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Educational Planning is the refereed journal of the International Society for Educational Planning (ISEP). *Educational Planning* is published quarterly by ISEP which maintains editorial, production, and correspondence offices at the State University of New York (SUNY) – College at Buffalo, Bacon Hall 312J, 1300 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14222-1095. The Journal is assigned ISSN 0315-9388 by the International Series Data System/Canada. All material in the Journal is the property of ISEP and is copyrighted. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any information storage or retrieval system without written permission from the publisher. Permission to use material generally will be made available by the editor to students and educational institutions upon written request. For manuscript submission and membership information please see last pages.

EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

**(A Journal Dedicated to Planning, Change, Reform, and
the Improvement of Education)**

VOLUME 12

NUMBER 4

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RESPONSIBILITY-CENTERED PLANNING: TWO FACES OF ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSE

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Higher education is under pressure to do more with less with a consequence of numerous states undertaking a variety of initiatives to demonstrate to their legislatures and an increasingly impatient taxpaying public that it is possible to get more and better government service for each tax dollar spent. This modus operandi is coming at a time of declining overall levels of state support for operating and capital purposes. This article explores the responses from various constituencies that address the increased pressures with which they are faced.

INTRODUCTION

It is hardly a surprise to say that higher education is under pressure to do more with less. Numerous states have undertaken a variety of initiatives to demonstrate to their legislatures and an increasingly impatient taxpaying public that it is possible to get more and better government service for each tax dollar spent. Consider these cases: In 1996, South Carolina legislators established a performance-based system for distributing funds to public institutions based upon 37 criteria (with money attached to each measure) as opposed to actual enrollment or operational costs. Missouri's Coordinating Board for Higher Education has tied a growing share of that state's university budgets to performance and collaborative efforts across campuses. In the State of Washington, a property tax rollback limited revenues and halted spending increases to the rate of inflation and population growth (cited in "Almanac," 1997).

Moreover, these changes come at a time of declining overall levels of state support for operating and capital purposes. Even in states where funding formulas or allocations have not been directly affected, there has been an increased attempt by legislatures to prescribe faculty workloads and cut low-enrollment degree programs (Villa & Blum, 1996).

Multiple reasons can be identified for the growth of these related measures around the country. This trend likely taps into the same desire of the citizenry to limit overall government growth given the view that it has become too large and inefficient in the delivery of essential services--often fueled by significant rises in income or property taxes (e.g., Proposition 13 in California). In a related vein, the National Conference of State Legislatures (1997) has pointed to a growing focus on the affordability of higher education (as evidenced in the passing of a notable number of college savings programs and prepaid tuition plans in the 1997 legislative sessions) as driving this movement as well.

While "restructuring" or "reengineering" are terms often used to describe these novel approaches to funding across the states, what many of these initiatives also appear to share is a push for heightened accountability in higher education funding. However, there is little

evidence that these pursuits have changed the way that most institutions of higher education manage their planning and budgeting functions short of the financial retrenchment that takes place as budgets shrink in the face of increased demands. On the other hand, a major premise of this article asserts that changes in the fiscal environment for public higher education provide the imperative for a new kind of financial planning and management.

PROBLEMS WITH EXTANT APPROACHES TO PLANNING AND BUDGETING

In most of public higher education, the budget planning and administration process is fairly straightforward, traditional, and centrally managed. There is not a great deal of difference that comes with the larger size or complexity of comprehensive universities. State appropriations, student fees, and other resources are assigned to various campus revenue accounts, instructional and service units create expenditure budgets, and the use of these budgets is monitored by a cadre of functionaries in central administration as well as financial officers within the units. Part and parcel of this process, typically, is little unit autonomy in reallocating resources.

There are at least two problems with this approach to budget planning and development. One difficulty is that such a system tends to be plodding and cumbersome, as fiscal decision-making must usually take place up and down some budgetary chain of command. Yet, as organizations become bigger and more complex (i.e., with multiple layers of decision making authority), an even greater amount of unit administrative and budgetary flexibility or "maneuverability" is necessary to respond in a timely, effective fashion to pressures continuously arising in the internal and external environments (Dunn, 1998). This same decentralization principle has been at work for some time now in an array of bureaucratic organizations--corporate and otherwise--that must compete in the global marketplace. Today's complex organization "needs something beyond modification ... but also the flexibility that will enable it to change continually to improve quality and productivity" (Pascarella & Frohman, 1989, p. 1).

Consider the case of a state university where enrollment for a given year falls short of meeting those projections that had been the basis for budget development. This student shortfall has severe implications for the budget since tuition will be down considerably in the present fiscal year and state support may be lessened in subsequent years, even though there has been no reduction in expenses in anticipation of the decreased enrollment numbers. Of course, to prevent the cutting of staff or programs and maintain overall legislative appropriations, a recruitment initiative must be rolled down the line. Recruitment consultants are contracted, faculty, advisers, and others are sent throughout the state (especially to the major population centers) to drum up students, printed materials, billboards, and broadcast advertisements are purchased, and alumni efforts may be stepped up. In more extreme cases, remedial programs may need to be expanded to deal with students who are conditionally admitted without meeting basic

requirements. These approaches cost money, but to address the immediate budgetary impact all of this will probably be planned, authorized, and implemented within one fiscal year. The time frame to deal with this kind of problem does not permit the same kind of organizational consideration and financial decision making processes seen in most higher education settings today.

In addition, there is a second, more intractable problem with most current approaches to budgeting in higher education. That is, academic and program needs and responsibilities are too often separated from budgetary decision making authority. While the assignment of revenue and expenses to "component units" is commonplace in corporate accounting, such has not been the case in academe or other types of nonprofit organizations (see Bailey, 1995, p. 32-4). This can be especially problematic for the planning function as it leads to a situation where:

[t]otal costs and benefits of all activities ... are not clear to those engaged in them. For example, office and research space often are perceived as free goods ... but they clearly are not free to the institution. As a result, individuals within an institution of higher education often are induced to behave in ways that are at variance with institutional objectives. Incentives, the reward structure, and signals in the form of information on the consequences and benefits of action at the operating unit level often do not promote behavior that accomplishes institutional objectives. (Whalen, 1996, p. 128)

To address these shortcomings, a new style of budget development and administration that fulfilled two ideals was necessary:

- (a) To allow academic and service units to both make their own planning decisions for program continuity and improvement in a changing environment, and
- (b) To reflect the notion that program fiscal responsibility in any tax-supported entity is to some degree tied to income generation and expenditure management.

Toward those ends, a new approach commonly referred to as responsibility-centered management (RCM) was forwarded as a vehicle to meet increasing financial control and management demands in public higher education.

Though it is generally derived from the principles of full-cost accounting in the corporate sector, credit for bringing RCM to higher education is usually given to Jon Strauss and John R. Curry at the University of Southern California (Whalen, 1991). Known by a number of different names, including performance budgeting and activity-based costing, most of these financial management systems share some common attributes. Revenue is assigned to academic units (i.e., responsibility centers) based upon tuition and other sources of income while direct expenses--both salary and non-compensation costs--are charged against that revenue. Indirect expenses, or the costs of service of

nonacademic departmental units (e.g., library, admissions, placement, computing services, physical plant) are apportioned to the academic units using set formulas for cost allocation. More precisely, units retain the income they generate from their activities and, in turn, pay for all of the costs of those activities.

A 1996 internal review of RCM by Indiana University noted the following beneficial results of this approach to budgeting that had been employed at that institution since 1990:

1. Responsibilities for the units were increased through the use of the strong incentives that RCM provided with the opportunity to generate the resources to meet those responsibilities.
2. Program change from the bottom up was accelerated because budgets could be readily modified at the unit level to accommodate the change with a considerable degree of flexibility and independence.
3. Given their key role as income producers, a concomitant shift in unit focus toward service to students as customers took place, with students' interests and concerns receiving increased responsiveness.
4. Nonacademic units across the campus became more accountable for their performance to those academic units they were originally intended to serve (Indiana University Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, 1996).

Nothing on the horizon suggests a move away from the overall trend of shrinking state support and an added pressure for the generation of new and creative revenue streams from such sources as tuition, grants, fees, and development. Too, no other system exists at present that attempts to integrate planning, budgeting, and resource management while encouraging revenue enhancement and cost control. Finally, it is *de rigueur* in higher education administration to divorce management at all levels from undue centralized control. Since responsibility-centered management appears to move in the right direction on these issues, the model will probably remain with us for the foreseeable future and, hence, demands analysis.

The purpose here is not to detail the finer technical points of responsibility-centered budgeting. The reader is encouraged to review Whalen (1991) and other more current resources if that is so desired. Rather, the remainder of this article considers potential organizational implications of this nascent planning and resource management system in most public higher education institutions: First, organizational conditions leading to predictable human behavior can be anticipated for colleges or universities in reaction to RCM or other like financial planning models. Problems in the "human application" of vital RCM principles across a variety of external environments and internal situations that public campuses find themselves facing guides the discussion in the next section. That analysis then provides the basis for suggesting criteria to improve the utilization of responsibility-centered

planning, budgeting, and management systems for institutions contemplating such a move at some point.

ORGANIZATIONAL CONDITIONS SURROUNDING RCM

Responsibility-centered management receives its life from a set of planning rules or protocols established within, and unique to, each institution to direct income attribution, expense allocation, and overall financial relationships. These rules, though, may also generate a set of unexpected organizational conditions within the higher education enterprise. Even a rudimentary understanding of the principles governing RCM hints at what some of those outcomes may be.

As alluded to earlier, a prominent feature of RCM is that operating decisions affecting resources are best planned and made by the unit or responsibility center which will be responsible for implementing those decisions. Indeed, this is the essence of decentralization in organizational decision-making. Instead of resources being allocated to an institution's hinterlands in some god-given fashion from a remote or inattentive central unit, RCM seeks to maximize organizational effectiveness by placing financial control proximate to those who best know the strengths, needs, and demands of each program.

In his compelling story that recounts the coming of RCM to Indiana University, Whalen (1991) described this circumstance in the *School of Urban and Regional Planning*: "in that environment ... [the School] had blossomed. Enrollments had risen, grants and contracts had grown, and gifts from donors had increased ... yet [it] was not an institutional priority. The system gave sufficient discretion to ... the talents of faculty to make decisive progress and advance the program" (p. 99).

As important decisions regarding planning and budgeting are made closer and therefore more accessible to them, faculty and staff can be expected to seek increasing involvement in those processes. They may even attempt to redefine planning and decision-making processes across the campus in regard to matters that hold financial implications for the unit. In the past, while higher education administrators have always paid homage to their role in guiding program considerations, the faculty's more extreme decisions could be permitted to languish through "further study" in central administration or simply go unfunded. RCM now invests faculty and staff with the wherewithal to plan for and act on those decisions.

This all leaves administrators to make some decisions of their own. Because of the accompanying financial control that must be given over to subordinate units to allow RCM's planning benefits to manifest themselves as intended, some administrators may find it difficult to surrender the authority necessary when ultimate accountability rests with them, so responsibility centers are abandoned. In reality, however, accountability relationships must likewise shift as unit leaders guide decisions and implement programs in a similar manner as central administrators. Others may attempt to hybridize RCM in a way that jeopardizes or curtails this authority--in this case, any benefits of

decentralized management will be lost pursuant to the rule of functionality (i.e., in management, authority must accompany responsibility). What's more, this loss will probably be at the high price of frustration and resentment from those trying to make the RCM model work within the units.

Yet, even in optimal situations, responsibility-centered systems of planning, budgeting, and financial management can be expected to meet with some reaction among the institutional human resources who must abide by it. To the degree these new planning practices ultimately influence decision making and introduce different kinds of performance indicators (e.g., relating to fiscal accountability), they may similarly spark a pattern of behaviors or "human responses" from a communitarian perspective, as opposed to a singularly bureaucratic organizational orientation.

It is commonly accepted that a solely bureaucratic perspective is insufficient for explaining the creation of quality and effectiveness in schools, colleges, universities, and other human service institutions. Researchers have noted that in response to organizational frustration and perceived heavy-handed administrative practice, these organizations often respond in a communitarian fashion. This communitarian perspective views academic and service units, for instance, as small societies, characterized by "informal and enduring social ties; and they are driven by a shared, common ethos" (Verdugo, Greenberg, Henderson, Uribe, & Schneider, 1997, p. 41). Communitarian theory would assert that a set of human reactions can be anticipated in response to the stress and uncertainty that RCM presents to a campus (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988).

