Committees for various activities like, collection of food grains, its preservation, its supply to mess, maintaining hostel discipline, games and sports, cleanliness of the building, etc., should be appointed. It should be seen that ~~each~~ and every student is involved in some activity.

Looking at all the advantages of staying in a hostel, it may be said that this type of programme may work more beneficially than even the special class or special institution for dull backward students.

## 12. Co-Operative Work in Class-Room

Recognition of the dull backward students by the teachers is one of the most powerful means to eliminate some undesirable traits like tardiness, unpunctuality, truancy and non-talkativeness. Every student should feel that he is the responsible member in school activities. There are hundreds of activities in a school. Even for a smallest task (e.g. to see that there is no wastage of the chalksticks) one student in each class should be made responsible. This way

their co-operation should be sought.

Again, the teacher's resourcefulness may be utilised in encouraging over-achievers to help dull backward students in the class. One over-achiever should take responsibility of one dull backward student for guiding and helping him in school achievements. Of Course, the over-all responsibility lies with the teachers.

#### LAST FEW WORDS

As, at present, the dull backward children cannot be segregated from average ones, one cannot think of a different curriculum for them. How to get on with the present curriculum in the regular class of an ordinary school is a question which needs answer.

Every dull backward student has his own problems. The teachers should be encouraged to start Action Researches on every small problem related to the dull backward students in their schools. Later on, such small researches may take a big shape.

The ultimate value of this study will be measured more by its usefulness to the investigators who are really interested in the educational problems of the dull backward children and by its stimulation to do further research work in the field of education of the dull backward children, than by the amount of its factual data which may be verified by later experiments.

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