# REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON

# COUNSELING AND SPECIAL SERVICES IN LATIN AMERICAN EDUCATION

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AS THE TITLE INDICATES, THIS REVIEW OF RESEARCH IN LATIN AMERICA COVERS a wide variety of topics. It can, however, be subdivided into three main divisions:

(a) counseling, guidance, and student personnel work, (b) research dealing with disabled and/or handicapped persons, and (c) studies dealing with cultural-attitudinal-value influences within Latin American education as they affect counseling and guidance and special education-rehabilitation.<sup>1</sup>

Some explanation of the procedures concerning this review is in order. The author contacted approximately 300 persons, organizations, university departments, etc. in an attempt to locate research material in the three areas outlined above. While the present result was not outstanding, it did yield considerably more than was anticipated. Because of the difficulty in obtaining research reports in Latin America this chapter will also refer to sources where coverage of research might be found and to research in process. While this is not regarded as "good" research reporting procedure, it is hoped that it will facilitate and stimulate contact between Latin American researchers and will at least inform the professional public concerning the nature of Latin American research in the three areas of the review.

### COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE

Many alternate terms (notably student personnel services) have been proposed as substitutes or extensions of the concept of counseling and guidance. While there is some merit in most of these proposals this review will use the terms most understood in Latin American, i.e., counseling, and personnel work. It may be instructive in this first review of research on counseling and guidance in Latin America to view it in contrast to the long established research tradition in the United States. Perhaps such a contrast can be illuminating for both.

The current review (AERA, 1966b) of counseling and guidance in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> If researchers in these three areas who are working on Latin American topics will keep the author of this chapter informed, an attempt will be made to make the information available to others on request.

United States consists of ten chapters. Beginning with a chapter on theoretical formulations, it proceeds to review research on elementary, secondary, and higher education programs; the review deals with counselor preparation and the counseling processes—including group procedures, and contains chapters on appraisal, vocational development, and students with special characteristics. A chapter on programmatic research concludes the survey. The author of the latter chapter defines it to mean both research dealing with the total range of counseling and guidance services as well as to mean "programs" of research, i.e., long term substantive research emphases.

Latin American research in counseling and guidance is presently concentrated on the appraisal function. In fact, it reminds one of the early "trait and factor" emphasis in the United States. There are two emphases, however, which are somewhat unique: (a) interest in the effects of nutrition on psychological development and academic functioning and (b) cross cultural studies. It appears that one of these interests is indigenous and the other a reflection of the influence of the United States. The indigenous interest in the effect of nutrition is readily understandable, for in many of the developing nations of Latin America malnutrition is a constant, insidious, and pervasive fact of life and is increasingly being recognized as a major educational problem as will be documented below. The interest in cross cultural studies in Latin America appears to emanate from two sources: (a) Latin American practices of "translating" U. S. psychological tests and guidance paraphernalia into the local language with the consequent interest in seeing how the two national populations compare and (b) the personal academic interests of U. S. professors who collaborate with their Latin American colleagues. A reading of Silvert's chapter on: American Academic Ethnics and Social Research Abroad (Silvert, 1966) might benefit the former group.

# The Appraisal Function

Pedraza and Baca (1963), using freshman grades as a criterion and students in pharmacy, architecture, and agriculture at the National University of Bogotá, Colombia, worked on the validation of several tests such as the ACE (American Council on Education). They found highest correlation (.36 to .86) between the mathematics and natural sciences sections of the Cooperative Achievements Tests and the criterion of freshman grades. In another study, Pedraza and Baca (1965) investigated the usefulness of a battery of scholastic aptitude and achievement tests for a general admissions program in the Universidad Nacional de Colombia. They found the battery to be highly predictive of academic success and recommended a combination of scholastic aptitude and achievement tests.

Ballera (1965) worked on the standardization of the Allport, Vernon,

and Lindzey Study of Values in Colombia. He found: (a) no differences between students at the two universities he studied, (b) differences existed between students in different academic departments and (c) rank (low to high) order on scales were—religious, esthetic, social, political, economic, and theoretical.

Numerous other studies (Albee, 1964; Boulger and Colmen, 1964; Johnson et al., 1967; Kohan, 1964; Lane, 1964; Risso and Zanocchi, 1967) deal with various aspects of the appraisal function. Indeed an entire review could be written on this area. An encouraging aspect of research on the appraisal function in counseling and guidance in Latin America is at least an awareness of the need for control of cultural factors.