Following this conceptualization of organizations, it becomes possible to theorize how these "small societies" might react given what is known about RCM and how it alters the operational landscape of the typical higher education institution. More practically stated, two questions can be raised which parallel the two salient outcomes of responsibility-centered management: (a) What planning strategies or actions might be taken within a unit to ensure the benefits of a strong financial performance (i.e., income greater than costs) under RCM, and (b) What might these same groups do to shield themselves from the negative consequences of a poor financial performance (i.e., income less than costs) under RCM? These two contingencies suggest two very different communitarian reactions which are considered next.

ANTICIPATED REACTIONS TO RCM

The two reactions essentially comprise contrasting approaches to planning under responsibility-centered management. Nonetheless, one reaction is portrayed here as a proactive organizational response (i.e., an "entrepreneurial imperative" to encourage a strong financial response) that pushes a unit or responsibility center to not only adapt to decentralized management, but to thrive under the rules of the system. The other potential communitarian response is seen as a more reactive one in which the unit attempts to maintain as much of the status quo as

possible (i.e., a "bunker mentality" to protect against a poor financial response) against the competing interests for resources inherent in most RCM-type models. As is illustrated below, the larger pitfalls for most college and university administrators are to be found with the latter approach, so it is there that we begin.

THE BUNKER MENTALITY

We begin with the assumption that most academic and service units will be receptive to new planning, budgeting, and financial management techniques that hold out the promise of improving their existing condition (read additional resources) in some way. Indeed, what academic department hasn't in good faith conducted a retreat to establish its "vision" and "mission" in response to the University's latest iteration of institutional goal setting? All of us have seen these same sorts of piecemeal efforts come and go on campuses. They frequently lose momentum after a period of time, often prompted by a change in central administration, and new ways are then developed for organizational advancement.

Unfortunately, what these fleeting initiatives seem to share, beyond their short period of timeliness, is either a dearth of clear standards that define organizational performance and effectiveness or the failure to enforce those standards in any real sense. For example, how often does negative data pertaining to a unit's goal attainment make its way into a department head's annual performance dossier? Instead, process and style may serve as proxies for some measure of unit effectiveness. Responsibility-centered management and other performance-based systems do not reflect that same problem. For better or worse, performance effectiveness is distinctively clear: Budget surpluses are carried forward to support unit planning and development, or budget deficits must be serviced as debt (with interest) in upcoming years' budgets.

As might be expected, this system of built-in accountability creates its own set of problems in higher education settings. Assume that a unit's faculty engages in planning for the purpose of ensuring the highest net expected utility in terms of compensation, progress toward tenure, scholarly reputation, departmental prestige, and the like. For the most part, performance is appraised individually, with those winning teaching awards and publishing the most journal articles usually making the quickest progress toward tenure and garnering merit points to boost salary. A faculty member's success is still largely a function of individual ability, effort, and an assortment of random elements.

However, the financial performance of the unit as a whole under RCM could have direct ramifications for individual success, with poor performance impacting faculty in a particularly detrimental way. Departmental budget deficits, when they occur, will have to be made up in some fashion. This reality may serve to hold down all salaries (including those of the top faculty performers) and resources to support scholarly endeavors necessary for tenure and promotion will become an even scarcer commodity. The ability of each member of the department to

succeed, in part, is thus mediated by the ability of the unit to thrive under responsibility-centered management. A marginal teaching professor who runs off students from service courses or the faculty member who cannot carry his share of the load in obtaining sponsored funding, say, will literally cost his department under a performance budgeting model. These shifting tides will raise or lower all boats in the unit.

Savio's (1996) model of unionization draws upon an institutions-as-equilibria approach to suggest that faculty are risk averse, differ by ability levels, and therefore choose how much effort to give to a job to achieve their "highest net expected utility" (p. 3). If responsibility-centered planning approaches create organizational situations or structures which disturb this institutional equilibrium and interfere with the positive correlation between the amount of effort a professor (or any other employee for that matter) puts into a job and the potential for success on that job, one of two things may happen. In an attempt to maintain equilibrium, either the faculty member will curtail the amount of effort that is made or similarly affected individuals will seek out avenues to protect their lot and ensure some modicum of fair treatment for the effort they continue to expend.

All of this is not to say that RCM will force faculties and other employee groups to turn *en masse* to unionization in the same manner that O'Toole (1994) has previously argued would happen if the tenure system were abolished. The point is empirical and it would be folly to refuse to consider a change--to responsibility-centered planning and management systems--merely because another change--unionization--could occur. Good and bad examples of faculty unions in higher education exist and it is irrational to assume that unionization is an absolute good or evil in our colleges and universities.

Still, administrators contemplating a move toward the RCM approach cannot cavalierly ignore a line of findings examining the determinants of faculty unionism in higher education. Involvement in institutional decision-making has been accepted as a major determinant in the degree of expressed support for collective bargaining for some time (Williams & Zirkel, 1989). It takes no great leap to think that the "low production" professor or unit member who is dragging down the financial performance of the responsibility center, or who simply refuses to put forward effort to support the performance of the unit in the manner than RCM measures it, would look for some protection to ensure job security. As early as 1973, in their seminal work on unions and American higher education, Ladd and Lipset (1973) noted that unionization would be the refuge of individuals who make a "claim to a permanent position, even if a more able candidate should subsequently appear" (p. 72).

On the other hand, "high production" unit members who positively affect departmental performance under the RCM yardstick, but who are not sufficiently rewarded for it (i.e., those high achievers stuck in marginal units per typical RCM measures), might be expected to turn to the union as well. The most important determinant of a pro-union vote is dissatisfaction with pay or other related aspects of work--and the belief

that unionization can improve one's individual situation in that respect (Graf, Hemmasi, Newgren, & Nielsen, 1994).

Higher education unions have given the faculty and other professional employees a greater voice within colleges and universities and thus affect how resources are distributed (Villa & Blum, 1996). In the end, it may be the case that *both* those who cannot adapt to responsibility-centered models, in addition to those who respond to it significantly better than their unit or department, will perceive an increase in union instrumentality thereby heightening the chance that a union would be certified. Borrowing from wording in the collective bargaining agreement between the Board of Regents of the State University System of Florida and the United Faculty of Florida (1995), "mutual benefits are to be derived from ... participation of faculty and professional employees in the formulation of policies under which they provide their services" (p. 2). This is true whether they flounder or thrive under the plan they themselves develop as the key element driving responsibility-centered management.

In a related vein, this author and a colleague currently have research underway attempting to examine the degree to which a campus-wide RCM initiative may have contributed to a successful faculty union recognition vote at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale (SIUC). Preliminary research results indicate that the university's timing may not have been propitious and that the RCM issue was successfully co-opted to the union's benefit during its recognition drive. As well, we already have seen scenarios such as the one in which business school faculty at Temple University filed a grievance under the union contract asserting that their teaching loads were heavier than average than those in other departments (not unlike the situation at many institutions), and that this was unfair and unreasonable (cited in Mortimer, 1993).

Will RCM exacerbate such problems or provide the means to respond to them? There will almost certainly be similar situations where increased pressure to "fill courses to the max" to build income for the responsibility center is present, leading to even wider swings in faculty workload or productivity than already exist. Some colleges and universities, like Temple, could turn to unions or other prevailing powers (e.g., lobbying the legislature) to redress these kinds of grievances to which RCM may contribute.

At the same time, though, RCM is structured to *reward* heightened productivity through additional resources that accrue to each center and ultimately to its members. These benefits may prompt an entirely different set of planning responses that can be deemed entrepreneurial in nature.

THE ENTREPRENEURAL IMPERATIVE

As should be readily apparent by now under responsibility-centered management, a unit will receive budgeted income it generates from its activities, not just from tuition, but from an allocated share of state support, fees, grant and donor support, services, and the like. While this provides a strong incentive for income generation in the

responsibility centers, it also places a heavy burden on these same units to create both annual and long-range plans that generate the necessary resources for their continued operation. And of course, this pressure is especially profound given the fact that RCM requires that all costs associated with research, teaching, and service be borne at this unit level.

Each dean or other director of a responsibility unit under this system, in addition to being concerned with efficiency and the judicious use of those resources that do exist, can increasingly be expected to turn attention toward planning processes and documents that expand that resource base which is at the unit's disposal. This building of new revenue streams has been referred to as "academic entrepreneurship" (Whalen, 1991, p. 178). Besides simply providing resource incentives, however, it would seem that this same notion of entrepreneurship could beget other changes in the planning act that will impact positively on academic programs, personnel, and the culture of the Academy as well. Entrepreneurship in the usual business sense implies an ability to respond quickly and decisively to the demands of the marketplace. How might this translate to planning in public higher education?

The responsibility center model gives a tangible incentive to do something like improving course quality to draw more students. Take the case of a department that offers service courses for a university's undergraduate core curriculum. Under RCM, it would be in the department's best interest to plan for courses that are as "attractive" as possible, maybe by upgrading the content or staffing classes with professors as opposed to teaching assistants. In doing all of this, there is a concomitant shifting of focus toward the customers of higher education--the students. While this corporate metaphor may be anathema to the academic purists, all of us should be reminded that potential competitors are as close as the nearest computer terminal. As only one example, Colorado State University now offers a complete MBA program via Distance Education and the Internet, with no need to set foot in Fort Collins (or the United States for that matter!).

A more cynical view here might suggest that the department-in-question could instead set forth a plan to dilute its course content and pack the largest lecture halls to turn the service course into a cash cow for the unit. That's probably true. In reality, this same determination is no different than what is being made on practically every campus already.

The difference under RCM is that the planning which may have been almost wholly within the purview of the administration before now has a degree of flexibility and independence to be handled closer to the point of service delivery under the rules of RCM. Decisions regarding budgeting, financial management, and resource allocation remain primarily with the unit providing the service. The faculty, in this case, would probably stand a better chance of impacting academic decisions about what could be justified from a cost-benefit standpoint from its own responsibility center, as opposed to fighting with some vice-president in central administration. This idea of proximity is also generally understood to increase the effectiveness and ownership of planning and

decision-making at all levels within an organization, even if everyone with a voice in the process cannot prevail (Eisenhardt, 1995).

Finally, the aforementioned implies a crucial, *ongoing* planning dialogue that is going to have to take place within the responsibility units if RCM is to operate as intended: Is it in our interest to teach many service courses? Should we go off campus with a degree program? Do we put money into "purchasing" library services or establish our own departmental technology center? Is it best to provide centralized advisement at the undergraduate level, or let faculty do the advising and use the funds saved to strengthen graduate education? Certainly, an adjunct benefit from discourse such as this will be seen as the various centers better determine roles, responsibilities, and priorities to answer the decisions presented to them by responsibility-centered management. These discussions will no longer be just philosophical in nature--they will give evidence of the very purpose of the department, unit, or center. In the best sense, what we have been saying for years should happen: Planning will drive performance.

In the end, clear purpose leads organizations and the people within them to make certain choices. Responsibility-centered management can serve as the catalyst for meaningful planning while facing a constellation of choices that will bring change to a campus, manifesting its vision and mission. Given the opposing means by which the RCM initiative could be played out as posited here, some recommendations seem necessary to support and nurture that planning dialogue across the units. The following guidelines are thus intended to strengthen RCM not only in terms of its own utilization as an approach to planning in general, and budget planning in particular, but in terms of crystallizing academic and other programmatic changes within the responsibility centers as well.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UTILIZING RCM

- *Attend First to the Core Mission of Each Responsibility Center.*

If a department's vision and mission are keys to defining choices and creating plans that affect resource allocation, it seems reasonable that some mechanism has to exist by which that overarching purpose is set. If not, choices will get made anyway. In the absence of strategic planning or other mission-building activities by each responsibility center, tied to the budgeting process, a series of seemingly disconnected choices simply creates this mission by default. (Of course, this is nothing new-- remember the hallowed acronyms of PPSES, PERT, and ZBB?)

Responsibility-centered management is a highly rationalized process applied to what is essentially a non-rational undertaking--a group of diverse people coming together to make a multitude of joint decisions about the educational needs of students, their shared discipline or profession, and society in general. Mission-by-default contributes to diffuse purposes (none of which are usually fully met) and the inefficient allocation of scarce resources.

