The Most Important Problem in Education is to Come to Terms with Values

JOHN RAVEN

SUMMARY

There is widespread agreement among teachers, pupils, parents and employers that the main goal of education is to develop the character of the pupils and to foster the spontaneous tendency to behave in a competent manner. Studies of the qualities required in the workplace support these opinions.

Yet schools tend to neglect these goals. This is partly because achieving them either involves influencing pupils' values or helping them to develop the value-laden qualities which are required if they are to reach their own valued goals effectively. Yet, as a society, we are very ambivalent about either explicitly seeking to influence values or tailoring educational programmes *to* personal values. Their neglect is also partly a result of psychologists not having provided teachers with the understanding of the nature and variety of competence, and the ways in which its components are to be fostered, which is required if these goals are to be attained. Their neglect is partly a product of psychologists not having provided society with the information on the personal and social consequences of pursuing alternative goals which is needed if we are to make more rational choices of goals. But their neglect is mainly a consequence of the fact that neither teachers nor pupils can get recognition for working towards these goals in a form which has the market value of academic examination attainments.

But not only are *these*, the *main* goals of education, neglected. Secondary schools do not generally confer any educational or developmental benefits on their pupils. Indeed, their sole function seems to be to legitimise the selection of a few pupils for privileged positions in society. Even this selection and placement function is performed poorly because schools fail to credential many of the pupils who would be most likely to contribute to the development of their society in ways which would lead them to be selected for those positions.

The statement that schools do not help their pupils to grow in worthwhile ways is an understatement. They stunt the growth of many of their charges. Furthermore, the attitudes, values and perceptions which they lead many of their pupils to adopt would be expected to bring in their train some highly undesirable consequences for society as a whole. Indeed, such work as is available suggests that they do have these undesirable consequences.

The solution to these problems is, at first sight, as horrifying as the problem. It involves assessing these value-laden qualities as part of the schools' normal process of recognising, fostering and credentialling talent. This information will allow schools to foster different qualities in different pupils, to gear the pupil's education to his own values, and to draw potential employers' attention to pupils' strengths. By

drawing employers' attention to pupils' strengths schools would enable pupils to continue to capitalise upon, develop and utilise their strengths in the workplace.

Not only do most people find the prospect of assessing these qualities horrifying, they also think that it would be neither possible nor desirable to individualise educational provision in a way which would permit individuals to develop and utilise their idiosyncratic talents. They think it is a sign of weakness on the part of the employee if his employer has to ask himself where best to place him so that he will work effectively. Instead of differentiating between employees' strengths they think in terms of 'general ability' or 'quality'. They construe 'equality of educational opportunity' to mean that everyone should have the *same* provision, not equal access to one of a wide variety of different types of provision.

If we are to tackle the most pressing problem in education, therefore, we have to bring most of the population to re-examine these broader civic and social attitudes and beliefs. Finding a solution to these problems is critical to the continued existence of our society. It involves coming to terms with values.

THE AGREED GOALS OF EDUCATION INVOLVE INFLUENCING PUPILS' VALUES, AND HELPING THEM TO DEVELOP QUALITIES WHICH CAN ONLY BE DEVELOPED IN RELATION TO GOALS THEY VALUE
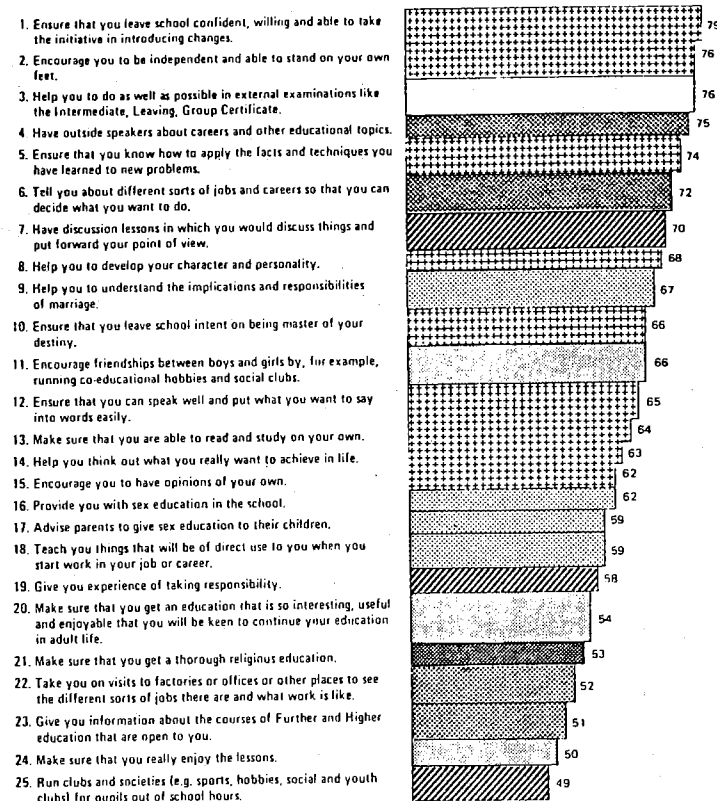
The first three tables show a series of educational objectives in the order in which they were rated 'very important' by nationally representative samples of pupils, teachers, ex-pupils and parents in Ireland and the UK (see Raven, 1977, for more detail).

Table I shows the items in order of importance as assigned by the Irish pupils. The first thing which should be noted about this table is the first item. It reads 'Ensure that you leave school confident, willing and able to take the initiative in introducing changes.' Those who think that schools should *not* be in the business of actively bringing about change in society should be challenged by this data. In the eyes of the majority of the clients of the educational system, the *primary* objective of education is to foster the qualities required to bring about change. Nevertheless, if one reflects for a moment on the qualities which are required in individuals who are to take such an active and innovative role, one thinks of qualities which can only be fostered through activities which are conspicuous by their absence in classrooms. How many classrooms does one meet in which pupils display the levels of commitment, energy, and purposeful activity which is conjured up by such a phrase?

There are several other objectives near the top of the pupils' list which seem to imply similar characteristics. Independence of thought and behaviour; applying what one has learned to new problems; learning without instruction. The most important thing to note about all of these qualities is that they involve a degree of spontaneity and self-motivation which is most uncommon in secondary school classrooms today. In most classrooms pupils can be expected to learn docility, willingness to tolerate boring and useless activities, and dependent rather than independent behaviour. They can be expected to learn what is put in front of them, and possibly to learn how to pretend to have learned what is put in front of them, rather than learn how to learn without instruction.