# Nutrition and Psychological Development

Latin America provides a challenging setting for research dealing with the effects of nutrition on all aspects of psychological development: intelligence, personality, aptitudes, etc. Research of this type is best understood within the large scale research programs of agencies like INCAP (Institute of Nutrition for Central America and Panama) and a somewhat similar research program at the School of Medicine of the Universidad del Valle, Cali, Colombia.

INCAP, located in Guatemala City, Guatemala, worked for more than a dozen years to develop Incaparina, a low cost, high protein food supplement. The indigenous food practices are such that children, after weaning, receive a corn meal mush-like preparation with essential protein elements in the diet. It is well known that protein is crucial during these early months of life when the brain is in its period of most rapid growth. INCAP is now engaged in the first stages of an extremely complex, multidisciplinary study of the effects of protein supplement to the diet as it relates to psychological development and especially intelligence. The research population includes expectant mothers and children from weaning to about twelve years of age. Entire villages are being studied in different locations in Guatemala; some villages serve as control groups with others receiving the Incaparina food supplement.

Extensive and varied measures are being secured on all aspects of physical and psychological development: e.g., weight, height, blood analysis, dexterity, concept formation, intelligence, spatial and numerical ability, academic achievement, and personality development. Indeed, when the project is completed it will represent a veritable gold-mine of information on the interactions of the nutritional state and psychological development.

The School of Medicine of the Universidad del Valle is engaged in a somewhat similar project but with a different population. While the research population in Guatemala ranges from villages of rather pure Mayan Indian composi-

tion to villages primarily Ladino (mixed Spanish-Indian) the project in Cali deals little if at all with the Indian element, but concentrates on sectors of the city representing diverse and contrasting socio-economic levels that are not ethnically dissimilar.

Studies in Ro de Janeiro<sup>2</sup> and São Paulo, Brazil, show as high as 50 per cent of children in the primary grades scoring low enough on standardized intelligence tests to be classified as mentally retarded. An AID (Agency for International Development-United States) report<sup>3</sup> also states that approximately 50 per cent of elementary school children in Brazil are "grade repeaters" each year—presumably because they cannot learn well enough, i.e., are at least functionally mentally retarded. How many of these children were subjected to early and prolonged malnutrition? Is the damage irreversable? If so, what are the implications for massive primary school programs if permanent intellectual damage has already occurred? Definite research evidence addressed to this question is urgently needed.

Lopez, et al. (1966) studied the effect of early parental and nutritional deprivation. They studied children who had been completely abandoned, from low socio-economic, and from middle-high socio-economic levels; findings showed that 1.4 per cent mental retardation occurred in the low and middle class children but 15 per cent in the abandoned members of those classes. Their data indicated diet to be relatively determinant in the amount of mental retardation. The library at INCAP in Guatemala is replete with studies in this area. An additional study of general interest is the doctoral thesis of Vannoy (1963).

## Cultural-Attitudinal-Value Studies

The literature abounds with studies of this type, many of them cross cultural in nature. Similar studies on the disabled or handicapped will be dealt with under that section. Several studies by Angelini in São Paulo (1965, 1967) examine children's behavior and attitudes. He found differences in attitudes of adolescents toward the future according to age, sex, and socio-economic level. Novaes (1965) presented five case studies of children with affective deprivation in a school setting. The author argues for the school providing psychiatric assistance to school children and to their families. Rodrigues (1962) studied the fears and worries of school children finding that environment, stage of psychological development, and sex were important influences on the type and frequency of fears and worries.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Paper presented by Olivia Pereira (Catholic University, Rio de Janeiro) at the Third International Seminar on Special Education, Bad Hapsburg, Germany, September, 1966.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Paper presented by Ross Cardwell at the Midwest Council of the Association for Latin American Studies, East Lansing, October 21, 1966.

## Additional Studies in Latin America4

Examples exist in the literature of interest and work in all areas of research in counseling and guidance. Goldblatt (1967) studied the influence of geography on youth employment and school enrollment rates in Mexico, comparing them to Sweden. Using the diffusion theory of certain human geographers she was essentially interested in investigating the influence of one population aggregate upon another as a function of size and distance. Goldblatt found that the immigrants to the large cities often lived in self contained areas and enrollment in school came late in the resettlement pattern—often determined by ability to pay. She stressed the importance of cultural variables on work patterns and school enrollments.