Consider the case of a medical school that establishes as its mission the training of primary care physicians for urban areas. This institutional *raison d'être* will naturally direct planning in regard to clinic sites, specialties to be offered in the residency programs, hospital affiliations, and such. Lacking the resource base to be all things for all purposes, a clear mission now guides those choices to be made for the optimal use of limited funds during plan development. Without planning around the core mission of a unit, decision making under RCM is probably no better, and is certainly less efficient, than what is done by a centralized administrative staff. Indeed, what would appear to be the most compelling aspect of responsibility-centered budgeting (i.e., the nexus of academic and financial planning and decision making) is lost. Whether provided by RCM or some other model, an integrated planning-budgeting framework is essential to addressing long-term needs.

- *Provide Support to Improve Planning in the Responsibility Centers.*

College and university administrators, while not taking pleasure in it, become accustomed to making significant and influential decisions without complete information and in tight timeframes. However, this is likely not the tradition of the typical professor who has been taught to value contemplation and reflection before weighing in with the definitive answer to some problem. Shared governance aside, some administrators may even view it as a key aspect of their duties to shield faculty and staff from such burdens related to the intractable difficulties of resource allocation. (This recalls one former dean who rightly took pride in telling the faculty how he was able to reallocate funds so that every professor who wanted it could have full employment during the summer session.) Further, the historical tradition of an expanding resource base in higher education had helped everyone dodge such decisions as choosing between a larger library collection and technology acquisition.

Members of responsibility centers will need to be desensitized to these demands. For instance, training may need to be provided in strategic or long-range planning and collaborative decision making techniques. Units may demand initial guidance in how to create decision standards by which problem analysis and subsequent planning can take place. Of course, dependable sources of information will need to be identified and cultivated, and management information systems developed.

These needs, in turn, hint at new roles for administrators as planning facilitators within the departments. Failure to attend early on to how RCM decisions will be made could lead to frustration, confusion, and an alienation of staff from the process. Wilms, Teruya, and Walpole (1997) allude to this core problem which can plague all planning models in their recent account of bringing responsibility centers to UCLA: "in truth... no one really knew how to engage the faculty, and during the rapid startup [of RCM], no one seemed to want to spend the time figuring it out" (p. 45).

- *Build the Budget to Reflect the Internal Planning of the Responsibility Centers*

This may be one of the most confounding problems that present itself in conjunction with a move toward the RCM model. It is safe to say that many budgeting systems and actual budget documents in higher education are as responsive to external demands and influences as they are to internal decision-making. Micromanagement from a system's governing board or elaborate initiatives from a strong state-level higher education agency can interfere with, and dilute the effect of responsibility centered management. Additionally, information generated by mandated financial reporting systems might not be sufficient for comprehensive planning needs.

Separate working budget papers and documents can be developed that more closely reflect the needs of a given institution or collection of responsibility centers as exhibited in their collective plans. (Indeed, these plans might be incorporated as part of an overall budget document package). This is no different than what exists currently at many large colleges and universities as campus budgeting takes place across undergraduate colleges, professional schools, athletic programs, research centers, museums, conference facilities, and the like. It becomes more of a clerical function, then, to build the institution-wide budget by translating these various documents onto standardized system or state budget forms.

Some other approaches may aid in dealing with this problem. Certainly, to the extent possible, responsibility centers should be encouraged to reflect legitimate system initiatives within their own planning and budgeting process. If increasing student diversity is a main thrust of the governing board during a planning cycle, that thread should probably be made explicit and visible within each unit's plan and budget. Too, the governance bodies themselves may require some in-service on the intricacies of responsibility-centered planning and budgeting to limit undue oversight and control. Obviously, this won't stop politics in higher education budgeting from rearing its ugly head, but it may slow it down a bit.

- *Foster a Sense of Fair Treatment Across the Responsibility Centers*

In addition to the program reviews that have become ubiquitous in higher education, the effectiveness of center planning and budgeting decisions under RCM now also need to be measured over time. Department or unit financial performance, as well as the fiscal stewardship of its leadership, will need to be more closely monitored and evaluated under set standards by central administration. As one component of this, evaluations of chairs and heads may need to be modified to fully mirror these new expectations.

At the same time, common sense dictates that any disparate treatment of units will undermine the benefits that may accrue from various responsibility-centered approaches. To be sure, if there is no

consequence or sanction for *every* center that runs a deficit year after year, why should any center be expected to concern itself with RCM?

It would be just as harmful if the planning rules under which RCM operates on a campus change midstream. To illustrate, it could be the case that central administration allocates a small percentage of its resources for a supplemental distribution to those centers which particularly serve to promote the mission or a special goal of the entire institution (e.g., increasing student diversity). A department might do its own planning around this initiative--maybe undertaking expensive recruitment efforts--with an eye on the supplemental funding. If that distribution was later cut for some reason that had the appearance of being arbitrary, don't expect any unit to be so foolish as to try to meet that special goal again.

- *Communicate With the Responsibility Centers, Their Members, and Other Constituency Groups.*

In all of this, the departments and units must not feel that they've been thrown overboard without a life preserver. If any one thing seems clear in the literature on RCM to date, it is that the transition to a responsibility-centered system takes time and a modicum of trust. Adjustments will need to be made as RCM models are implemented across a variety of campuses. For instance, rules may be changed to increase the flexibility and authority of center fiscal officers in a very large institution.

In any event, mutual respect and support should be evidenced in ongoing discussions that, while temperate in tone, are honest and open in content. It is only through continuous communication between central administration and the responsibility centers as defined that shortcomings of the new system can be identified and corrective actions taken to shape a more successful RCM model for a specific institutional environment. It is always more important to ensure that the special needs of a college or university are addressed than it is to concentrate on a particular planning process or methodology. For such to be the case, effective organizational communication is crucial.

In the final analysis, expanding authority and decentralizing organizational planning to faculty and staff does not relieve higher education administrators from any burden or duty. In fact, it very likely imposes the need for new administrative skills of fiscal oversight, facilitation, and communication. But with rapid changes taking place in the economy, technology, and global politics, institutions of higher education today cannot afford to waste resources, respond bureaucratically to societal challenges, and lose opportunities for development and improvement. Responsibility-centered planning, budgeting, and management approaches provide an administrative structure to address this continuing turbulence we can expect in the coming years.

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The Annual Plans of School-Based Managing Schools Operating in a Centralized Educational System: Planning for Ambiguity.

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To what extent are the annual plans of School-Based Managing (SBM) schools operating in a centralized system of education made operational? SBM poses a conflict for centralized governments manifest largely in the tendency to increase school autonomy and the interest to maintain control over schools. The Israeli educational system requires principals to prepare annual plans that enable the Ministry of Education to maintain central control over schools. A content analysis of 36 of these annual plans is performed and the extent to which plans are made operational is assessed. The analysis shows that plans are ambiguous. They are characterized by a multiplicity of tasks; tasks are rarely made operational, most tasks are highly complex; evaluation processes are defined for only a limited number of tasks; and, a significant portion of school budgets is allotted to enrichment activities, which inherently lack clear and precise goals. These findings are further supported in a set of interviews carried out with school principals. It is therefore concluded that more emphasize needs to be placed on increasing the planning qualifications of principals. In addition, a number of trust-building measures between schools and the central government need to be taken prior to the implementation of SBM in schools, such as changing the formal role and duties of the superintendent and delegating schools full authority regarding curricula and human resource management.

INTRODUCTION

One expression for decentralization is School-Based Management (SBM) which has recently become the centerpiece of the current wave of reform (Sackney & Dibsiki, 1994). Simply stated, SBM is a proposal to decentralize and debureaucratize school control (Guthrie, 1986). SBM refers to the increase of authority at the school site (Clune & White, 1988) and emphasizes maximum delegation of decision making to the operational level (i.e., school level) within a centrally coordinated framework (Boyd, 1990, p. 90). SBM provides a more appropriate balance of authority and accountability (Rennie, 1985). It is based on the assumption that decisions made closer to the client level are better than those made by central government officials who lack the precise knowledge regarding specific local needs (Conley, 1991; David, 1989, p. 46). SBM grants schools the authority to plan their budget and manage it autonomously, to define goals, processes and curriculum according to their educational beliefs and local needs, to decide autonomously on the evaluation processes they wish to conduct and, to increase principals' authority as to personnel.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The literature on effective schools has argued that SBM is an important means for improving student performance (Purkey & Smith, 1985). Under SBM, professional responsibility replaces bureaucratic regulation, and school staff accountability for children's achievements is

assumed to increase (Cohen, 1988; Garms et al., 1978, p. 293; Sergiovanni, 1990; Brown, 1990). Moreover, management at school level can better and more quickly meet local needs than can central organization. Therefore, SBM enhances managerial efficiency and fosters a healthier school climate (Johnes, 1995). Although many theoretical claims have been raised regarding the potential contribution of autonomy for school effectiveness and for teacher commitment, the empirical evidence is rather mixed (Firestone & Pennell, 1993). Several studies have found a strong relationship between autonomy, professional independence and commitment (Rosenholtz, 1989; Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990- Chapman & Hutcheson, 1982). In contrast, other findings show a slightly negative relation between autonomy and organizational commitment (Charters et al., 1984) or no relationship at all (Reyes, 1989). Moreover, the available empirical evidence suggests that SBM does not guarantee school improvement (Maten et al., 1990). It has been found that schools involved in SBM do not took much different from schools that have not been involved with SBM (Glickman, 1990) and that school effectiveness has not been contingent upon SBM. Rather, school personnel have continued to behave as it did under the previous structure (Sackney & Dibski, 1994).

A basic premise to SBM is that it is heavily determined by the context within which a school operates (Murphy & Beek, 1995, p.7). In countries that have rather heavily centralized structures of governance, the notion of decentralizing educational systems by introducing SBM may carry the seeds of its own contradictions (Weiler, 1990). This may be explained in considering that central government officials find themselves caught between their desire to improve school performance by delegating authority to the school level and by their wish to preserve their control over schools. Moreover, the introduction of SBM to schools in centralized systems of education depends mostly on the initiative of central government officials, who can withdraw powers merely by making an official announcement (Bray, 1985). These unique circumstances imply ambiguity for school-level educators, who need to respond to the initiatives presented by central government officials knowing that their school autonomy is not guaranteed. Furthermore, the introduction of SBM in centralized structures is likely to be followed by a set of regulations and demands intending to preserve central control over schools.

THE ROLE OF PLANNING

A key element in preserving central control over schools in the Israeli educational system is embedded in the requirement that schools submit an annual plan to the superintendent, prior to the introduction of SBM. This prerequisite is hardly surprising considering the qualities and strengths of planning processes and plans.

Planning is the art of clarification. Planning processes are used to translate vague ideas and intentions into well-defined and operational plans. Plans enable effective and rational bridging (Faludi, 1973, p. 1; Schoinick & Friedman, 1993) between present and future events (Inbar,

1985). Planning processes increase the probability that rational and calculated rather than random actions will be taken by the organization's members with reference to routine or unpredictable events (Saaty & Kearns, 1985- Armstrong, 1991). The strength of planning is embedded in making the unclear operational, in prioritizing tasks and creating a point of convergence for all the organization's members, in determining the desired blend of time, space and action, and in producing indicators for success and failure. Metaphorically speaking, a good plan is like a map that enables anyone who properly uses it to navigate and find his/her way among the various interests, tasks and activities performed by the organization. It enables one to assess the extent to which the organization is successful in attaining its objectives.

Therefore, a plan that promotes complexity, that lacks clear and operational definitions for tasks, activities and evaluation processes, and that displays a large number of tasks without properly prioritizing them may create ambiguity rather than increase clarity. Those who use a map of such quality will most probably get lost.

DECENTRALIZATION AND SBM IN THE ISRAELI EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Traditionally, the Israeli educational system featured a high degree of central control to ensure maximum equality within the educational system, which was a main concern since Israel became independent in 1948. This means that Israel's 1800 elementary (grades 1-6) and junior high schools (grades 7-9) are managed by a centralized bureaucracy located in Jerusalem around the Ministry of Education, headed by a Minister and run by a Director-General. Based on the assumption that centralization will best ensure equity, the Ministry of Education was responsible for the educational policy and national goals, the budget, the curriculum and for monitoring schools through a central control supervisory and superintendency network. In addition, it controls the recruitment of teachers, teachers' salaries and curriculum development and the outputs through national minimum tests and matriculation exams.

