

II—THE ADJUSTMENT OF SOCIAL EDUCATION TARGETS TO DIFFERENT CULTURAL SETTINGS

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Since the first studies made in 1964 in connection with the translation and adjustment of Gunzburg's P-A-C 1 and 2, and the final published translations into Portuguese in 1967, the author, with the help of Professor Luzia da Rocha Silveira, has attempted to adjust particular items in the two forms of the P-A-C to the social and economic conditions of the apprentices at the pedagogical workshops of the Pestalozzi Society of Brazil.

These adjustments were necessary mainly because the assessments on the P-A-C 1 and 2 were used to develop a programme of treatment and education for each of the assessed cases.

An analysis of the apprentices' home and family conditions showed the following main points of concern which influenced their functioning.

1. Housing conditions.
2. Large families.
3. Parents' conduct.
4. Disordered homes.
5. Low level of education.

These points are important because here are found some factors which differentiate the Brazilian working conditions sufficiently from those of England on which the P-A-C is based, as to require some slight adjustments and enlargements of the criteria on which the P-A-C charts are scored.

1. Background information of selected cases showed that some live in slums with over ten brothers and sisters and their parents are working out. Mentally retarded children are left to tasks such as fetching water, shopping, cleaning, etc.
2. Apprentices develop, therefore, social and occupational skills in these areas probably sooner than children in England.
3. On the other hand, for financial reasons, there are few opportunities of acquiring habitual skills in the use of games, instruments, tools, etc., such as bicycles, skates, heaters and other more sophisticated electrical goods. In this case more simple situations such as football, going to the beach, samba school, etc., have to be substituted as desirable social skills.
4. Obligated to go out alone because they have no companion and perhaps also because social services are few, many apprentices grow independent and go to the institute by themselves, sometimes taking three different transports (bus, train, etc.).
5. The low level of education in poor families makes it extremely difficult to obtain adequate co-operation in activities listed under the communication section, e.g., language, writing, arithmetic, reading and more sophisticated social skills.

Indeed, a study of family co-operation in training skills listed on the P-A-C showed that our families were easily clasified in five groups.

- (a) Negligent.
- (b) Over-protective.
- (c) Co-operative.
- (d) Literate.
- (e) Illiterate.

It is against this background of a less sophisticated society where poverty plays a major part that the author attempted to define the teaching aims contained in the P-A-C 1 and 2 to make them more suitable for the different cultural conditions of Brazil. The following article will single out some items of the social assessment scale of the P-A-C 1 and 2 where the criteria for scoring had to be adjusted to the social conditions of the people on whom the scales are used.

The consistent use of the P-A-C 1 and 2 since its introduction has, therefore, given opportunity for a realistic adjustment of items and also provided a large number of records which will make it possible to obtain the average achievements for the four areas of the P-A-C 1 and 2. This will enable us to develop in future "average achievement levels" comparable with those of the P-E-I 1 and 2 but obtained from a Brazilian population assessed on criteria which are suitable for their special conditions.

The Main Changes in the P-A-C 1

In Socialisation, items 62, 103 and 117 refer to games and express skills to be achieved in the use of equipment and rules of individual group games. We stressed football, marbles, kite and other important games. It is important to notice that 85% of the group is good in competition, generally, and do well in the "pelada," football in yards, beaches, schools, etc.

Items 31, 47, 105 and 108, referring to house tasks, were interpreted according to the social conditions described above. Apprentices play an important part in helping their parents who work out. For those who live in slums, it is easy to fetch water, buy milk and newspapers, clean the house, take their father's lunch to his place of work, sweep, cook, etc.

In the Occupation area, apprentices in the carpentry, printing, bookbinding or straw-weaving workshops had good opportunities for practising skills, therefore items referring to agility and relating to the use of tools such as hammer, saw, anvil, spinning machines, were fairly competently handled, and it seems that the group managed to rise higher on these skills than would have been expected. The same happened in item 91 where the group of trainees was skilful in playing ball, making cloth balls, kites, etc. They prefer open-air games which do not have rigid equipment such as slides, swings, etc., as described in the P-A-C.

The Main Changes in the P-A-C 2

In the Self-Help area, item 86, referring to the competent use of the self-service laundry, items 7, 8, 47 and 48, referring to skills in the use of public transport, suffered changes to match living conditions, places of work, availability of public resources and, above all, social experience of this kind. A laundry is not widely used by the families of the apprentices. For some, the most natural procedure is for their mothers to wash their clothes and those of other families. Thus it is easy to teach the apprentices to take their dirty clothes to the place where the washing is being done. Those who live in slums and more distant suburbs can do these tasks. Buses and trains are widely used, but not with maps and timetables. Apprentices can use public transports by themselves provided they are conditioned to a bus number or a particular driver, etc. Bus timetables are not found in the streets as in other communities.

In Socialisation, items 21 and 22, referring to shopping, needed adjustments.

If apprentices live in slums, the "birosca," tiny general store, is an easy place for teaching how to buy things, do errands, etc. The local bakers is also an important place for them to shop at. In item 106 of Home Assistance, the cooking of an adequate meal with the help of frozen food, tins, etc., had to give way to making "media," a typical morning meal consisting of white coffee, bread and butter. Tins are not frequently used. Item 66, assessing reliability in looking after others, is common among us and teaches versatile skills. This is useful because there are often families of ten or more children, and the older children have to take care of the young ones. In the sub-section on Financial Dealings, items 27, 68 and 108 (going to the bank, knowing about postage, taxes, insurance, etc.) are not very common among the members of the group, and tasks like fetching water, buying a newspaper, going to the market, etc., fit better. Item 67 is important because the apprentices save money to go to football games, cinemas and other amusements.

In the Occupation area additional occupation skills were listed. In item 112, for example, other odd jobs listed were, e.g., going to the "birosca," helping the milkman, running errands at the market, selling newspapers, bottles, etc. In Rio de Janeiro, adolescents work as errand and delivery boys at the market place with little wooden trolleys they make themselves to carry goods for their parents or for other people and receive payment for this. In Leisure Occupations, items 33, 73, 74 and 113 are closely bound to two important activities of the Brazilian peoples, football and carnival. Thus social skills flourish in these areas with group meetings at football clubs, samba schools, etc.

Probably most of the adjustments made are fairly minor, and a great majority of skills listed in the P-A-C can, and are being used as originally designed. For example, the workshop applies the criteria referring to employment in accordance with the P-A-C. They manufacture hand-made goods, weaving thread and leaf, toys, wood, necklaces, etc. After ten years of application of the P-A-C forms, we believe we have been proved right in our efforts to offer an education and training programme based on the necessities of our apprentices' social background to help in the development of their social competence.