Occupational-choice studies are illustrated by the work of Hartigan (1965) and Stump, Jordan, and Friesen (1967). Hartigan sought to identify the extent to which selected knowledge, interest in the profession, as well as other educational, socio-economic, and cultural forces influence secondary school students in the choice of nursing as a career in Honduras. Her findings were:

- 1. There existed a lack of knowledge regarding nursing and nursing education programs.
- 2. The nurse was the most important single source of information about nursing.
- 3. The senior "bachillerato" students who choose nursing as a career ranked high in scientific interest.
- 4. Leisure-time interests and activities were limited in scope and number.
- 5. The majority of the fathers of the senior "bachillerato" students held professional, technical, administrative, or managerial positions and had considerably more education than average, but the fathers of those choosing nursing as a career had somewhat less education than the fathers of the total group.

Stump, Jordan, and Friesen (1967) conclude that the attitudes and values of the Latin American female become similar to the male as the female engages in work roles similar to those of the male.

Ledent (1965) at the University of Honduras reports on the predictive value of the "bachillerato" degree for success in the Colombian University. Using a sample of students from medicine, law, and engineering from the University of Cauca, Colombia, he found little relationship between the bachillerato and university success.

<sup>4</sup> After the review was completed the author learned of research programs in Brazil and Chile. Considerable materials are available from the following addresses:

Director, Centro de Orientación Educacional y Vocacional del Instituto de Investigaciones Pedagógicas, Facultal de Filosofía y Ciencias de la Educación, Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago, Chile.

Director, Fundação Getulio Vargas, Instituto De Seleção e Orientação Profissional Praia de Botafogo, 186-11 Andar, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

# Latin American research in counseling and guidance

Bushong (1967) lists 950 dissertations of United States and Canadian universities between 1961–1965 which deal with Latin America. Of the 30 theses interpreted as dealing with some aspect of counseling and guidance, two studied specific programs in Brazil (Antonelli, 1961) and Jamaica (Gayle, 1964).

The Universidad de Puerto Rico is perhaps the most active and productive source for research in all three areas contained in this chapter. Their listings (Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1964–66) contain articles, monographs, books, and students theses. The College of Education of the Universidad del Valle has the potential for becoming an important source in this area as well as the Instituto de Investigaciones y Mejoramiento Educativo (IIME) of Guatemala. Only time will answer whether these institutions are able to realize their potential. Dr. Nuria Cortada de Kohan of the Guidance Center at the University of Buenos Aires has also been very active in research in counseling and guidance. The psychology department of the University of Mexico, Mexico City, has produced a number of student theses on topics relative to counseling and guidance.

The proceedings of the Interamerican Society of Psychology contain many valuable papers on aspects of counseling and guidance. A new journal, the Revista Interamericana de Psicología, contains many research reports of interest to guidance workers. A few text books in Spanish are beginning to appear in counseling and guidance (Hatch and Costar, 1965; Knapp, 1962).

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION

In the U. S. work with disabled and/or handicapped persons is somewhat artificially divided between two professional groups: special education and rehabilitation. On the international level, perhaps due primarily to the work of voluntary agencies and the United Nations specialized agencies, rehabilitation is often used to include both. This review at times also uses the terms interchangeably.

The concept of the care of the disabled or handicapped has made strident gains in Latin America since the second World War—1945. This is due primarily to: (a) decreased infant mortality rates, with a consequent increase in the number of disabled children, (b) enlightened attitudes toward the role and practice of education, and (c) the greater awareness of social responsibility that is beginning to characterize leaders in Latin America.

Only two studies on special education and rehabilitation (McAlee, 1964; Toth, 1964) are listed among Bushong's coverage of doctoral theses. These two studies, followed by that of IIME—which was reported by Ardon (1966),

contain a rather exhaustive and complete report of the status of rehabilitation and special education in the five nations of Central America. These studies, with two additional theses at Michigan State University (Felty, 1965; Friesen, 1966), constitute the bulk of research specifically in the area. However, a number of studies on specific aspects or topics have been completed or are underway, primarily under two auspices: the Universidad de Puerto Rico (1964–66), and the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration (VRA, 1964) of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D. C. Under the auspices of these two agencies will be found examples of all aspects of research on rehabilitation (medical, psychological, educational, vocational, and sociocultural), as well as delinquency.