Attention should next be drawn to the forward looking nature of many of the qualities which appear at the top of the pupils' list. The pupils are saying that they think schools should be primarily concerned with helping them to clarify their life

TABLE I. *Importance of objectives: boys. Percentages of boys rating each objective 'very important'*

1. Ensure that you leave school confident, willing and able to take the initiative in introducing changes. — 79
2. Encourage you to be independent and able to stand on your own feet. — 76
3. Help you to do as well as possible in external examinations like the Intermediate, Leaving, Group Certificate. — 76
4. Have outside speakers about careers and other educational topics. — 75
5. Ensure that you know how to apply the facts and techniques you have learned to new problems. — 74
6. Tell you about different sorts of jobs and careers so that you can decide what you want to do. — 72
7. Have discussion lessons in which you would discuss things and put forward your point of view. — 70
8. Help you to develop your character and personality. — 68
9. Help you to understand the implications and responsibilities of marriage. — 67
10. Ensure that you leave school intent on being master of your destiny. — 66
11. Encourage friendships between boys and girls by, for example, running co-educational hobbies and social clubs. — 66
12. Ensure that you can speak well and put what you want to say into words easily. — 65
13. Make sure that you are able to read and study on your own. — 64
14. Help you think out what you really want to achieve in life. — 63
15. Encourage you to have opinions of your own. — 62
16. Provide you with sex education in the school. — 62
17. Advise parents to give sex education to their children. — 59
18. Teach you things that will be of direct use to you when you start work in your job or career. — 59
19. Give you experience of taking responsibility. — 58
20. Make sure that you get an education that is so interesting, useful and enjoyable that you will be keen to continue your education in adult life. — 54
21. Make sure that you get a thorough religious education. — 53
22. Take you on visits to factories or offices or other places to see the different sorts of jobs there are and what work is like. — 52
23. Give you information about the courses of Further and Higher education that are open to you. — 51
24. Make sure that you really enjoy the lessons. — 50
25. Run clubs and societies (e.g. sports, hobbies, social and youth clubs) for pupils out of school hours. — 49

TABLE I. *Continued*

26. Educational visits in connection with your subjects — such as to see chemical plants, museums and theatres. — 48
27. Give you a say in how the school is run. — 48
28. Make sure you are confident and at ease when dealing with people. — 46
29. Ensure that you can express yourself clearly in writing. — 45
30. Help you to develop a considerate attitude towards other people. — 45
31. Make sure you go out into the world determined to make Ireland a better place in which to live. — 44
32. Teach you about what is right and wrong. — 44
33. Provide facilities for pupils to do their homework at school. — 43
34. Help you to get on with other people. — 41
35. Encourage you to have a good time. — 40
36. Help you to take an interest in and to understand what is going on in the world now. — 39
37. Introduce you to new subjects, e.g. philosophy, sociology, archaeology etc. — 38
38. Encourage you to have a sense of duty towards the community. — 36
39. Make sure that you leave school aware of the prolonged struggle for Irish freedom and determined to uphold the ideals which inspired it. — 33
40. Ensure that you feel confident and at ease when dealing with figures and numbers. — 33
41. Enable you to develop an interest in subjects other than those studied for examinations. — 33
42. Teach you about a wide range of cultures and philosophies so that your own can be seen to be only one of many. — 33
43. Have Project work, that is work in which you have to make something or do some investigation and write it up. — 28
44. Make sure you have opportunities to give short lectures and talks to the rest of your class. — 27
45. Ensure that you are aware of aspects of school subjects which you do not have to know for the examinations. — 27
46. Teach you about bringing up children, home repairs, decorating and so on. — 27
47. Take you on holidays in this country or abroad. — 25
48. Run courses for adults as well as young people. — 24
49. Have rules about the clothes and hairstyles you may wear in school. — 14
50. Have rules about the sort of things you may do outside of school hours. — 8
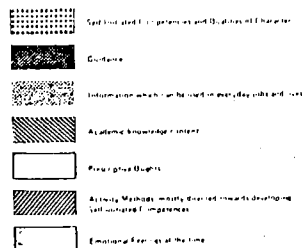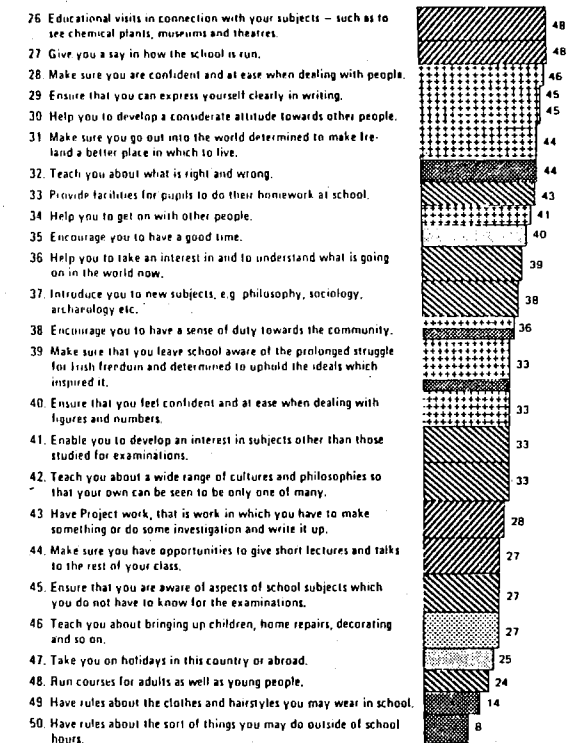
For technical reasons the base varies from item to item, but the base for most figures is 5–600. See technical report (Raven *et al.*, 1975) for exact numbers.

KEY TO SHADING IN CHARTS

Self motivated competences and Qualities of Character

Guidance

Information which can be used in everyday life and work

Academic knowledge content

Prescriptive Objectives

Activity Methods mainly directed towards developing self-motivated competences
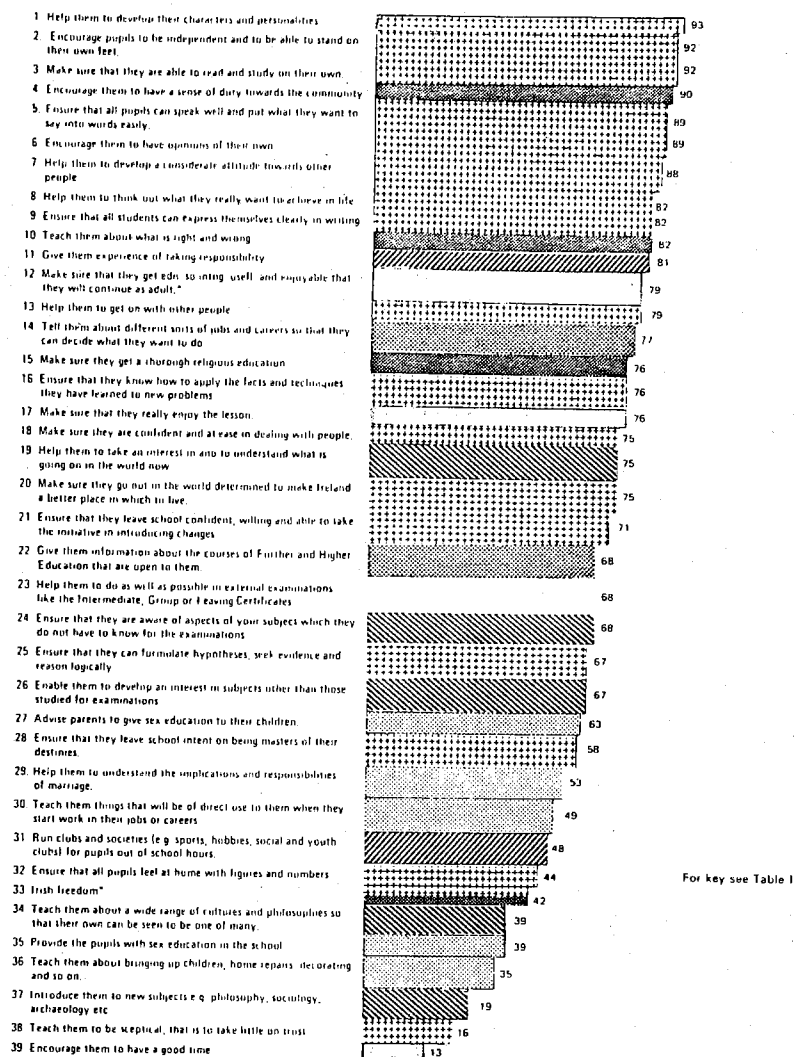
Emotional Security at the time