In the last decade however, the Israeli educational system has decentralized rather than centralized its control patterns. The Ministry of Education initiated this trend although the country is small and therefore relatively easy to control (Inbar, 1986). The move towards decentralization is initiated for two main reasons: firstly, central officials turned to decentralization as a last resort after realizing that all the other control mechanisms have failed (Gaziet & Romm, 1988). Secondly, educators in Israel have long recognized the negative pedagogical effect of strong centralization, curriculum uniformity and the fragmented nature of the system (Vollansky & Bar-Elli, 1995). Hence, in 1992 the Minister of Education commissioned a steering committee to explore the possibility of extending the scope of school autonomy and introducing SBM in Israel. This was done after a number of central initiatives to decentralize the educational system that were carried out during the 70s and the 80s ended with no significant changes in schools' autonomy and authority.

The committee recommended moving towards SBM based on a set of guidelines:

1. Schools will develop a clear definition of focused goals;
2. They will develop a clear work plan that corresponds with their defined goals;
3. Schools will use and implement extensive monitoring and assessment methods;
4. They will be granted full independence in using their budget;
5. Schools' authority with respect to personnel matters will be broadened; and
6. There will be a governing body for each school (Recommendations 5 and 6 were postponed).

Although the main purpose of SBM is to increase schools' autonomy, it is interesting to note however, that schools in Israel cannot freely choose whether to implement SBM. The decision is rather, in the hands of the municipalities who are responsible for signing the contract with the Ministry of Education. Hence, schools are obliged to introduce SBM if a contract is signed between the municipality within which they operate and the central office. The City of Jerusalem with 74 elementary schools was the first to sign a contract in 1997.

Despite the declared policy of the Ministry of Education to decentralize the educational system by introducing SBM to schools, the present paper argues that principals are most likely to experience a dilemma: their need to present an annual plan at the beginning of the school year to the superintendent to the district and to community members, contrasted to their interest in avoiding possible criticism.

This dilemma may be explained by considering that clearly defined plans presenting the total sum of the schools' yearly activities may serve as a tool to be used by those intending to estimate the quality and effectiveness of the schools' performance. Since principals have experienced the impact of centralization over a long time and the failure of previous attempts to decentralize the system, it is likely that they would rather avoid taking uncalculated risks by exposing schools to criticism. Therefore, it is assumed that they will be most reluctant to create highly operational plans that may be used at some future time by central office officials and superintendents to evaluate the quality of school performance.

Hence, since principals in SBM schools are obliged to present their annual plans to a large number of concerned parties, it is assumed that they would rather plan for ambiguity. This means that school plans will be characterized by vagueness to an extent that prevents assessing the degree to which schools attain their tasks.

METHOD

Annual Plans

The annual plans of 36 elementary schools in Jerusalem are studied. Eighteen schools have implemented SBM for the last two years and 18 schools have implemented SBM in the last year. Ten schools are religious and 26 schools are non-religious. The sample contains both large and small schools with an average of 385 pupils ($sd = 116.3$), 30.6 teachers ($sd. = 9$) and 14.6 classes ($sd. = 3.4$). All 36 principals participated in a one- year training program that was initiated and carried out by the Ministry of Education. According to central office regulations, principals are obliged to participate and graduate this program prior to the introduction of SBM to their schools.

A key issue in the training program of school principals for SBM is the preparation of a school's annual plan, which should be the result of a school-based planning process. According to the guidelines defined by the Ministry of Education, this work plan should focus on the pupils and strive for constant improvement of their scholastic and educational achievements. During their training, principals are presented with the general format and the specific elements that need to be included in a school's plan. According to these guidelines, a plan should include a reasonable number of operational tasks, which correspond with the educational policy and national curriculum of the Ministry of Education as well as the local characteristics of pupils, parents and teachers and community needs. The work plan should include an assessment system for the tasks and objectives defined and planed by school, using formative and summative evaluation processes. Finally, the work plan should clearly state the amount of money that school intends to allot from its budget for each task.

Plan Analysis

Following the ideas of Holsti (1969), Boss & Tamai (1999) and Chi's (1997) methodology, school annual plans were content analyzed. This process was accomplished in several phases. First, school plans were segmented according to semantic features by selecting school tasks as units of analysis. A school task is operationally defined as "a statement referring to a planned activity that determines what needs to be done and what school expects to accomplish at some future time". Second, each task was coded in three sequential stages:

- A. Each task was classified according to its type: learning, social or technical task;
- B. Each task was coded according to four clear operational definitions of the categories used to assess task clarity; and
- C. Each task was coded according to four clear operational definitions of the categories used to assess the tasks' complexity.

Two graduate students, who coded the tasks independently, according to the operational definitions of the categories, carried out the coding process. Only those tasks that both judges identified beyond a reasonable doubt as corresponding to one of the content categories were included in the analysis. Coding reliability was measured by calculating the two independent judges' agreement on each of the coding categories. Across 50 randomly chosen tasks, the reliability between the two independent judges is 96% when coding for the type of tasks; the reliability is 92% when coding for the tasks' clarity, and the reliability is 84% when coding for the tasks' complexity. The analysis of each plan took 5 hours on average.

Operational Definition for the Content Categories

- A. *Type of tasks*: Three content categories are used to distinguish between the types of tasks. The content categories are as follows:

Learning tasks - These tasks focus on acquiring basic skills and knowledge. For example: *"Starting in the second grade, pupils will learn English as their first foreign language."*

Social tasks - These tasks focus on acquiring social skills, on the processes of socialization and on education for values. For example: *"Pupils will acquire proper norms of moral behavior and values, such as the respect for others."*

Technical tasks - These tasks focus on the school's logistic activities, such as maintenance and acquisitions. For example: *"All computers in the school laboratory will be upgraded"*

- B. *Task clarity*: Task clarity is studied using four content categories designed to evaluate the extent to which school tasks are made operational. The content categories are:

- (i). What - What is the task about (a school's intention) and what eventually should be achieved?
- (ii). Who - Who in school is responsible for accomplishing a specific task?
- (iii). How - What actions should be taken and means used in order to accomplish a task?
- (iv). When - When is a specific task to be accomplished?

Each task is coded using these criteria. Scores for each task may range from 1 for low operational tasks in which a single criterion is applicable (none of the tasks was scored 0, since a school's intention is declared in all tasks) to 4, for highly operational tasks in which all four criteria are applicable. For example, the task *"The school will do its best so that all children will progress"* is coded '1' since it states school's intention although none of the other criteria mentioned can be applied for this task. The task *"All third grade pupils studying mathematics in-group A (Sara's group) will use the 1, 2,3 teaching method, and will master the first five issues listed in the curriculum by the end of December"* is

coded '4' since all 4 criteria can be applied. This task is therefore highly operational.

C. *Task-complexity*: Following Campbell's (1988) typology for task complexity, four content categories are used to assess the complexity of tasks. The content categories are:

1. The existence of multiple potential ways (i.e., paths) to arrive at a desired end-state. For example, *"The school will introduce a variety of teaching methods so that pupils' achievements in mathematics will be increased by 10%."*
2. The presence of multiple desired outcomes (i.e., end-states) to be attained. For example, *"The school's educational programs will improve pupils' cognitive abilities, emotional capacity and their positive attitudes and behaviors."*
3. The presence of conflicting interdependence among paths and outcomes. For example, *"The school will enforce strict discipline to ensure a healthy social and learning environment."*
4. The presence of uncertain or probabilistic links among paths and outcomes. For example, *"The school will conduct a large number of social activities so as to increase pupils' love for the nation."*

Based on these basic complexity content categories identified by Campbell, each task is classified in one of three levels of task complexity:

Simple tasks: These tasks are relatively clear, as they meet none of the four criteria of the basic content categories that are employed to assess task complexity.

Semi-complex tasks: These tasks are characterized by mild ambiguity as they meet the first and/or the second criteria of the basic complexity content categories.

Fuzzy tasks: These tasks meet three or four criteria of the basic complexity content categories. They are labeled "fuzzy" because they are the most ambiguous among tasks, since there is only minimal focus for the task-doer.

Following the content analysis of tasks, three additional issues that are tightly linked to the idea of SBM are studied.

Evaluation: The way evaluation processes are defined for school tasks may serve as an indicator for plan ambiguity. It is suggested that plans that define formative and summative evaluation processes for all tasks increase the clarity of the quality of school processes and outputs. On the contrary, plans in which evaluation processes are defined for a

limited number of tasks, using either summative or formative data, provide little information about the quality of school activities and outputs and are therefore relatively more ambiguous.

To assess the degree to which schools intend to evaluate processes and outcomes, the section in the plans that refers to school evaluation procedures is analyzed. This is done by:

- A. Counting the number of evaluation processes that schools intend to perform, and
- B. By classifying the evaluation processes as formative or summative.

The reliability between the two judges who independently classified school evaluation assignments is 93%.

Budget: To assess the degree to which schools clearly define their use of their budget the proportion of the budget dedicated for enrichment activities is calculated for each school. This section of the budget is chosen since schools are not required to define clear objectives and outcomes for enrichment activities. Therefore, this section is inherently ambiguous relative to the other sections of the budget.

Changes in plan ambiguity in time: In order to determine if plan ambiguity increases or decreases in time, a comparison between first and second year SBM schools is performed. The total number of tasks and task clarity and complexity are used as indicators in the comparison.

Interviews: To increase the power and validity of the interpretations offered for the results obtained in the content analysis, interviews with 10 school principals were performed. In the interviews, the principals were asked to comment on their training processes and to offer their interpretation to the results that the content analysis revealed.

RESULTS

Multiplicity of tasks

One of the indicators used to evaluate the degree to which SBM annual plans are ambiguous is the quantity of tasks. Simply stated, the larger the number of tasks defined by a school, the harder it is to monitor its activities and estimate the school efficiency. Although there exists no standard or absolute criteria to determine what number of annual tasks is considered large or small, it is still possible to argue that an average of 32 annual tasks per school may be considered a high number, considering the limited energies of school. Though one may argue that a large number of tasks can characterize schools wishing to maximize their outputs, the same number of tasks may also serve an opposite tendency and characterize schools wishing to increase the ambiguity of their

plans. This subsequent argument may be explained since the larger the number of tasks, the harder it is to focus and therefore monitor a school's activities. Moreover, a large number of tasks increase the probability that some achievements could eventually be presented and used as indicators for the effectiveness of the school. It may therefore serve as an insurance policy for schools intending to minimize future criticism. This argument is supported by the fact that the tasks are not prioritized in any of the plans studied.

TABLE 1
Means & Standard Deviations of Schools (N = 36) Annual Tasks

TASKS	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Local Tasks	31.9	8.73
Learning Tasks	14.1	5.79
Social Tasks	11.1	7.04
Technical Tasks	6.7	3.68

Task Clarity: In order to assess the tasks' clarity, each task is coded using the four categories of task clarity, and frequencies are computed separately, for the learning, social and technical types of tasks. Then, a 95% confidence interval is constructed for each category.

TABLE 2
95% Confidence Interval for the Proportion of Tasks According to the Four Operational Criteria Employed

CLARITY CRITERIA					
TYPE OF TASK	1 Criterion	2 Criteria	3 Criteria	4 Criteria	TOTAL
Learning	47.8%#4% 238	37.6%#4% 187	11.4%# 2% 57	3.0%#1% 15	N= 497
Social	46.0%#4.9% 182	41.2%#4.8% 163	10.1%#2.9% 40	2.4%#1.5% 10	N=395
Technical	38.5%#6.8% 74	23.9%#6% 46	22.3%#5.8% 43	15.0%#5% 29	N+192

Learning tasks: The results indicate that the confidence interval for the proportions is 4% for the first and the second categories, 2% for the third category and 1% for the fourth category. Since there is no overlapping between the upper and the lower limits in any of the categories, it may be inferred that all proportions are significantly different, below $p = .05$.

Based on the frequencies that are obtained, it is possible to conclude that learning tasks are rarely made operational in the plans (in 47.8% of the tasks only a single operational criteria which reflects the schools' general intention may be employed). These tasks are ambiguous since they lack clear definitions regarding what should be achieved in the end, who in the school is responsible for accomplishing a specific task, what actions should be taken and when a specific task is to be accomplished.