# Special Education Research

Six issues of the Review of Educational Research (AERA, 1966) have dealt with research on exceptional children. The most recent issue (1966a) contains chapters of research on administration, preparation of personnel, and the separate areas of exceptionality: mentally, retarded, gifted, speech, visual, learning disorders, emotional-social crippling, special health problems, and deaf or hard of hearing.

The bibliographies contained in the theses of Felty (1965), Friesen (1966), McAlees (1964), and Toth (1965), and those obtainable from the Universidad de Puerto Rico and the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration contain the bulk of research in this area with two exceptions. Under the dynamic leadership of Sra. Eloisa Garcia Etchegoyhen de Lorenzo of Montevideo, Uruguay, a center for the study of mental retardation in Latin America has been established within the Inter-American Institute in Montevideo. This center should in time become a primary source of research information on mental retardation in Latin America. A rather voluminous report by Robert Klinger, International Center, University of Michigan, on Latin American Education also contains considerable information on special education.

In summary, the research in special education in Latin America indicates that there has been:

- 1. No research on program administration.
- 2. No research on teacher preparation. This topic has, however, been written about and some interesting training projects are underway, notably at the Universidad de Puerto Rico. Most of the teachers in special education in Latin America have received only in-service training and of those with some university training, the majority received it in the United States. An intensive inservice training program to prepare elementary school counselors is also underway in Santiago, Chile, sponsored by the Ministry of Education.
- 3. Little or no research on the gifted.

- 4. There has been considerable research in the area of mental retardation, most of it dealing with relationships to nutrition and cultural deprivation factors (Pollit and Granoff, 1967).
- 5. Considerable research exists in the area of the socially maladjusted-emotionally disturbed, most of it dealing with delinquency or with emotional disturbance resulting from parental deprivation.

# Rehabilitation Research

The research in rehabilitation is difficult to gather as well as to classify. Much of the research has been of the "action-research" type with the purpose of providing services to disabled persons, primarily vocational in nature. The Instituto Nacional de Reabilitação (VRA, 1964, p. 23; Rubel, 1966, p. 45) of São Paulo, Brazil is an example of such an "action-research" oriented institution.

Some of the more academically respectable research in rehabilitation in Latin America has been in the area of mental illness, likely because psychologists and sociologists are trained in research, whereas teachers and counselors are much less so.

The work of Stubbins (1967 a, b) represents the work of Fulbright professors in rehabilitation. He emphasizes that value systems set limits on the nature of psychosocial services available to disabled persons.

# ATTITUDINAL—VALUE—SOCIAL CHANGE RESEARCH

In terms of design, execution, and reporting, this is the area of research in the present review that most nearly meets current standards of social science research. The projects to be reported here are also large scale, well financed, and conducted by highly trained full-time scholars.

The cross national study of modernization by Inkeles (Smith and Inkeles, 1966) in six countries (Chile, Argentina, Pakistan, Nigeria, Israel, and India) is an example of research which appears to have avoided all the mistakes of project Camelot (Silvert, 1966, p. 144). Since counselors deal extensively in attitudinal approaches to life problems they should be aware of new social science endeavors which attempt to research both individual modernity as well as the modernity exhibited by large units such as occupational groupings and even the nation.

Thirty-seven major themes (variables) were explored by the Inkeles study (Smith and Inkeles, 1966, p. 354) in defining psycho-social mobility. The authors state: Basically, we assume that modernity would emerge as a complex but coherent set of psychic dispositions manifested in general qualities such as a sense of efficacy, readiness for new experience, and interest in planning, which are linked, in turn, to certain dispositions to act in institu-

tional relations—as in being an active citizen, valuing science, maintaining one's autonomy in kinship matters, and accepting birth control. The authors assumed these personal qualities would be the end product of certain early and late socialization experiences such as education, urban experience, and work in modern organizations such as the factory.