values and how to achieve them effectively. Schools are expected to play an active role in providing careers and vocational guidance. Again, how many schools do this sort of thing very effectively? (As we will see, pupils, and ex-pupils, are far from satisfied on this score.)

Quite clearly, as far as the pupils are concerned, schools are supposed to engage in instrumentally valuable activity, whether this is by helping them to develop *generally* valuable qualities which will enable them to lead their lives effectively, by helping them to pass examinations and therefore get into good jobs, or by providing guidance associated with their future.

There are two final features of this data to which attention should be drawn. One is the extremely low importance that pupils attach to having rules to guide their lives and behaviour. The sort of prescriptive, constricting, activities, in which teachers often seem to love to engage, are not thought by the clients of the educational system to be an important part of their programme. The other, more important, point is the meagre emphasis on aspects of school subjects not required for examination purposes. This is one of several pieces of data which lead to the conclusion that, while pupils want to pass examinations because of the benefits that passing examinations bring, they do not attach a great deal of importance to the academic content of their studies. Interestingly enough, as we shall see, this perception is shared by their teachers. Teachers and pupils are working, against their will, toward goals which neither believe to be of intrinsic value. Indeed, finding a way of handling the discrepancy between the importance which pupils attach to passing examinations and the low importance they attach to the *content* of their studies is a key problem facing educationalists at the present time. The problem to be solved is that of finding ways of giving teachers and pupils credit for working toward the goals which they themselves believe to be the most important. Unfortunately this involves giving them credit for fostering the pro-active qualities which come at the top of the pupils' list. Most of these qualities involve values and can only be fostered and displayed in pursuit of valued goals. If we are to give teachers and pupils credit for working in this area we must therefore necessarily become involved in assessing value-laden qualities. And this is something which our society has, in the past, been utterly unwilling to do. We have retreated into making assessments which are 'objective' and, supposedly, 'value-free' precisely in the order to avoid these value-dilemmas. But a consequence of doing this appears to have been that we have rendered education, and much of our effort to develop and use the manpower available to us as a nation, sterile. Psychologists have an urgent obligation to contribute data which will enable society to handle some of the dilemmas which are responsible for this.

Table II presents similar data obtained from teachers. What is immediately obvious is that the characteristics which come at the top of teachers' order of priorities are much more prescriptive and constricting than those which came at the top of the pupils' order of priorities. The pupils wished to develop qualities which were expansive, expanding and open-ended. The teachers wish to engage in a much more constricting set of activities designed to mould the pupils into pre-set patterns. Nevertheless it is also clear that the activities which will be required if teachers are to achieve the objectives which come at the top of their own list would still be a great deal more growth-enhancing than most of what goes on in most classrooms at the present time. The differences between the teachers' and the pupils' order of priorities, while important, should not be exaggerated. There is a great deal of scope for teachers and pupils to move jointly in a common enterprise.

TABLE II. *The importance of educational objectives. Percentage of teachers saying each objective 'very important' for 'more academic' pupils*

1 Help them to develop their characters and personalities — 93
2 Encourage pupils to be independent and to be able to stand on their own feet. — 92
3 Make sure that they are able to read and study on their own. — 92
4 Encourage them to have a sense of duty towards the community — 90
5 Ensure that all pupils can speak well and put what they want to say into words easily. — 89
6 Encourage them to have opinions of their own — 89
7 Help them to develop a considerate attitude towards other people — 88
8 Help them to think out what they really want to achieve in life — 87
9 Ensure that all students can express themselves clearly in writing — 82
10 Teach them about what is right and wrong — 82
11 Give them experience of taking responsibility — 82
12 Make sure that they get educ so oring usell and enjoyable that they will continue as adult.* — 79
13 Help them to get on with other people — 79
14 Tell them about different sorts of jobs and careers so that they can decide what they want to do — 77
15 Make sure they get a thorough religious education — 76
16 Ensure that they know how to apply the facts and techniques they have learned to new problems — 76
17 Make sure that they really enjoy the lesson — 76
18 Make sure they are confident and at ease in dealing with people — 75
19 Help them to take an interest in and to understand what is going on in the world now — 75
20 Make sure they go out in the world determined to make Ireland a better place in which to live — 75
21 Ensure that they leave school confident, willing and able to take the initiative in introducing changes — 71
22 Give them information about the courses of Further and Higher Education that are open to them — 68
23 Help them to do as well as possible in external examinations like the Intermediate, Group or Leaving Certificates — 68
24 Ensure that they are aware of aspects of your subject which they do not have to know for the examinations — 68
25 Ensure that they can formulate hypotheses, seek evidence and reason logically — 67
26 Enable them to develop an interest in subjects other than those studied for examinations — 67
27 Advise parents to give sex education to their children — 63
28 Ensure that they leave school intent on being masters of their destinies — 58
29 Help them to understand the implications and responsibilities of marriage. — 53
30 Teach them things that will be of direct use to them when they start work in their jobs or careers — 49
31 Run clubs and societies (e.g. sports, hobbies, social and youth clubs) for pupils out of school hours. — 48
32 Ensure that all pupils feel at home with figures and numbers — 44
33 Irish freedom* — 42
34 Teach them about a wide range of cultures and philosophies so that their own can be seen to be one of many. — 39
35 Provide the pupils with sex education in the school — 39
36 Teach them about bringing up children, home repairs, decorating and so on. — 35
37 Introduce them to new subjects e.g. philosophy, sociology, archaeology etc — 19
38 Teach them to be sceptical, that is to take little on trust — 16
39 Encourage them to have a good time — 13

For key see Table I.

In connection with data to be presented in a moment, it is important to note that getting pupils through examinations came down in position 26 in the teachers' order of priorities. Pupils think that getting through examinations is important, but that the content knowledge of which these examinations are designed to assess is unimportant. Teachers do not even think that getting through examinations is all that important compared with other objectives. Nevertheless, as we will see, it is the objective that gets the lion's share of attention.