Social tasks: It is found that the confidence interval for the proportions is approximately 5% for the first and the second categories, approximately 3% for the third category and 1.5% for the fourth category. No statistically significant differences are found between the proportions obtained in the first and second categories. However, the proportions in these two categories differ significantly from the proportions obtained in the third and fourth category below $p = .05$. These results reflect that the larger portion of the school social tasks is hardly made operational in the plans since only two of the four operational criteria are applicable for approximately 87% of the social tasks. Therefore, it is hard to determine if, and to what extent, these tasks are actually being accomplished in SBM schools.

Technical tasks: It is found that the confidence interval for the proportions is approximately 7% for the first category, approximately 6% for the second and third categories, and 5% for the fourth category. Statistically significant differences below $p = .05$ are found only between the proportions obtained in the single criteria category and the other categories. The proportions indicate that the larger portion of the technical tasks is in the second, third and fourth criteria categories, meaning that these tasks are more commonly made operational in the plans. This is hardly surprising in considering the nature of technical tasks that are inherently more concrete and clear.

Task Complexity: In the last phase of the task analysis, task complexity is assessed. Based on Campbell's (1988) argument that complex tasks are often ill structured, difficult and ambiguous, the analysis uses Campbell's four complexity criteria to assess the complexity of tasks in SBIM schools.

TABLE 3
95% Confidence Interval for the Proportion of Tasks According to Campbell's Criteria for Task Complexity

CLARITY CRITERIA				
TYPE OF TASK	Simple	SEMI-Complex	Fuzzy	TOTAL
Learning	8.6%#2.4% 43	38.4%#4.2% 191	52.9%#4.3% 263	N=497
Social	15.6%#3.5% 62	38.9%#4.8% 154	45.3%#4.9% 179	N=395
Technical	81.7%#5.4% 157	15.6%#5.1% 30	2.6%#2.2% 3	N=192

The confidence intervals computed for the proportions of task complexity indicate no overlapping between the upper and the lower limits among the categories excluding the proportions of the fuzzy and the semi-complex categories of the social tasks. Therefore, it may be inferred that all proportions are significantly different below $p = .05$, excluding this single overlap.

Based on these results the conclusion can be made that a significant portion of schools' learning and social tasks is presented in the plans in a fuzzy manner. This means that tasks are characterized by multiple potential paths to arrive at a desired end-state, by multiple desired outcomes to be attained, by conflicting interdependence among paths and multiple outcomes and by uncertain or probabilistic links among paths and outcomes. Therefore, it is difficult to appraise the quality of school processes and effectiveness regarding these tasks. However, a totally different picture is obtained when the complexity of technical tasks is assessed, since most of these tasks are coded simple. As noted earlier, this may be related to the inherent qualities of technical tasks, which are precise and characterized by a clear link between processes and outcomes.

Evaluation: To fulfill the requirements of the Ministry of Education, SBM schools are required to discuss in their plans the evaluation processes that they intend to conduct. Therefore, a separated paragraph is provided for this issue in each plan. Evaluation processes are used as an indicator for plan ambiguity since these processes provide data about the quality of school processes and outputs. Plans that define evaluation processes for a limited number of tasks, and use either summative or formative data, provide limited information about the quality of school activities and increase plan ambiguity.

As Table 4 indicates, schools intend to evaluate a relatively small portion of their annual tasks. The figures presented in Table 4 might have been even smaller, considering that the instructions to the two independent

TABLE 4
*Frequencies and Proportions of Formative and Summative
Evaluation Processes for Tasks*

EVALUATION PROCESS			
TYPE OF TASK	Formative	Summative	TOTAL
Learning	53 10.6%	76 15.2%	N=497
Social	26 6.5%	36 9.1%	N=395
Technical	22 11.4%	0 0%	

judges were to count every evaluation process they identify in the plans rather than count the tasks to be evaluated. That is, they counted a single task twice if a school intends to use both formative and summative processes in order to evaluate it. The results show that schools have no intention of performing summative evaluation processes for 85% of their learning tasks, for 91% of their social tasks or for any of their technical tasks. The figures are even smaller for the proportions of formative processes of evaluation. This means that during the school year and by the end of it, schools will not be able to provide data referring to the extent to which most of their assignments have been attained.

Two additional points should be made. First, none of the 36 plans that are studied define in advance the tools that will be used for the evaluation of tasks. Second, none of the 36 plans presents hard data that describe present circumstances, which may be used as a base line to assess the tasks presented in the plans. Therefore, there is no way of appraising either the magnitude of the tasks presented in SBM plans or the magnitude of school achievements.

In conclusion, the plans offer few guidelines as to how schools intend to evaluate their outcomes. There is little evidence regarding the extent to which the tasks presented in the plans present a significant challenge for schools. Moreover, the plans lack indicators that schools intend to employ to assess success or failure.

Budget: A significant aspect of SBM refers to the schools' ability to create their own budget according to the guidelines of the Ministry of Education and run it autonomously. The analysis focuses on the proportion of the budget allotted to enrichment activities, since Israeli public schools are not required to define clear objectives and outcomes for enrichment activities. Therefore, this section is inherently ambiguous relative to the other sections of the budget.

According to the figures presented in the plans, the proportion of the budget allotted to enrichment activities in SBM schools ranges from 13% to 62% (Mean = 32.1; sd = 11.77). This means that a relatively large portion of the budget in SBM schools is used without clear operational definitions as to how schools intend to make use of the money and the actual effectiveness of enrichment activities. Hence, a large portion of the schools' budget is dedicated to activities are scantily represented in the plans. As a result, there is no way of calculating the effectiveness of school enrichment activities in terms of a cost benefit analysis.

Changes in Plan Ambiguity in Time: The final phase of the analysis focuses on the extent to which plan ambiguity increases or decreases in time after schools have had some real experiences with SBM. For this purpose, a comparison is constructed between the plans of 18 schools that implemented SBM for the first year and 18 schools that had SBM implemented for two years.

The results of the comparison between the two groups reveal no significant differences in the total number of tasks that schools define. There is a sharp decrease in the number of technical tasks and an increase (although not statistically significant) in the number of social tasks. In terms of task complexity, there are no significant differences in the complexity of learning tasks, as the major portion of these tasks remains fuzzy. The same is implied for social tasks. The increase in the average number of social tasks in the second year is evident mostly in the proportion of fuzzy tasks, which is significantly increased. Moreover, although the logistic assignments of schools, such as maintenance and acquisitions, never end, the findings show a sharp decline in the total number of technical tasks that schools define in the second year. Since most of the technical tasks are relatively simple, this decline mostly affects the proportion of simple tasks that significantly decreases.

These findings lead to the conclusion that schools in their second year of SBM tend to maintain a high degree of task ambiguity rather than use SEM as an opportunity to more clearly state their tasks and intentions.

The Interviews: The interviews centered on two main issues: the training process of school principals and their interpretations to the findings that the content analysis of schools' annual plans revealed.

Principals report that the training process was rather intensive:

... every week, the group met for 6-8 hours during which we discussed issues related to the implementation of SBM in schools. The trainers, mostly from the Ministry of Education, brought up issues and we spent the time discussing these issues. In some cases, we started the discussion with a lecture presented to us by a high-ranking official or by a researcher from the university.
(Interviews with Principals)

This process repeated itself for a whole year

. . . . the people from the Ministry of Education monitored our attendance. Therefore, all of us came regularly to the meetings unless something serious and unexpected came up.

(Interviews with Principals)

A central theme in the training of school principals for SBM is the preparation of an annual plan. "... the trainers explained us the importance of these plans and then instructed us how plans should be prepared" (Interviews with Principals).

TABLE 5
Changes in Plan Ambiguity Over Time:
First and Second Year Group Means

Criteria for Ambiguity	First Year (N=18)	Second Year(N=18)	t-value(d.f.=34)
<i>Number of Tasks</i>			
Total Tasks	32.6	31.16	.37
Learning Tasks	14.0	14.22	-.113
Social Tasks	9.0	13.27	-1.886
Technical Tasks	9.66	3.77	2.912**
<i>Learning Tasks</i>			
Fuzzy	6.83	7.33	-.362
Semi-Complex	3.77	3.95	-.244
Simple	1.27	1.11	.316
Clarity (1-4 criteria)			n.s
<i>Social tasks</i>			
Fuzzy	3.44	6.83	-1.426*
Semi-Complex	2.38	2.46	-.186
Simple	1.50	1.94	-.632
Clarity (1-4 criteria)			n.s
<i>Technical Tasks</i>			
Fuzzy	.11	.16	-.470
Semi-Complex	.33	.22	.556
Simple	8.61	3.33	2.727***
Clarity (1-4 criteria)			n.s

*p = .05

**p = .01

***n.s = Differences are Statistically not Significant

The preparation of plans according to the principals was a central issue in their training and a lot of emphasize was placed on the details:

...first, we discussed the importance of plans. Than, we were shown an example that is, what are the main features that a good plan should contain. Finally, we discussed separately each of the components (Interviews with Principals).

When principals were asked to address the findings of the content analysis, they were not a bit surprised. One of the principals said: "...I am not sure if all of us are so sophisticated, bad planners or rather troubled. Maybe it is a combination of all three" (Interviews with Principals).

Suspicion and risk are two themes inherent in principals' attitude towards SBM:

..... it is a well-known fact that past initiatives taken by the Ministry of Education to decentralize the Israeli educational system did not lead to a significant increase in the autonomy of schools. Instead, the pressures on schools increased (Interviews with Principals).

Some school principals consider SBM as a sophisticated strategy to increase schools' dependency in the central office by diminishing the influences of the districts. Suspicion is evident when principals refer to the way SBM is being implemented in schools:

They tell us that the plan,-is are for internal use, so that each school will be better able to increase its effectiveness and efficiency. If this is the case, why do we have to submit the plans to the superintendent? We are now involved with SBM for the second year, but nothing much has changed as far as the monitoring of school is considered. The superintendent continues to monitor school exactly as she did before we introduced SBM and we are constantly asked to submit reports (Interviews with Principals).

Some school principals see SBM as a potential to negatively affect equality among schools:

... each school is free to use his budget according to its particular needs. However, smaller schools get a smaller amount of money in comparison to bigger schools. Schools in older buildings have to dedicate a larger amount of money for maintenance purposes in comparison to schools that are placed in recently constructed buildings. In these schools, little money is left for pedagogical purposes (Interviews with Principals).

When principals are asked to refer to the internal qualities of school plans, they say:

"There are so many rapid processes and changes that are constantly evolving in my school, that it is almost impossible to determine in advance when, how and by who a certain task will be accomplished (Interviews with Principals).

One principal offered an interesting explanation for the large number of tasks that are included in his school's annual report:

I asked each teacher to prepare a list of tasks that he/she considers important. Then, we combined the lists and ended up with a long inventory of tasks that represents what teachers in our school consider important. It was obvious that school will not be able to achieve all these tasks, but I think- it was important that each teacher will be able to identify his/her tasks in the general plan (Interviews with Principals).

DISCUSSION

Decentralization and the introduction of SBM to schools is based on the assumption that schools will be more relevant for children and their community when they are able to make their own decisions based on local needs. The tendency of central government officials to decentralize the Israeli educational system by introducing SBM to schools is based on the assumption that increased autonomy for schools will positively affect school effectiveness, school staff accountability and will decrease the expenditure on educational activities. These three powerful expectations encourage officials to delegate authority to the local level.

Our analysis of SBM annual plans shows that it is difficult to determine if, and to what extent, schools intend to meet this challenge and make an effort to fulfill these expectations. Our findings show in addition, that whether consciously or unconsciously, educators in Israeli self-managing schools do their best not to state tasks clearly. We argue that they do so either because principals lack substantial planning qualifications or because they try to prevent central office officials, parents and other interest groups from closely supervising and monitoring their activities and outputs. In this sense, school staff accountability in Israeli self-managing schools remains vague. Moreover, according to our findings, a significant portion of school resources is channeled to various activities that are not operationally defined. Therefore, there is no way of knowing if these resources are properly used. In considering the way evaluation processes are defined in the plans it is argued that schools hardly offer a solid basis that may be used to assess their effectiveness.

Plans of such quality create a conflict for superintendents and senior officials, between their intention to increase school autonomy, on the one hand, and their wish to increase school effectiveness, on the other hand. If they insist that plans be made operational, they may undermine school autonomy in planning and implementing plans that stand up to school staff beliefs and standards. If they allow schools to produce ambiguous plans, they may indirectly harm school effectiveness. Hence, senior officials in centralized systems of education are caught between the hammer and the anvil when they introduce SBM to schools.