The authors on the basis of their analysis of the data thus far reached the following conclusions:

To us the most fundamental of these observations lies in the evidence we find of the trans-cultural nature of the human psyche. We consider it notable in the highest degree that a pool of some 119 attitude question sand some 40 related informational and behavioral items should show such extraordinarily similar structure in six such diverse countries—and even more than that number of cultural groups. If we had started with the same theory and the same pool of items, but then devised a separate and different or distinctive scale of modernity for each of the six countries, the result might be interesting, but would not be compelling. Yet, to find that in all six countries basically the same set of items both cohere psychologically and relate to external criterion variables in a strictly comparable fashion is, we believe, a finding of the first importance. It strongly suggests that men everywhere have the same structural mechanisms underlying their socio-psychic functioning, despite the enormous variability of the culture content which they embody. The authors hope to elaborate on these connections, and through an analysis of the forces which make men modern, to throw some light on the psychic unity of mankind—a unity which we can demonstrate is increasing.

A study by Feldman and Hurn (1966) investigated the nature of change occurring in population of modernizing societies as they moved into modern blue-collar occupations. The abstract of their article states:

The nature of the change in value patterns that precede, accompany and are consequences of modernization is an important and durable issue for students of industrialization [—and the current reviewer adds—for counselors.] The purpose of this paper is to investigate mobility from rural and/or traditional occupations to urban and/or industrial occupations and attempts to relate this mobility to different estimates of value change. The data come from re-interviews of a sample of Puerto Rican heads-of-households originally interviewed in 1954. The specific data reported here are from the first 104 pilot-study re-interviews. Our results challenge many of the popular assertions re the kinds of value changes accompanying the experience of modernization, e.g., the modernizing mobiles are less likely to value education as an avenue of mobility for their children. Thus, the pilotstudy finds, once again, that consistency between value and position at any point in time should not be extended to the interaction of these two factors in time should not be exeeded to the interaction of these two factors in time should not be exeeded to the interaction of these two factors in the course of social change.

The conclusions of Smith and Inkeles (1966), and Feldman and Hurn (1966) have been reviewed in detail to illustrate both the importance of the

substantive area and the nature of social science research since there is such a noticeable lack of emphasis on scientific methodology in much of the Latin American research literature in counseling and special services. Certainly the assertion of Smith and Inkeles concerning the trans-cultural nature of the human psyche runs counter to both the myth and most of the empirical evidence in cross cultural research. Their findings raise new questions as to the importance of the cultural variables at a time when it is almost a research fetish.

A series of studies are underway in Costa Rica under the auspices of the Programa Interamericano de Información Popular (PIIP). Two of these studies relate to the present review, the first because it uses Incaparina (refer to section on special education) and the other because counselors will increasingly become involved in the birth control issue in Latin America.

A study by Deutschmann, Mendez, and Herzog (1966) investigated factors in influencing the adoption of new drugs and foods (i.e., Incaparina) in five Guatemalan villages. The study, another example of sound social science research can be summarized as follows:

- 1. The adoption "learning" curves for the new drugs and foods are of the same general type as found elsewhere: characterized by a slow start, followed by a rapid ascent, and then a decline as the number of adopters decrease.
- 2. Considerable variation exists among individuals in terms of their acceptability to new ways of living; both in terms of how they become acquainted with new practices and in the number of changes that they are ready to make.
- 3. Some characteristics of early innovators were: younger, higher standard of living, high literacy, and high degree of exposure to mass media. The authors also argue that "the acquisition of the ability to read, even if reading is not practiced, implies the acquisition of knowledge about other things which permit a greater receptivity to change."
- 4. Information diffusion relies heavily on the kinship channel, the mother role being important.

A second, equally sound study at PIIP by Waisanen, Durlak et al. (1966) examines attitudes toward birth control and induced abortion.

The work of the author (Jordan, 1962 a, 1962 b, 1963, 1964 a, 1964 b, 1965 b, 1967) and his students (Felty, 1964, 1965; Friesen, 1966) in attitude research in Latin America investigates many areas of interest to counselors and special education-rehabilitation personnel. The studies investigate the relationship between attitudes, values, contact with the attitude object, proneness change, institutional satisfaction, religiosity, and demographic factors such as sex, age, income, and education.

Many additional studies, (Carnoy, 1965; Cleland, 1967; Epstein, 1967; Goldrich, 1968; Hereford, 1967; and Peck, 1967) exist but limitation of space prohibits their review.

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