Table III shows comparative data obtained from earlier British Surveys, for pupils, ex-pupils and parents on the one hand and teachers and headmasters on the other (Morton-Williams *et al.*, 1968). It is clear that there are major discrepancies between the first three groups and the second two in relation to virtually all the instrumentally valuable activities which might go on in schools. This covers examination attainment, careers guidance, and things of direct use in one's job or career. It is difficult to see how *any* real progress can be made in a climate in which there are such marked conflicts in perceptions of what education is all about. What is important, too, is that there is in this table *no* evidence for the view often expressed by teachers that pupils will change their minds as they grow up, get jobs, and become parents. There is *no* evidence that pupils would regret it later on if they did not pay attention now.

The general results we have reported here—and our suggestion that the objectives which most teachers and pupils believe to be the most important are currently neglected—have been replicated by Johnston & Bachman (1976) in the United States and by De Landsheere (1977) in Belgium. The general conclusion that the educational system fails to help pupils to identify and foster talents is heavily underlined in Flanagan's (1978) report on the last findings from the project-talent study.

But how seriously can we take these ratings? Are they just window dressing? The first point to be made is that we did not get these items out of the blue. They evolved through a long programme of exploratory work in which we asked teachers pupils, parents, ex-pupils, employers and employees, in an open-ended manner, about the objectives of education. The items we finally used were expressed to us, in strong terms, by at least some people. The second point is that many of the objectives which came at the top of the teachers' and pupils' lists lie at the heart of many curriculum innovations. Some teachers believe them to be so important that they are prepared to invest a great deal of energy trying to achieve them. But these studies are of *opinion* only—is there any more objective way of confirming their validity?

THE OPINIONS OF TEACHERS, PUPILS, PARENTS AND EX-PUPILS ARE CORRECT

We have, in fact, carried out a series of studies to try to find out whether these opinions are correct. In one study (see Raven, 1977) ex-pupils were asked what benefits they got from their education. Only a small proportion were able to report any benefits, but such benefits as were reported involved developing qualities which were related to those which came at the top of the lists. These qualities, if they had been developed, had chiefly been developed by pupils who had held positions of responsibility within their schools. A similar conclusion emerges from the work of Flanagan (1978) and Collins (1979).

In another study (Raven & Dolphin, 1978) a cross-section of employees in a wide variety of organisations, ranging from the civil service through banks and offices, to

TABLE III. *Proportions of 15 year-old leavers, their parents and teachers saying that various school objectives were very important*

Key 13–16–year–olds
     19–20–year–olds
     Parents
     Teachers
     Heads
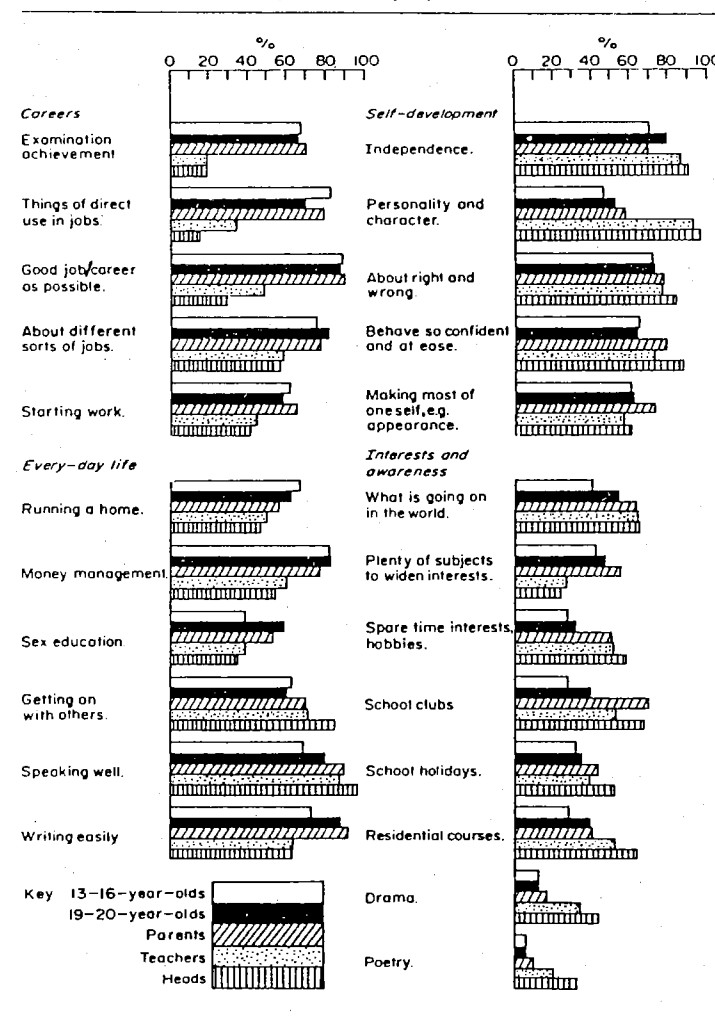
large factories were interviewed. It was found that the qualities required to deal with the problems which plagued these organisations were, in fact, the very qualities which have been mentioned. Like Collins (1979), we found that, when people had developed these qualities, it was usually through particular types of work experience. Furthermore, although employers were often anxious to do so, they often failed to develop and utilise the wide variety of values, talents, and competencies, available in their workforce. This was largely because they lacked constructs for thinking about these qualities, how to assess them, how to develop them, and how to utilise them.

A third study (Raven, 1980a) involved a cross-section of adults. They were asked about the problems they encountered in leading their lives as they would have liked to have led them, and what they thought would happen if they attempted to do something about the problems they identified. Once again we found that the qualities which were required were the very qualities listed by the teachers, pupils, parents and ex-pupils we had earlier interviewed. While their lives were, in fact, plagued by problems, they lacked the interpersonal skills, initiative, expectations of themselves and of others, and understandings which would enable them to do something about these problems.

In addition to this work of our own we reviewed the available literature on the qualities required at work and in society (Raven, 1981). The results confirm our own and they also confirm the views expressed by those we interviewed. They confirm that high level competences are indeed required in all levels in society (see especially the work of Flanagan & Burns, 1955, with factory operatives, Sykes, 1969, with navvies, Van Beinum, 1968, with bus drivers, and Benedict, 1976, with unemployed adults in a small town in rural Ireland. They underline the need for high level competences among professional groups (see McClelland & Dailey, 1974, with human service workers, MacKinnon, 1962, with architects and scientists and Taylor & Baron, 1963, with scientists). But they particularly emphasise the need for perceptions of oneself and of others, and of understandings of society (which are not specifically listed in our table of objectives) among managers, employees, and citizens—including the managers of our society (senior civil servants and politicians). Jaques (1976) studied senior managers in industry and in the political system, McClelland & Burnham (1976) studied senior personnel in the forces, and Winter (1979) studied leadership and management skills in the navy.

THE NATURE OF THE QUALITIES VALUED BY TEACHERS AND PUPILS

It has already been suggested that one of the reasons why schools neglect to foster these qualities is that too little is known about their nature and the ways in which they are to be fostered.

In the course of reflecting on, and mulling over, the sort of data which have been summarised, and in the course of a number of action-research programmes, we have built up a certain amount of understanding of the nature of these qualities, the ways in which they might be fostered more effectively, and the ways in which progress toward them might be assessed. Table IV presents a list of some of the other qualities, or components of competence, which schools might try to foster. These competences are not listed in any order; the list is incomplete and it is simply presented as a basis for discussion.