Planning is a rational activity that is influenced to a great extent by the values, assumptions and motivation of those involved in these processes. Plans may therefore serve as indicators for planners' qualifications, interests and perspectives. Our analysis of school tasks

indicates that school staff does not regard annual plans as an opportunity to declare their educational beliefs and values and to define school tasks accordingly. Instead, they make school plans ambiguous and avoid clear statements about tasks, processes and outcomes that might be used in some future time to determine the extent to which their school attained its goals.

One possible explanation for the ambiguity characterizing the tasks in SBM plans may be related to school principals' lack of planning qualifications. According to this explanation, the training of school principals have to put more emphasize on the development of professional qualifications relevant for planning.

Another possible explanation may be related to the past socialization processes that educators experienced while working for many years in a centralized educational system that closely monitored their activities. Based on this explanation our findings suggest that educators at the school level find it hard to abandon old habits and to unconditionally respond to decentralization. The way tasks are presented in SBM plans reflects the little trust that school staff has in central government intentions. Moreover, it is evident that time in itself according to our findings cannot be considered the ultimate cure. Much depends on the experiences that educators accumulate while implementing SBM in their schools.

It is suggested, therefore, that additional trust-building measures need to be taken by the central government and schools prior to the introduction of SBM to schools. Educators need to be trained for decentralization and replace old habits and norms to better enable schools to adjust for decentralization. This should be followed, like any other attempt to introduce change into the school setting, by substantial changes in a significant number of regularities (Sarason, 1982), which will increase the correspondence between SBM and the other qualities of the educational system. For example, major changes in the processes of supervision and in the role of the superintendent need to be taken so as to enable schools to run their educational processes based on their inputs and educational vision. Moreover, decisions related to curricula and human resource management should be made at school level. These changes will encourage educators to dare, declare and initiate various educational activities that correspond with their educational beliefs. Since the decision to introduce SBM into schools in countries with centralized systems is in the hands of Ministry of Education officials, much depends on their assistance and on their willingness to run an educational system characterized by multiplicity and variability.

Introducing SBM with the intention of maintaining central control over schools rather than increasing school autonomy will most likely contribute to the mistrust between schools and the Ministry of Education and encourage educators to avoid risky challenges by maintaining ambiguous school plans.

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Similarities and Differences between Total Quality Management and Reengineering: Implications for Strategic Planning, Continuous Learning, and Change

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There is a contradiction at work in the notion of the global village: while technology has made the planet seem much smaller the complexity of our world is steadily increasing. Complexity demands a difference in the way issues are framed and resolutions sought. This article examines the similarities and differences between Total Quality Management and Reengineering and discusses the implications for strategic planning, continuous learning, and change.

INTRODUCTION

There is a contradiction at work in the notion of the global village: while technology has made the planet seem much smaller the complexity of our world is steadily increasing. Complexity demands a difference in the way issues are framed and resolutions sought. In short, complexity challenges academic and non-academic institutional planners to question the mental models upon which knowledge has been acquired and skills developed; that is, their conventional habits of thinking and learning.

Senge (1990) offers a compelling response to learning and complexity through his notion of learning organizations, but, how does an organization prepare for such in-depth change from a bureaucratic to a learning model? The following paper asserts that an organization involved in Deming's (1982, 1986) continuous quality improvement/Juran's (1989) total quality management (QM)¹ can more readily construct the bridge to a learning organization than can an organization involved in "reengineering" (Hammer & Champy, 1993). Furthermore, the arguments contained within the following paper submit that unless reengineering is introduced into an organization actively involved in QM the reengineering initiative will likely falter. The discussion will rest in the following principles: the organization as a system, process management, variation, learning, and the human dimension.

ORGANIZATIONS AS SYSTEMS

According to Deming (1994), a system is "a network of interdependent components that work together to try to accomplish the aim of the system" (p. 50). When the interdependent components that comprise a system collectively align they advance the whole system in the direction of its purpose. Therefore, "a component is not judged by some

¹ Deming's (1982, 1986) continuous quality improvement and Juran's (1989) total quality management are referred to jointly as quality management (QM).

competitive measure, but by its contribution to the whole system" (Scholtes, 1997, p. 49). Interdependence infers cooperation as opposed to competition; relationship is key (Joiner, 1994; Wheatley, 1992).

Conversely, internal competition seeks to optimize each separate component and is viewed by Deming (1994) as destructive to the system as a whole. Viewing an organization as a system stands in stark contrast to the long-held acceptance of bureaucracy as the standard organizational model. While a system is organized around a clearly stated and shared aim or "constancy of purpose" (Deming, 1986, p. 24), a bureaucracy is organized around a pyramidal reporting structure. Although the pyramid outlines the chain of authority and accountability it does not reveal the interdependencies within the organization or the internal strategies for production and/or service. The static logic behind bureaucratic structures tends to optimize the subunits and fragments the whole while the fluidity of systemic thinking tends to "reclaim the memory of the whole" (Batalden, 1992).

One characteristic of a system is its boundary, that place at which one system bumps up against another component or an entirely different, yet interconnected system. Not all components need to be neatly defined and documented such as the boundaries surrounding one grade level from the next. However, many systems connote a more refined delineation between boundaries. For example each classroom serves as a bounded component within the system of a school. Each school represents another bounded system within an educational district. Elementary, secondary, and post-secondary systems together form each province's educational system, just as the total of all provincial educational systems form the national system and so forth.

Rather than managing each component of the educational system imagine managing the total educational system as a whole cooperative system:

A system of schools [public, private, parochial, trade, colleges, universities]...is not merely pupils, teachers, school boards, school regents, and parents working separately to achieve their own aims. It should be, instead, a system in which these groups work together to achieve the aims that the community has for the school--growth and development of children, and preparation for them to contribute to the prosperity of society. (Deming, 1994, p. 62)

The notion of a cooperative system involves everyone in the organization and forms the basis for Joiner's (1994) "all one team" (p. 11). Thus the permeability of system boundaries determines the degree of cooperation and it is this notion of a system's openness that is essential for effective cross-functional and interhierarchical process management.

Hammer and Champy's (1993) reengineering advocates management by process as opposed to function, and, thus, infers the notion of a system but Deming (1994) goes further. In Deming's (1994) view of a system, the breadth and depth of requisite openness implies an indivisible complex interactive network. Because educational organizations are characterized by a high degree of interrelatedness they

can be viewed as human communication networks, and, as such, are advantageously poised for the initiation of process management.

Managing processes across and throughout a system necessitates a shift from a static bureaucratic functional approach toward a dynamic and continuous change paradigm. Developing the capability to manage in continuously changing environments requires the capacity for continuous organizational learning; that is, for steady improvements in the processes that inform an organization's internal arrangements, attitudes, knowledge, culture, and results (Harvard Community Health Plan, 1989).

PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

Hammer and Champy (1993) submit that reengineering is a "fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in critical, contemporary measures of performance, such as cost, quality, service, and speed" (p. 32). Deming (1982, 1986) argues that continuous quality improvement of all processes infers dramatic improvements (breakthroughs) in performance and cost of production and service. While each theory concentrates on process improvement there are vast distinctions in the way in which processes are improved.

The most contentious difference is in how processes are understood and is accentuated by the question of whether to enhance or to completely replace existing processes. Hammer and Champy (1993) declare that the answer is to discard existing processes and replace them with entirely new ones. However, this simple comprehension of business processes--their interrelationship and impact on other processes--demonstrates an understanding limited to snapshots, a belief that change is predictable and incremental and cause and effect are linear, closely related in time and space.

Deming (1982, 1986, 1994) and Juran (1989) prefer kaizen--small incremental improvements--along with new process design. New science (Gleick, 1987, Kelly, 1994, Wheatley, 1992) has familiarized many with the notion of the butterfly effect; small changes that result in dramatic consequences. The butterfly effect demonstrates two important insights: a small adjustment in a process can produce dramatic results, and cause and effect may not be closely related in space and time. In planning literature, Mintzberg (1994) refers to the sudden happenstance of unexpected arrangements as "emergent strategies" (p. 25).

In instances where processes have become so ad hoc as to be beyond repair, quality planning is introduced to design and implement new processes. Hence, quality management is informed by the predictable and better prepared for the unpredictable. Deming (1986) is very clear about the indeterminate, the "unknown and unknowable" (p. 121) factors that directly impact cost, efficiency, and effectiveness such as the quality of the work environment and patterns of human interaction.

VARIATION

Walter Shewhart first identified process variation during his work at Bell Telephone Laboratories in the 1920s. Variation in process performance, the route to all outcomes, is measurable by way of data collection and analysis. Whether or not process performance is predictable is contingent upon its stability.

If process variation is unstable: that is, influenced by a special cause (indicated by an appropriate control chart) action can be taken to improve process performance by understanding and eliminating the special cause or causes. Conversely, if the process has only common causes influencing the variation, it is stable and requires more fundamental changes to affect an improvement. When processes are stable, outcomes such as quality, quantity, and costs are predictable; where processes are unstable, prediction is impossible.

Hammer and Stanton (1994) state that the focus for process performance "should be on goals and ends rather than actions and means. A process should answer the question "what?" not the question "how?" (Pp. 18-19). In view of the fact that outcomes are due to variation in process, this statement raises two haunting questions: 1) How do those involved in reengineering know which processes to discard and replace without knowledge concerning variation that currently exists in the process?; 2) After having started over, how do those engaged in reengineering know that what is newly instated is better? The authors of reengineering have remained silent on the concept of variation.

Therefore, reengineering does not, in my mind, adequately address the most salient questions related to why, where, what, and how to improve. Attainment of any goal, any outcome is the result of the "how" question. For example, the question most frequently posed by Deming (1994) in the context of efforts directed at improving the quality of outcomes, achieving overall organizational mission, and realizing vision is, "By what method?" (p. 24)

Unlike QM, reengineering offers no method by which to study or measure process. Thus, what is manifested from reengineering teamwork must live in the realm of assumption and opinion as opposed to the data actualized through scientific method employed by quality improvement teams. For reengineering teams to move beyond conjecture into empirical inquiry would imply a previous knowledge of the tools and methods for continuous quality improvement.

Quality management not only provides a framework by which to study process performance--Deming's (1982, 1986) plan, do, check/study, act (PDCA) cycle--, but it also provides a means for acting on variation and evaluating improvement strategies using Deming's seven process measurement tools² (Walton, 1986). Together, Deming's process improvement framework and methods constitute statistical process control (SPC).

² Deming's seven helpful tools: flow diagram, Pareto chart, scatter diagram, run chart, control chart, histogram, and cause and effect (fishbone/Ishikawa) diagram.

Finally, by ignoring what already exists: that is, “discarding all existing structures and procedures and inventing completely new ways of accomplishing work” (Hammer & Champy, 1993, p. 33), tradition is negated. The cultural make-up of educational institutions tends to value tradition.

LEARNING

Although revolutionary change demands adaptive learning, the pace of change associated with reengineering can interfere with generative learning. Senge (1990) notes that generative learning arises from the intrinsic love of learning for its own sake, from a desire to expand one’s capabilities. “This is why leading corporations are focusing on generative learning which is about creating, as well as adaptive learning, which is about coping” (Senge, 1990, p. 8). When radical, dramatic change is introduced into systems the results can be devastating. Such rapid change confounds reflection in and on practice (Schon, 1983), and can, when stress levels are unduly high, inhibit creativity and innovation.

On the other hand, kaizen has the advantage of introducing multiple changes simultaneously, thus keeping the system slightly off balance but at a level strong enough to impel ongoing efforts forward without overwhelming stakeholders. Such a “tension for change” (Senge, 1990, p. 9) readies the organization for transformation while the multiple feedback loops created from the many and various patterns of kaizen assures organizational flexibility, constant re-balancing, and, thus adaptation. Diversity in quality improvement projects underway establishes multi-informational sources and increases insight, awareness, and the potential for discovery.

Introduction of a learning model such as PDCA into an organization experiencing learning readiness makes possible the generation of new knowledge about the system and its capabilities. It is this notion of organizational stakeholders inquiring into their own assumptions about theories of knowledge, about systems, variation, processes, and the people who work within them that is the basis for organizational learning.

