EMPLOYMENT OF THE MENTALLY RETARDED**

1. Background Information and Proposals for Action


Brief information about the programs of various national and local agencies and discussion of what sorts of jobs are found by the retarded, problems which occur in connection with their promotion, and prospects for increasing job opportunities for them.


A general discussion of the significance of work experience to the mentally retarded and of the possibilities and difficulties of providing it for them under existing conditions.


This manual is intended to be used "as a comprehensive tool for programs of training and placement." It includes information on experience with the placement of retarded persons in competitive jobs, including those in automated industries, and discusses the possibilities of creating new opportunities through job redesign. Part II consists of a job description system which contains both job requirements and training information for a variety of specific jobs.


* Compiled by Hazel C. Benjamin, Librarian.
** Items listed should be ordered from the publisher. Addresses are given in connection with each reference.
Concerned with programs for educable adolescents, Section I includes papers which discuss the subject from the viewpoints of the public school and of the vocational rehabilitation agency, as well as a summary report on the findings of a conference held jointly by the American Association on Mental Deficiency, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Office of Education. Section II contains brief descriptions of programs in actual operation in eight large cities.


An overall look at the socioeconomic characteristics of the retarded, occupations for which they can be trained, various types of training programs now in operation, and new programs currently being implemented.


A brief popular presentation of facts about the mentally retarded and their ability to work with suggestions for recruiting, interviewing, and placement.


Presents a comprehensive program covering research and scientific manpower; prevention; clinical and social services; education, vocational rehabilitation, and training; residential care; rights under the law; stimulation of public awareness; and the organization of planning and coordinating services.


Examines the current situation with regard to educational facilities for the mentally retarded and makes recommendations concerning the desirable basic approach to the problem and the extension and improvement of educational programs and of occupational preparation and placement services. Consideration is also given to means of providing and preparing more manpower to implement the expanded programs which are proposed.


A statistical analysis which gives information about the socioeconomic
characteristics of mentally retarded rehabilitants and compares them with non-retarded rehabilitants. The report also contains data on the performance of the various states in meeting the problem.


Discusses the type of information which the industrial psychologist and the economist need to use in order to predict "the profitability of placing a mental defective at the task of learning a simple manufacturing operation" and points out that "economic considerations alone will frequently determine the industrial retention" of such an individual.

2. Reports of Research and Experience


Analyzes the reasons for seventy-three unsuccessful placements of fifty-seven students by a New Jersey training center. "Reports indicate that an appreciable number of students demonstrate lack of readiness for employment or difficulty in adjustment to employment, as distinguished from lack of job skills." The author recommends a "gradual step-by-step progression to community release" in order to "enable the student to develop a greater feeling of responsibility" and to better equip him "for ultimate placement."

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"Employer attitudes toward hiring mentally retarded individuals." *American Journal of Mental Deficiency* (P. O. Box 96, Willimantic, Conn.), March, 1963. pp. 705-713. $3.00.

Report of a research study on the relationship between certain characteristics of employers (educational level, realistic concept of retardation, type of vocational contact) and their expressed attitudes toward hiring retardates which "suggests that attitude... is relatively independent of knowledge" and makes recommendations for persons responsible for training and placement programs.


Gives examples of successful placements in Massachusetts firms and mentions personnel practices which need special attention when hiring retarded persons.

Jones, Harold E. and C. B. Stokes. "The new look for the adult re-

Describes a vocational training and placement program in Shreveport, Louisiana in which both private and public agencies participated. During the year reported on eighteen out of twenty-four retardates had been satisfactorily placed in gainful employment.


A study of 177 employed adults with intelligence scores of 79 or lower which presents data regarding types of jobs held, earnings, length of time in jobs, how jobs were found, why jobs were left, and the attitudes of clients and their families toward present jobs. No statistical relationship was found between level of intelligence within the group and earning power.

Michal-Smith, H. "A study of the personal characteristics desirable for the vocational success of the mentally deficient." American Journal of Mental Deficiency (P. O. Box 96, Willimantic, Conn.), July, 1950. pp. 139-143. $2.00.

A research study of the probable success of the retardate in each of eight types of jobs and of "the relative degree of importance of each of fifteen personal characteristics" in their success. Data for this study were secured from both personnel directors of leading corporations and from directors of institutions for the mentally deficient.


Summarizes data submitted by six local employment offices on scores and work records of 240 applicants whose abstract learning ability scores on the General Aptitude Test Battery were below 80. More than half of these scored 100 or better in one or more other aptitudes. Examples are given of the kinds of work performed by such persons, and the value of the GATB in uncovering their potentialities is pointed out.


Presents evidence that a mild degree of retardation is less of a handicap than is often thought. Improvement in the performance of unskilled industrial work is often much better than IQ scores lead one to expect. "There is a significant negative correlation between initial score and percentage improvement." This leads the author to conclude that "the problem of feeble-mindedness is as much a problem of character or social conditioning as of cognitive or motor deficiency."