Let us look at some of the qualities in more detail in order to see what can be said about their nature, development and assessment.

TABLE IV. *Some components of competence*

Confidence that one can engage in a number of the following types of competent behaviour.
Tendency to notice *problems* which will interfere with goal attainment.
Tendency to notice resources which can lead to establishment of goals, or to their attainment.
Ability to lead effectively—the ability to articulate group goals and unleash the energies of others in pursuit of them.
Ability to follow effectively—the spontaneous tendency to study and seek to understand an overall programme of activity—and one's own place in it—without having to be given detailed instructions.
Tendency to engage in integrated thought-action-feedback strategies.
Willingness to tolerate the anxieties which swell up in the course of achieving new and important goals.
The tendency to bring to bear the relevant past experiences.
Ability to integrate complex information in a subjective manner rather than to focus on one or two inadequate criteria.
Sensitivity to one's own feelings and emotions and willingness to unleash them in the service of goal attainment.
Tendency to make standards explicit.
Ability to set up win-win relationships with others to achieve joint goals.

Very many people say that it is important for schools to foster self-confidence. But when one explores the issue in more detail, one finds that there are wide variety of different types of self-confidence. One of these involves the notion of confidence that one can learn *without* instruction; that one can learn on one's own. If one is to be able to learn on one's own, one has to be confident that one can reflect on the vague feelings on the fringe of consciousness which tell one that one has a problem or the germ of its solution. One has to develop the habit of reflecting on these vague feelings and bringing them up into full consciousness, confident, on the basis of one's previous experience, that the time spent in doing so will be rewarded in the end. One has to develop a knowledge that this whole frustrating and time-consuming business is very worthwhile and will pay dividends. Then one has to think over the implications, and initiate courses of action which will enable one to find out if one's tentative understandings are correct. One has to have learned that one does not solve one's problems *simply* by sitting and thinking about them. One learns a great deal from operating on one's environment and learning from the effects of one's actions. So to be confident in one's ability to learn on one's own, *without* instruction, one has to be confident that one can undertake all of these activities.

Another type of self-confidence involves confidence that one can get other people to help one, and this in turn involves confidence that one can persuade other people. It involves having had experience of playing a leadership role which involves clarifying group goals and convincing other people that, through joint action, these joint goals can be achieved. It involves confidence that one can express oneself adequately. It involves confidence that other people will not regard one as the sort of person to whom they should not listen. It involves the ability to be sensitive to the worries which other people have, but have not clearly articulated, let along expressed. This in turn implies sensitivity to glimmerings of understanding in one's own consciousness. Sensitivity to others involves sensitivity to oneself. Thus, developing this type of self-confidence involves having had ample experience of engaging in these high level cognitive, affective, and goal-directed activities. It involves having engaged in these activities in an integrated manner in relation to goals which are important to one.

Each of the other headings could also be discussed at length. But the points to be

drawn out of this discussion are, firstly, that it is impossible to foster these, and most of the other qualities which have emerged as the most important qualities to be fostered by schools, except in relation to goals that pupils care about. One cannot expect them to engage in any of these complex and difficult activities if they do not think the goals toward which they are trying to work are important. If they do not *practice* these components of competence they cannot learn how to behave more effectively. Secondly, a key feature of all these qualities is that they are best thought of as motivational dispositions. All of these qualities are *self-motivated.* It is a contradiction in terms to describe behaviour a pupil engages in only when he had been told to do so as 'initiative'. If one wishes to foster these qualities one has therefore to teach the pupils to *trigger them off* for themselves; that is, they have to develop the *habit* of engaging in them in the presence of appropriate cues. Thirdly, just as these qualities cannot be fostered except in relation to goals the pupils value, so neither can they be assessed except in relation to those goals. It does not make sense to say that a pupil "lacks decision-taking ability" if one has simply observed that he is not prepared to put in the tremendous amount of effort required to make good decisions in relation to a goal that he, in reality, does not wish to achieve.

One corollary of what has just been said is that, if these qualities are to be fostered, it is necessary that pupils be able to practice the behaviours which schools are there to develop in relation to one or another of a wide variety of different goals. Another is that progress toward helping pupils to develop these qualities can only be assessed when the pupil is striving to do something which he personally cares very strongly about. We can, therefore, no longer claim to be able to make meaningful assessments of pupils' ability by setting them single-valued tasks (e.g. academically-oriented examinations) which we—and not the pupils themselves—have chosen.

The final point to be made here (and there are many others which have been made elsewhere) in relation to the list presented in Table IV is that there are so many of these goals of general education, so many of these components of competence, that all pupils cannot be expected to develop all of them. Some pupils will have the inclination and the ability to develop some of them. Other pupils will have the inclination, the interests, and the talents required to develop a quite different set of qualities. Nevertheless, they are all components of general competence.

The problems which these observations pose for assessment are critical, although probably not insurmountable. They do, however, mean that we have to abandon virtually all of our traditional assessment techniques and models, for they imply that we can only make assessments in relation to goals which individual pupils value, and that, even when a number of pupils value the *same* goal, we can expect them to display *different patterns* of competence, no one of which can be said to be better than the others.

TO WHICH GOALS DO SCHOOLS ATTEND?

So far, we have seen that most people are agreed that the *main* goals of education involve developing motivational dispositions, or value-laden qualities. The next tables show that the goals which actually receive attention in classrooms, and are felt to be attained by schools, are very different. It would seem that pupils' and parents' pre-occupation with getting examination certificates—which are so important because they control entry to a decent way of life—has driven the educational functions out of secondary schools. There is, of course, more to it than that because, as we have seen, few teachers know *how* to achieve the goals they believe to be so

important, and even fewer known how to assess progress toward them. But the power of this sociological process to overturn the priorities of teachers, pupils, parents, ex-pupils and employers is unmistakable. It would appear that one could harness these sociological forces to impel teachers and pupils to work toward the goals which they themselves believe to be most important. From what has been said, it would seem that it would be possible to do this by incorporating assessments of these characteristics into the certification and placement process. Since this solution horrifies most people we must look at the consequences of *not* doing so.

We have already seen that schools generally fail to help people to identify (and therefore do not leave pupils able to capitalise upon) their talents and that they neglect their main goals. But one can, in fact, make a stronger statement that that—for schools appear to achieve their main goals extremely badly.

How could it be otherwise: schools are the worst working environments in our society. Whereas some 80% of ex-pupils like their jobs, like their employers, and find their jobs interesting (Morton-Williams *et al.*, 1968; Bachman *et al.*, 1978; Robinson *et al.*, 1969) a third of pupils sometimes or always hate going to school (Raven *et al.*, 1975) and most pupils feel that their talents are not utilised or developed (Raven, 1977; Johnston & Bachman, 1976; Centre for Educational Sociology 1977). Most also feel that their teachers do not know them and lack respect for them (Raven, 1977; Centre for Educational Sociology, 1977). Under the circumstances, how could they possibly be achieving their motivational goals?