The importance of developing organizations as life-long learning systems is best stated by Ray Strata, President and Chief Executive Officer at Analog Devices, Inc: “The rate at which organizations learn may be the only sustainable source of competitive advantage, especially in knowledge-intensive business. ...All in the organization must master the cycle of thinking, doing, evaluating, and reflecting” (as cited in Senge, 1990, pp. 349-350).

THE HUMAN DIMENSION

Whether a lack of clarity in the original concept of reengineering or unfortunate timing during the stage of its introduction into the field of management, reengineering has become equated with downsizing, and restructuring--both precursors of fear. Eisenberg (1997) compresses the

problem: “[Hammer and Champy] fail to see that a business is a business because of its people and that it exists by serving the needs of the people” (p. 59). In short, reengineering’s great failure is its neglect of the human dimension. The negative side effects of reengineering are plentiful. For example, institutional downsizing generally results in fewer employees doing proportionately more work within the same complex processes. The potential for error, waste, and rework not only continues but also expands. The payoff is a less congenial devitalized work environment wherein the survivors of downsizing may feel guilt for having endured cuts and fear that they may not measure up to newly assigned tasks and roles (Eisenberg, 1997). The payoff for the reengineered company is observed in increased levels of anxiety, lost time accidents, stress-related illness, decreased institutional loyalty, and worse, reduced interest in the quality of one’s work. Eisenberg (1997) states that the fear that accompanies reengineered organizations accounts for deterioration in teamwork, delays in decision-making, evisceration of support functions, and diminution of creativity. As such, Eisenberg (1997) refers to downsizing as “dumbsizing” (p. 57).

Because reengineering drives fear into an organization, it fails the internal customer³. In contrast, Deming’s (1982, 1986) notion of the intrinsic motivators such as joy in work and pride in workmanship holds senior managers accountable for the quality of the work environment. Deming’s (1986) stated purpose for continuous quality improvement is to increase customer satisfaction (delight the customer), to improve competitiveness, and to reduce costs through process improvements so that dollars saved through efficiency can be made available for innovation and job creation. Deming (1986) states, “top management should publish a resolution that no one will lose his job for contribution to quality and productivity” (p. 26). Such a resolution serves to drive fear out of an organization and puts the onus on process problems as opposed to people as the real source of inefficiencies. In short, quality management offers a humanistic approach to managing in continuously changing times.

IMPLICATIONS FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING, CONTINUOUS CHANGE, AND LEARNING

The challenge for educational planners is to create tangible learning environments capable of fulfilling institutional mission within the context of stated vision and values, and to do so in continuously changing circumstances. The cornerstones for successful planning and implementation of a learning environment have been discussed and include: taking a holistic or systems view, managing by process as opposed to function, understanding and reducing process variation, encouraging continuous learning, and adopting a humanistic approach. The remainder of this section will demonstrate how thinking differently

³ Everyone working within the organization is considered an internal customer/supplier while those who are not members of the organization, but who ultimately influence or are influenced by it, are external customers/suppliers (Juran, 1989).

about the planning-relevant questions asked can connect strategic planning with organizational learning and continuous change.

Strategic planning historically begins with an organization's mission, its stated purpose. The mission is then defined in terms of goals, objectives to meet those goals, and the requisite financial and human resources deemed adequate and necessary to achieve mission-relevant goals. Yet, in my experience the essential questions that sustain purpose are rarely asked prior to the authoring of an organization's mission statement. The crucial questions might be posed as follows: "For what underlying need does the organization exist, and who has this need?" These two questions are basic to organizational mission, and, by keeping these questions in mind during all planning and implementation activities, organizational stakeholders are perpetually connected to purpose.

Once mission has been stated four new questions arise: "By what methods does the organization currently meet its purpose; how can the organization improve its methods; how does the organization know that its mission has been fulfilled; and, how well has it performed?" These questions are answered through scientific inquiry, through the use of Deming's tools and methods for quality management (Walton, 1986), through systematic evaluation, and, thus, through organizational learning.

A model has been created in Figure 1 to demonstrate the recurring questions and activities that connect strategic planning with continuous learning/change and that ultimately lead stakeholders back to organizational purpose.⁴ In the proposed model, strategic planners concentrate resources and activities on the needs and expectations of the organization's customers and customer groups (internal and external) as well as significant partners.

An assessment of internal and external customer needs and expectations means that the goals are customer-driven and focused as opposed to administratively assumed. In the preparation of plans to address identified needs and expectations, managerial attention is directed toward the core processes that produce the organization's outcomes, the behavioral indicators as to whether or not espoused values are also those values in use, and organizational culture as the means by which work environments are shaped. Culture is a potent force in either contributing to or impeding the realization of mission and vision.

⁴ I am indebted to Paul Batalden (1992) for the formulation of the questions contained within this model and Joseph Juran (1989) for his notion of breakthrough. Also, I wish to thank the organizers and participants at the September 1998 Conference for the International Society for Educational Planners held in Toronto, Canada for the insights that led to the formation of the model.

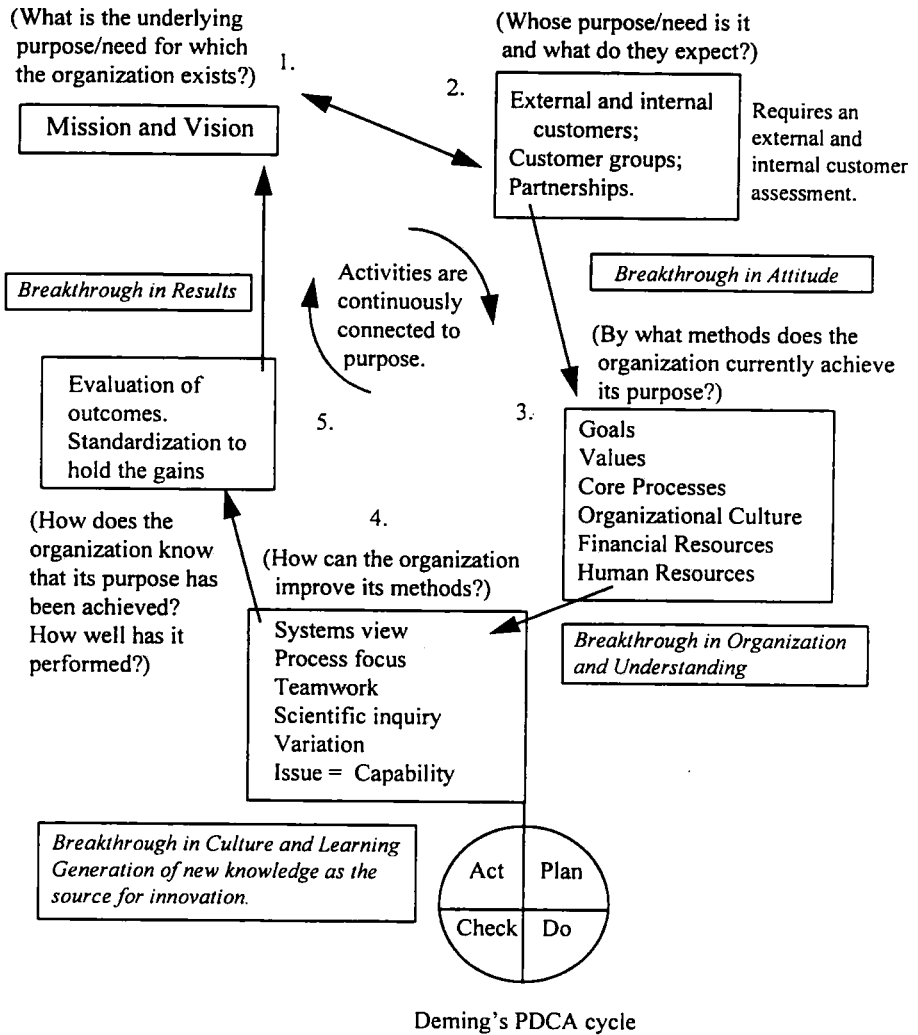


Figure 1. Connecting strategic planning with continuous organizational learning and change.

Organization-wide learning is accomplished when scientific inquiry and process improvement methodologies are applied to daily work.

Cross-functional and interhierarchical teams engaged in learning create pathways for organizational learning and cultural change. Essentially, the

Workspace becomes a continuous learning space wherein persons are learning how to learn together. As the organization becomes more involved in the generation of new knowledge, it becomes more capable of achieving its stated mission as well as continually improving its outcomes. Evaluation of the strides made in accomplishing its purpose indicates the need to implement methods to hold the gains made or to return to the planning stage in order to initiate another improvement (plan, do, check, act) cycle.

Therefore, the first three stages engage stakeholders in data gathering, in reorganizing for continuous change, and in planning change strategies while the last two stages occupy constituents in collective learning and evaluation. By following the six basic questions and their associated activities organizational decisions, plans, and strategies can be consistently connected and reconnected with organizational purpose.

The supporting framework for this model can be found in Deming's (1993) System of Profound Knowledge: that is, in his "appreciation for a system, knowledge about variation, theory of knowledge, and psychology" (Deming, 1993, p. xv) which are basic to his 14 Points. In contrast, reengineering lacks the essence necessary to effectively promote generative learning and to create environments conducive to joy and pride in work. In short, reengineering fails to ask the most salient of all planning questions: "By what method?" and "How do we know if all our methods have produced something better?"

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Work Cultures: Collective, Connective, and Collision

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Understanding that the collaborative process is an all-important first step towards improving practice and that it provides a broader perspective from which to reflect upon individual practice, this article reports the findings from an empirical study on collaboration and work cultures. The results indicate that there are at least three distinct types of collaborative work cultures, namely: Collaborative Collective, Collaborative Connective and Collaborative Collision.

INTRODUCTION

It is well accepted that the primary purpose of education is to advance knowledge and to develop skills-based learning amongst students (Holmes 1993). Educational planners invariably have these goals in mind whilst developing and implementing school-based initiatives. Indeed, they readily recognize that good planning is a fundamental activity “ . . . in any well-managed organization” (Keith & Girling, 1991, p. 153).

It is safe to conclude, however, that the area of collaboration is an area of interest that is under-explored in relation to the planning process. Whilst collaboration has long been recognized in other areas of education, i.e., curriculum design, planners have long neglected such areas of study for improving performance (Hargreaves, 1990a; Hargreaves, 1990b; Hargreaves, 1990c; Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990; Nias, 1987; Nias, Southworth & Yeomans, 1989).

Specifically, Collaborative Collective is when everyone is working together in a truly collective relationship. This type involves collaboration at all levels of decision-making and participation from all members of the group, in all activities.

Collaborative Connective centers on some shared and some individual activities. That is to say, although the conceptual framework and the methodological approach to the project are a collaborative effort, for the most part individuals break away from the larger group to complete their individual pieces of the project in isolation.

Collaborative Collision is where the team members establish a somewhat vague notion of what they are to do and each member works individually with an apparent group strategy. Unlike the other two types of collaboration, the type of work produced in this culture lacks uniformity, and turns out to be a cutting and pasting of seemingly related activities to form a collision of fragmented and disjointed effort

With current economic restraint, downsizing and fiscal cutbacks, no time has there been more of a need for successful collaboration than presently. The merits of collaboration have been well documented in recent years. Academics and practitioners alike boast the rewards of collaborative and collegial work cultures (Hargreaves, 1990a; Hargreaves, 1990b; Hargreaves, 1990c; Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990; Nias, 1987; Nias, Southworth & Yeomans, 1989). Shulman (1989), for example, states,

“collegiality and collaboration are not merely important . . . but are absolutely necessary” (p. 2). Similarly, Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) state, “working together has never been more needed” (p. 52).

Although research publications and conference presentations indicate an increased interest in collaboration and cooperative teamwork, little has been documented about the actual process itself. Research findings on collaboration are, at best, asides to other ends. The literature addressing research on collaboration typically reports on particulars involving the actual design of a collaborative project, the structural dynamics between the researcher and others involved in the project or the results of the cooperative team effort. As a result, very little is actually known about the process of people working together to meet similar goals. In short, the literature is deficient of findings regarding research on collaborative teacher work arrangements, particular in regard to curriculum development.

This article reports the results of a research study on the collaborative process. Specifically, this investigation found that there are three distinct types of work cultures: Collaborative Collective, Collaborative Connective and Collaborative Collision. Discussion focuses on these typologies while addressing difficulties, problems and possibilities relating to each of these work cultures. The paper concludes by offering helpful suggestions for teachers currently engaged in collaborative efforts or planning future cooperative teamwork. These guidelines will assist in creating a positive and more effective collaborative work culture. First is a review of the literature, followed by a brief synopsis of the conceptual framework, the research questions and the methodology employed to conduct the research.

