

knowledge was at hand that throughout the country experiments were going on to test methods of relating nonprofessional aides to teachers in classrooms adding a factor of assurance to undertaking a project of considerable dimensions.

#### OBJECTIVES

It is one thing to plan a teacher aide program; it is something else to think through the question of the use of migrants in such a program. In the reports of the programs under the direction of the New Jersey State Department of Education, the Wayne State University Project, and others, evidence came to light that adult migrants can achieve the necessary level of competence in such positions, if appropriate instruction and environmental experience are provided. In broad terms the general objectives adopted looked to the designing, implementing, and evaluation of planned task-oriented experiences through which qualified migrants might gain the specific knowledge and competencies which are essential to effective work as nonprofessionals in programs for migrants and their children.

The program to achieve these objectives included:

- (1) Giving all trainees a core of experiences designed to enhance their skills in speech, writing, reading, and basic mathematics; orienting them to basic expectations of employers; and helping them to understand those aspects of the general culture which impinge upon their immediate situation;
- (2) Helping each trainee gain selected skills fundamental to the specific job for which he is training;
- (3) Stimulating and aiding the trained migrants and seasonally employed farm workers in extricating themselves from unskilled seasonal agricultural work;
- (4) Enhancing the personal and social development of the migrants;
- (5) Acquainting appropriate agencies with the availability of the trainees at the completion of the training program;
- (6) Acquainting trainees with the services available to migrants and their children, and helping them to understand how to secure such services.

#### COMPOSITION OF PARTICIPANT GROUP

It was planned to include 30 trainees in the program, and that number was enlisted. They were all females, and all but two were Negroes; the two were Mexican. All fell within the age range of 16 to 45 years, clustered around a median of 21 years. They constituted, therefore, a young adult group. Fifteen were single; fourteen married, and one a widow. The married individuals had children ranging up to eight in number.

For a migrant group, the educational level was high. Twenty-five of the 30 had had schooling experience for 12 years or more. Four had been in school for 9, 10, or 11 years, and one for less than eight years. Twenty had maintained an average achievement record of C, nine a record of B, and one an average of A. Twenty-five had done field work at some time in their lives and the other five came from migrant families. The trainees varied considerably in their subsequent work experience, the greatest number having done clerical work, some of them in school situations; five served as nurses' aides. Four had no work experience. Five had done farm work only.

#### METHOD OF SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT OF TRAINEES

The process of selection was supervised by the Florida State Department of Education. The County Superintendent sent the request for candidates to all principals who relayed the request to teachers. They interviewed prospects who were screened by the State Department of Education. The director of the project felt that this process of selection resulted in a group of trainees who were more like teachers, especially in regard to their value systems, than they were like people in the migrant community. In another year the process will be changed. Through community action programs, candidates for training will be found—candidates with potential for the tasks of aides—and thereby the project will get deeper into the migrant problem. The educational achievement of candidates will be less, but through such trainees there will be greater opportunity to have an impact upon the problems of migrants. The staff reported that it regarded this matter as one of the two major weaknesses of the program.