We have also seen that, if the main goals of education are to be achieved, it is necessary to work out from the pupils' values. But very many teachers do not know their pupils and their values: indeed they markedly underestimate their serious mindedness (Raven, 1976). Most teachers feel obliged to pressurise their pupils, in an autocratic manner, to work to gain examination passes in which they themselves do not believe and which they think confer few benefits on their pupils. This tendency is exacerbated by the fact that they know that many of their pupils are bored and disinterested, and they believe that the pupils themselves do not wish to acquire the certificates. They therefore cannot trust their pupils to work on their own or create developmental opportunities in order to find out what their pupils individual interests and values are, let alone work toward different goals with different pupils. Yet we have also seen that, if the main goals of education are to be achieved, courses must be individualised so that pupils can indeed work toward their own particular values. But teachers are in no position to do this. Not only does the examination system prevent them, they themselves do not know what their pupils values are, and, when they were asked to say what the main goals of education should be for different groups of pupils, it emerged that they thought that the *same* goals *should* be pursued by *all* pupils (Raven, 1976). Not only were the same goals appropriate, they themselves felt that they were at the present time offering courses directed toward the same goals for all pupils, and that the goals were equally well, or, more correctly, equally badly, achieved by all pupils. Once again, one may ask: how could schools possibly foster individual talents in such a climate? Finally, although, as we have seen, if such goals are to be achieved, it is necessary for different pupils to do different things, two-thirds of the teachers we interviewed defined less academic pupils as "less intelligent, less able, and no good at anything". Only one-third described them as pupils with other abilities. This single-factor model of the intellect is inimical to diversified provision and once again points to the conclusion that schools *cannot* be reaching the goals which are widely thought to be the most important.

So far, we have suggested that schools cannot be achieving their main goals very effectively because teachers do not know, and are rarely in a position to find out, what their pupils values are and are unable, and often unwilling, to individualise provision. While convincing, this evidence is necessarily indirect.

We have made a number of attempts to collect more direct evidence. One of these was through the IEA 'Civics' study (Torney & Oppenheim, 1976; Raven & Litton, 1976). This study is, in fact, best thought of as a study of the outcomes of General Education. It shows that the most pupils have not developed initiative, the ability to work with others, respect for people with other talents, or a willingness to play an active part in society. This is not surprising. Few teachers were using the educational methods which would be expected to lead them to foster such qualities. Indeed very few even understood the objectives of the curriculum development procedures which would enable them to teach them.

Many authors (e.g. Reimer, 1971; Holt, 1977; Goodman, 1962; Friere, 1970) have asserted that schools *stunt* the growth of competence. Few careful studies exist, but those that do (e.g. Winter & McClelland, 1963; Freedman & Berg, 1978; Collins, 1979; Raven, 1980b) generally support the thesis.

THE VALUE OF PRESENT SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

So far, we have seen schools do not in fact achieve the main goals of general education. But is what they do teach of much value. How could it be? Students forget 50% of what they have been taught after one year, and 75% after two years. Furthermore, as is well known, most of the knowledge taught by schools is already ten or more years out of date. Whenever people need specialist knowledge they have to take further courses. Data collected by Berg (1970), Jencks *et al.* (1973), Collins (1979) and others confirm that what is actually taught is of little value.

The key finding is, however, that, as Table V shows, it *is* extremely important for pupils to accumulate certificates. It is only when one acknowledges this key fact—and accepts that it will not go away—that one can understand the source of the demand for 'educational' credentials. That that demand will *not* go away if it is more widely recognised that education is irrelevant is demonstrated by Dore (1976). If one accepts that it is of crucial importance, and permanent, it becomes obvious that the way to introduce change into schools is to change that which is assessed as part of this process.

TABLE V. *Relative social status of persons completing secondary school but then terminating their education* *

	Son's status (%)		
Father's status	Higher	Same	Lower
1. Professional and high administration	—	28	72
3. Inspectional, supervisory, etc.	18	25	57
5. Skilled manual, routine non-manual	52	36	12
7. Unskilled	94	6	—

*From Hutchinson, B. (1969).

Although it is widely believed that this social placement function, while not desirable, at least results in the 'more able' pupils being selected for influential positions in our society, that assumption has been questioned by such authors as

Berg (1970), Goodman (1962), Tomlinson & Tenhouten (1976) and Dore (1976) and a detailed examination of our own data shows that it may be highly disfunctional for society, if not for the individuals concerned. What we found when we studied upwardly and downwardly mobile pupils was that many of the attitudes and values which are known to be associated with social class related more closely to where pupils are going to than to where they come from. Thus, we found that pupils bound for high status jobs were much more concerned to develop the abilities required to work with others, to take initiative, to work for the good of the communities, and to take responsibility than were others. Pupils bound for low status positions, whatever their origins, were much more concerned than others to be given strict rules to guide their lives, and were much less keen to be original or develop independence or initiative. Instead they stressed obedience, sex education, religious education and having rules to guide their lives. Thus, it would seem that Kohn's (1969) claim that these values and attitudes are acquired as a result of experience in different sectors of society is open to question.

So far, so good. Although the results lead us to question the desirability of enrichment programmes in which pupils form all background are encouraged to strive to do well in the school system, they do appear to suggest that the system is functional. However, the highly upwardly mobile pupils were much more anxious than anyone else to get examination certificates and to cut out the 'frills' of education like developing the ability to work with others, the desire to work for the good of the community in which they lived, initiative and responsibility. Promotion of such self-interested individuals into high status positions could be extremely damaging for the organisations and society concerned. Such speculations are, indeed, borne out by our studies of employees in a wide variety of organisations. There we found, as did Berg (1970), that such individuals continued to vandalise their workplaces (by, for example, destroying the developmental potential of the workplaces) and their functional organisational structures, for the sake of personal gain.

As a result, it is fair to say that, not only does our IEA data (Raven & Litton, 1976) show that pupils at school have developed some highly dysfunctional overall attitudes, expectations, and values, the social placement functions of the educational system currently operate in ways which can only be expected to be socially dysfunctional. Academic success is of marked benefit to some people, but the system we have renders a more marked disservice to other individuals in our society. If systematic studies were mounted it is more than likely that one would be able to document a wide variety of other disservices performed by the educational system. Some of these are discussed in Raven (1977).

VALUES AND THE INDIVIDUALISATION OF EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

Before moving on it is appropriate to summarise the conclusions to be drawn from the material we have already reviewed. We have seen:

(1) That the aims of education most frequently endorsed by parents, pupils, ex-pupils, teachers and employers are heavily value-laden.

(2) That these objectives are poorly attained. Indeed there is some evidence that schools actually stunt the growth of the pupils most important competencies.

(3) That one of the reasons for the failure of most schools to achieve the main goals of general education is that their achievement demands the creation for each pupil of personalised programmes of development geared to his particular

values. By and large, schools have been unable to identify pupils' values, to create appropriate developmental environments, or to document their success in achieving these wider goals.

(4) That not only does schools failure to identify individual pupils' values, interests, and areas of competence lead *schools* to be unable to achieve their goals, it also makes for high levels of frustration and misery among adults, and to society being unable to identify and capitalise upon the talents, motives and human resources available to it.

(5) That to bring education back into the schools it will be necessary to credential individual pupils' achievements of the goals of general education as part of the certification process (which represents almost the only link between schools and society). What we need to do is to design a sociological steam engine which will enable us to harness free sociological forces to push us in the direction in which we want to go, rather than away from our goals. We need to harness sociological forces for the benefit of mankind in exactly the same way as Watt harnessed the free forces of physics.

(6) That failure to do this will mean that not only will schools continue to fail to achieve their developmental and educational goals, they will also continue to perform their guidance and placement function in a way which is unsatisfactory from the point of view both of the individuals concerned and the society in which they live. It will also mean that we are unable to implement effective manpower policies in which our society can recognise, utilise and reward the variety of talent available to it.

We turn now to a final set of data which both contributes to our understanding of the reasons for the state of affairs which has been described and underlines the importance of a major set of value-laden objectives for schools and teachers. It deals with people's perceptions of the way the socialised sectors of the economy should, and do, work.

When we asked parents whether educational provision *should* be tailored to the needs of individual pupils, the answer was that no, most emphatically, it should not (Raven, 1980b). All children should be treated equally. The reason for this was that, if one allowed teachers to treat different pupils in different ways, the sons and daughters of the more powerful and more articulate would get the 'best' deals, and there would be a danger of re-creating a society in which the variance in educational provision was more closely associated with background than with need. This would, in the long run, lead to a return to a caste society. There was little recognition of the fact that different people define 'the best' in different ways.

Before moving on to consider the implications of this it is important to note both that the same views were held in relation to the housing, planning, welfare, health and social services, and that there was widespread dissatisfaction with provision made in each of these areas at the present time. It was also demonstrated that some parents wanted their children to develop qualities which were incompatible with those which other parents wanted their children to develop. Thus, some parents wanted their children to learn to be independent, think for themselves, question authority, and respect other people. Others wanted their children to learn dependence, to learn only what they were taught, not to ask questions, and to be strong, tough and able to get the better of others. These incompatible demands taken in the context of an insistence on equality and the lack of diversified treatment, spell the death-knell for parental involvement in schools and appear to lead schools to teach toward the lowest common denominator in parental demand. In this way they

appear to be responsible for the tatty, grey, uniformity, and working-class value-orientation, of the educational programmes offered in most schools—and much of the provision made in the socialised sectors of the economy. In the absence of a belief that it is important to cater for, and capitalise upon, the variety in talents, interests and priorities in the population, and the means of catering for that variety, one makes uniform provision which actually satisfies no-one. Given that control of the spending of some 75% of GNP how rests with government, this is a matter of the gravest concern. Dore (1976) has also emphasised the urgency of thinking through our conceptions of equality, and the implications of not doing so for the running of our society. But this is not the only educational problem to which our own data on perceptions of, and beliefs about, the workings of our society point.

When we asked people (pupils, teachers, and the general population (Raven, 1973; Raven & Litton, 1976; Raven, Whelan *et al*, 1977; Raven, 1980b) what they could do about the problems which plagued them, most people said that there was little they could do: the *government* should do it. Nor was it even their duty to draw the government's attention to the problems. Politicians and bureaucrats should find these out for themselves. The reason for this apparently extraordinary pattern of beliefs and expectations was one we have met before: if citizens were permitted to intervene with the politico-bureaucratic structure in order to get something done about *their* problems, the more articulate and the more powerful would get the best deal.

The logic of this belief system leads inexorably to uniform treatment and to the need for unquestionable and uninfluenceable authority. It was reinforced by another set of knowledge and beliefs. People *knew* from their own experience how difficult it was to get consensus on a course of action, and they were dimly aware of the fact that other people's demands were incompatible with their own. Since, for the reasons already given, it would have been neither possible nor desirable to cater for the variety of priorities in different ways—even if one had accepted that other people's priorities were as valid as one's own—it followed that one needed a strong leader whose decisions could not be questioned and whose decisions would be binding on everyone. Otherwise, no progress could be made. Besides, one's fellow citizens were thought to be underhand and untrustworthy, and strong sanctions were required to make them behave. For these reasons, patterns of accountability should be upwards only; leaders should not be accountable to those below them. Indeed, one-third of one of our samples of secondary school pupils felt that regular elections were unnecessary. Open Government—in which people would intervene in, and continuously 'supervise', the bureaucracy was unthinkable.

The recipe for totalitarianism documented here heavily underlines the need for teachers to lead the nation to reconsider its concepts of equality, its perceptions of the way society should and does work, and its concepts of citizenship.

So now we come a full circle. To bring education back into the schools it is necessary to change the way the socialised sectors of society are expected to, and do, work. To bring about such change in perceptions, beliefs and expectations it is necessary to change what happens in the educational process. This could be done by accepting that, as ever, our most important educators are, and will continue to be, outside schools. But it could also be done if teachers developed for themselves, and sought to exercise, the very competences which it is most important for our pupils to develop: the ability to work out for oneself how a social system works and how to intervene in it to achieve one's own goals; willingness to act on the basis of one's own observations; the ability to engage in teamwork with, and support, others to

TABLE VI. *Objectives receiving most attention.*
Percentage of teachers (other than heads) who tried very hard to achieve each objective in their own lessons with the 'more academic' pupils

1. Help them to do as well as possible in external examinations like the Intermediate, Group or Leaving Certificates. — 76
2. Help them to develop a considerate attitude towards other people. — 63
3. Make sure that they really enjoy the lesson. — 61
4. Encourage them to have opinions of their own. — 60
5. Encourage them to have a sense of duty towards the community. — 58
6. Make sure that they are able to read and study on their own. — 58
7. Teach them about what is right and wrong. — 57
8. Ensure that all students can express themselves clearly in writing. — 57
9. Ensure that all pupils can speak well and put what they want to say into words easily. — 55
10. Encourage pupils to be independent and to be able to stand on their own feet. — 53
11. Help them to develop their characters and personalities. — 53
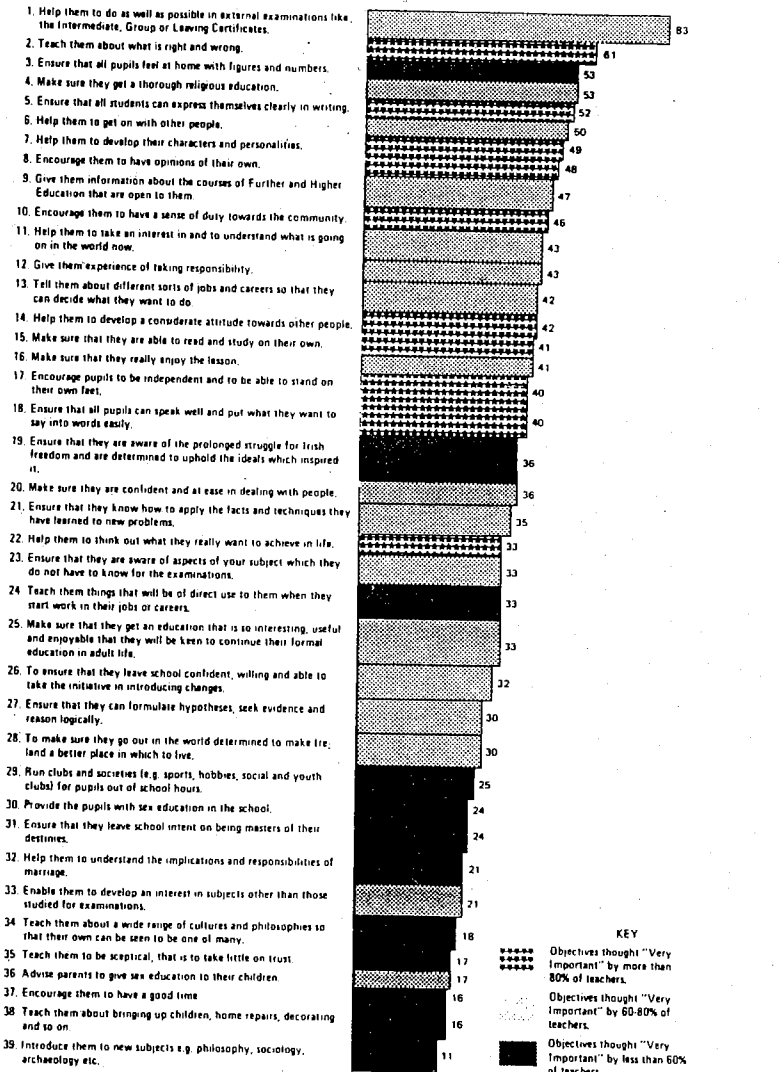12. Ensure that they are aware of aspects of your subject which they do not have to know for the examinations. — 49
13. Help them to get on with other people. — 46
14. Make sure that they get an education that is so interesting, useful and enjoyable that they will be keen to continue their formal education in adult life. — 45
15. Give them experience of taking responsibility. — 44
16. Ensure that they know how to apply the facts and techniques they have learned to new problems. — 39
17. Make sure they get a thorough religious education. — 38
18. Help them to take an interest in and to understand what is going on in the world now. — 37
19. Ensure that they can formulate hypotheses, seek evidence and reason logically. — 37
20. Make sure they are confident and at ease in dealing with people. — 36
21. To make sure they go out in the world determined to make Ireland a better place in which to live. — 34
22. Help them to think out what they really want to achieve in life. — 34
23. To ensure that they leave school confident, willing and able to take the initiative in introducing changes. — 31
24. Ensure that all pupils feel at home with figures and numbers. — 29
25. Tell them about different sorts of jobs and careers so that they can decide what they want to do. — 27
26. Teach them things that will be of direct use to them when they start work in their jobs or careers. — 27
27. Ensure that they leave school intent on being masters of their own destinies. — 26
28. Enable them to develop an interest in subjects other than those studied for examinations. — 26
29. Give them information about the courses of Further and Higher Education that are open to them. — 25
30. Ensure that they are aware of the prolonged struggle for Irish freedom and are determined to uphold the ideals which inspired it. — 22
31. Run clubs and societies (e.g. sports, hobbies, social and youth clubs) for pupils out of school hours. — 19
32. Teach them about a wide range of cultures and philosophies so that their own can be seen to be one of many. — 16
33. Help them to understand the implications and responsibilities of marriage. — 14
34. Advise parents to give sex education to their children. — 10
35. Provide the pupils with sex education in the school. — 10
36. Teach them about bringing up children, home repairs, decorating and so on. — 10
37. Teach them to be sceptical, that is to take little on trust. — 10
38. Encourage them to have a good time. — 7
39. Introduce them to new subjects e.g. philosophy, sociology, archaeology etc. — 5

For key see Table I.

Weighted base (=100%) all teachers other than heads rating objectives for 'more academic' pupils: 528.

TABLE VII. *Success with which educational objectives are attained.*
Percentage of teachers saying education 'very successful' or 'moderately successful' in achieving each objective with the 'more academic' pupils

1. Help them to do as well as possible in external examinations like the Intermediate, Group or Leaving Certificates. — 83
2. Teach them about what is right and wrong. — 61
3. Ensure that all pupils feel at home with figures and numbers. — 53
4. Make sure they get a thorough religious education. — 53
5. Ensure that all students can express themselves clearly in writing. — 52
6. Help them to get on with other people. — 50
7. Help them to develop their characters and personalities. — 49
8. Encourage them to have opinions of their own. — 48
9. Give them information about the courses of Further and Higher Education that are open to them. — 47
10. Encourage them to have a sense of duty towards the community. — 46
11. Help them to take an interest in and to understand what is going on in the world now. — 43
12. Give them experience of taking responsibility. — 43
13. Tell them about different sorts of jobs and careers so that they can decide what they want to do. — 42
14. Help them to develop a considerate attitude towards other people. — 42
15. Make sure that they are able to read and study on their own. — 41
16. Make sure that they really enjoy the lesson. — 41
17. Encourage pupils to be independent and to be able to stand on their own feet. — 40
18. Ensure that all pupils can speak well and put what they want to say into words easily. — 40
19. Ensure that they are aware of the prolonged struggle for Irish freedom and are determined to uphold the ideals which inspired it. — 36
20. Make sure they are confident and at ease in dealing with people. — 36
21. Ensure that they know how to apply the facts and techniques they have learned to new problems. — 35
22. Help them to think out what they really want to achieve in life. — 33
23. Ensure that they are aware of aspects of your subject which they do not have to know for the examinations. — 33
24. Teach them things that will be of direct use to them when they start work in their jobs or careers. — 33
25. Make sure that they get an education that is so interesting, useful and enjoyable that they will be keen to continue their formal education in adult life. — 33
26. To ensure that they leave school confident, willing and able to take the initiative in introducing changes. — 32
27. Ensure that they can formulate hypotheses, seek evidence and reason logically. — 30
28. To make sure they go out in the world determined to make Ireland a better place in which to live. — 30
29. Run clubs and societies (e.g. sports, hobbies, social and youth clubs) for pupils out of school hours. — 25
30. Provide the pupils with sex education in the school. — 24
31. Ensure that they leave school intent on being masters of their destinies. — 24
32. Help them to understand the implications and responsibilities of marriage. — 21
33. Enable them to develop an interest in subjects other than those studied for examinations. — 21
34. Teach them about a wide range of cultures and philosophies so that their own can be seen to be one of many. — 18
35. Teach them to be sceptical, that is to take little on trust. — 17
36. Advise parents to give sex education to their children. — 17
37. Encourage them to have a good time. — 16
38. Teach them about bringing up children, home repairs, decorating and so on. — 16
39. Introduce them to new subjects e.g. philosophy, sociology, archaeology etc. — 11

KEY

▓▓ Objectives thought "Very Important" by more than 80% of teachers.

░░ Objectives thought "Very Important" by 60-80% of teachers.

■■ Objectives thought "Very Important" by less than 60% of teachers.

All teachers answering for the 'more academic' pupils: 612.

achieve desired goals; and the ability to take initiative in introducing change and put up with all the anxieties, misrepresentations, worry and heart searching which that implies. Teachers who did these things would provide their pupils with role models which would help their pupils to move toward the most important goals of education.

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and should not be attributed to the Scottish Council for Education.

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