THE RISE OF COLLABORATION

Three distinct trends emerge from the literature on collaboration. Firstly, collaborative efforts are on the rise in a number of non-traditional work arrangements. Secondly, research findings presented in the literature typically focus on the outcome of collaborative efforts and not the process itself. Thirdly, the areas to examine while studying collaborative work arrangements are difficulties, problems and possibilities in working together.

Reports indicate that collaborative relationships and work cultures have been fostered and encouraged in a wide variety of fields, utilizing a number of non-traditional approaches (Fox & Faver, 1984; Schwartz, 1989; Singleton et al., 1982; Stockton & Hulse, 1983). Regardless of the sector of society, be it public or private, or the specific area of work interest, involving the pure, natural or social sciences, the merits of collaboration have infiltrated most areas of work. The latest collaborative efforts focus on interdisciplinary approaches (Birnbaum, 1981; Johnson, 1983; Leinhardt & Grover, 1990; McCarthy, 1991); multidisciplinary approaches (Franken et al. 1984; Halpin, 1990); and, inter-institutional approaches (Howey, 1983; Moavenzadeh, 1988; Oja, 1988; Whitt & Kuh, 1991; Yeager, 1980) in both research and field development. Further,

many of these arrangements involve cooperation between government, business and private individuals.

But regardless of the subject discipline or the nature of the arrangement, the merits of collaboration are continually praised and encouraged (Hargreaves, 1990a; Hargreaves, 1990b; Hargreaves, 1990c). Continued calls support shared work arrangements and multi-participation in decision-making (Bolman & Deal, 1990). Authors such as Louis and Miles (1990) suggest "strategies for involvement" to foster collaborative relationships. Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) endorse this notion suggesting the use of bureaucratic measures to actually facilitate collaboration. Similar to Louis and Miles, they offer five "mechanisms" to encourage a collaborative work culture. In short, collaborative efforts are continually being encouraged and the current literature clearly indicates that collaboration is on the rise.

RESEARCH FOCUSES ON OUTCOMES INSTEAD OF PROCESS

Despite the increased focus on collaborative work efforts, very little information has been documented on the process of collaborative work cultures *per Se*. The literature addressing research on collaboration typically reports on notions such as: the power of collaboration (McConaghy, 1989); the benefits of collaborative research (Norris et al., 1984); the relationship between the researcher and other players (Allan & Albert, 1987; Kearney & Tashlik, 1985); and, models for collaborative research (McCarthy & Walvoord, 1988). Research findings addressing the dynamics of collaboration focus more on managing collaborative research (Bridges, 1986; Carter *et al.*, 1989; Kyle & McCutcheon, 1984) than what it is like to work with others in a collaborative work arrangement.

Studies that do focus more on actual work cultures (Hargreaves, 1990a; 1990b; 1990c; Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990; Hargreaves & Wignall, 1989) typically report on the subcultures within the larger culture of the organization. Although important understandings are reached in describing the differences among cultures, these studies do not probe at discovering what actually causes the formation of such distinct entities. That is to say, their descriptive nature allows the participant to understand the organization, but they do not characterize the makings of the culture and what it means to work together.

Other research reports include the potential and positive effects of collegial interaction and collaborative teams (Lieberman, 1986; Shau, 1987) and collaborative efforts between university faculty, graduate students, teachers, and students (O'Brien & Pulliam, 1984). Similarly, Newnan and Noblit (1982) focused on a cooperative effort between research and practitioner. Their work allowed for both the researcher and the practitioner to jointly share the responsibility of data analysis at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Teaching Learning Center in North Carolina. But once again, although the dynamics of the research is pertinent to this particular study (because they were working as equal share holders in a collaborative project), the report of findings provides little documentation on collaborative work cultures. Some articles focus on the notion of

collaborative relationships (Callaghan, 1990; Erickson, 1989; Hanny & Stevens, 1985; O'Flahavan & Huxtable, 1989), but discussion in these writings tend to center on the relationship between the researcher and others involved in the study or project and not the notion of what it means to work together towards similar goals.

Recent symposia and paper presentation sessions also focus on issues of collaboration. For example, in the past four years, the grand total of 83 sessions have been held at the American Educational Research Association annual meetings (24 sessions in 1993; 26 session in 1992; 17 session in 1991; and, 16 session in 1990). Topics typically include: collaborative bargaining; collaborative decision-making; collaborative evaluation; collaborative learning; collaborative reflection; collaborative relationships; collaborative writing; collaborative models; collaborative inquiry; and, collaboration as a general theme. The sessions focusing specifically on collaborative research (13 in total) do not, however, address the theme of understanding the process itself.

These presentations typically reported on models for collaboration (e.g., Ruopp & Geboski, 1992) and researching the effectiveness of collaboration, in an evaluative mode (e.g., Ackland, 1992; Greene, 1992; Klenowski, 1992), and thus do not provide information on the process of collaborating *per se*. Other sessions tend to concentrate on "comparing the processes and products" of collaborative partnerships (e.g., Knight, 1993; Smith, 1993a; Smith, 1993b; Wiseman, 1993) or teacher and researcher initiatives (e.g., Goldberg, Saunders & Hamann, 1993; Moll, 1993).

In essence, the literature generally addresses one of two distinct notions: the relationship of the collaborative arrangement, be it the actual design of the project or the dynamics of the relationship between the researcher and others involved in the project and how they come together, or the finished product of the cooperative team effort. These findings report on important advances in research and collaborative undertakings but shed little light on the area of collaborative relationships in conducting research or working in a cooperative team fashion. While focusing mainly on the actual framework undertaken to complete the project, however, they miss the personal element of work attitudes and interpersonal relationships that is vital to understanding work cultures. As a result, very little is reported about the actual process of people working together to meet similar goals. In short, the literature surveyed is deficient of findings regarding research on collaborative work arrangements.

DIFFICULTIES, PROBLEMS, & POSSIBILITIES

Although the literature regarding research on collaboration provides a limited understanding of collaborative work cultures, it does provide some guidance for conducting research on the collaborative process. Common themes implicitly and explicitly stated in the reports on collaborative work dynamics center on difficulties in working together, problems associated with meeting the end results and positive aspects

(the possibilities) of working together in shared collaborative work cultures.

In essence, discussion in the current literature indicates a need to understand difficulties, problems and possibilities in the collaborative endeavor. Black and DeLuca (1979), for example, focus strongly on describing problems and possibilities inherent in collaborative research. The findings, however, like most research of this nature, focus more on the actual dynamics of the project itself and what these difficulties, problems and possibilities mean for the content of the project undertaken and not on the actual collaborative relationship between individuals. It seems that in conducting research on collaborative relationships, one should focus on difficulties, problems and possibilities to further advance an understanding of work cultures and what it means to work together. This typology would assist in building understandings that will take the work of other researchers (such as, Hargreaves, 1990a; 1990b; 1990c; Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990; Hargreaves & Wignall, 1989) one step further. These three components -- difficulties, problems and possibilities -- form the conceptual framework for the present inquiry on collaborative work cultures.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Current literature indicates that collaborative work endeavors may best be understood by analyzing difficulties, problems and possibilities within the context of the collaborative work culture. This typology was the tool form which the researcher approached the general research question: how is it that teachers work together?

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Specifically, this research was guided by three main questions:

1. What difficulties do individuals experience working in collaborative work cultures?
2. What problems do individuals experience working in collaborative work cultures?
3. What possibilities are present in collaborative work cultures?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Individuals engaging in collaborative planning development were observed over an 8-month period. In total, there were 12 groups (five or six teachers per group). The data were collected from three distinct work phases. A non-participant observation approach was employed during each phase. Journal records were kept regarding group interactions. The

individuals openly shared their experiences, views and the dynamics of what it was like to work together. They also shared their plans they were producing. The review of the current literature presented earlier in this paper was completed before commencing the study.

Phase One: Coming Together

At this phase a number of individuals came together to form groups to work together in a collaborative work relationship, in developing a planning unit. During this first phase the teachers were preparing to ultimately form small groups (of five or six people) to engage in collaborative group efforts. Over a one-month period (approximately two hours per week for four weeks), these individuals experimented with others in a variety of group settings to help them decide whom they would work with for their final curriculum project.

The participants exchanged ideas and completed simulated activities to determine with whom they were compatible to work. They experimented with a variety of different group arrangements (partnerships, triads and settings of four and five), and explored a number of different topics (relating to their professional expertise and personal values). Following the experimental group sessions, the participants formed groups (five or six people) to engage in a collaborative planning unit.

Phase Two: Collaborative Efforts

The 12 groups (five or six teachers per group) were observed over the remaining seven-month period. During this phase, each group worked toward designing and completing a collaborative planning project. Each group was observed for two hours per week over the course of the 7 remaining months.

Phase Three: The End Result

Each group shared their final planning project with the researcher. In addition, they presented a final report of their collaborative efforts of which the researcher attended. Members of the twelve groups shared their insights in informal discussion. They offered commentary on the difficulties, problems and possibilities of working together.

ANALYSIS

Journal records and interview data were analyzed for recurring themes, important differences and other salient issues (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Miles and Huberman, 1985). Particular emphasis was given to the typology of difficulties, problems and possibilities to firstly, develop an understanding of collaborative work relationships and group dynamics within these twelve collaborative settings, and secondly, to identify the major characteristics that contribute to difficulties, problems

and possibilities within each of these collaborative settings. Particular consideration was given to each group's final product and how they saw it coming together.

FINDINGS

Three Types of Collaborative Work Cultures

The data indicate that there are at least three types of collaborative work cultures. These cultures are also hierarchical in nature. Firstly, there are distinctions in collaborative group arrangements. That is to say, certain characteristics distinguish one type of collaborative culture from another. Secondly, the formation of these types of cultures is directly attributed to difficulties, problems and possibilities encountered by the group. The manner in which a distinct culture dealt with these three typologies largely determined the success or failure of certain efforts. Thirdly, there is a definite hierarchy in the three types of culture. Both the work relationship and the productivity can be ranked.

The three types of collaborative work cultures in order of ranking are: Collaborative Collective, Collaborative Connective and Collaborative Collision. The highest form of collaboration is superior to its two subordinates. And, the second level is higher than the third. Some might argue that collaborative cultures should not be ranked and ordered, that no one culture is better than the other, they are simply different. In this study the data indicate that there is a definite ordering of cultures. The participants in the Collaborative Collective culture, for example, typically expressed higher satisfaction with their work than those working in the other two types. In addition, their final work product was judged superior (by all members in all types of cultures) to those of other groups.

Similarly, the participants that formed the second culture, the Collaborative Connective, were more content with their work situation than those in the third category, but less content than those in the Collaborative Collective. In addition their final results were far superior to those of the third ranking type of culture but once again, not as good as that of the first rank. Those on the Collaborative Collision culture, the third ranking, typically were malcontent with both their working relationship as a group and their finished product was admittedly weak.

The following discussion will focus on the three types of collaborative work cultures. First, is a brief description of the three types of cultures. Next, is a presentation of characteristics of each type, followed by a comparison of the difficulties, the problems and the possibilities affiliated with each of them.

THREE COLLABORATIVE WORK CULTURES

One form, the Collaborative Collective, is where participants collectively initiate and conceptualize an endeavor. They focus on completing mutually agreed expectations and collectively contribute to all facets of the project in a shared fashion. Quality and shared decision-making are the guiding forces within these cultures.

The second type of collaboration, the Collaborative Connective, consists of both collaborative and individual components within a collaborative undertaking. Initially individuals work toward group consensus in conceptualizing the project. Once this blueprint is drawn, tasks are divided and the members are left to complete their individual portions of the project. This division of labor lends itself to each person working in isolation. In the end, however, the group collaboratively places each piece together to complete the final picture. Emphasis is placed on consistency and quality.

Characteristics of the Three Collaborative Cultures

Although there were some similarities among the types of cultures, the collaborative groups generally worked in one of three manners. A list of characteristics for each type of collaborative culture is presented, followed by an elaboration of this.

The Collaborative Collective

The Collaborative Collective settled into their work very quickly. Although they were diverse in terms of educational backgrounds, areas of expertise and life experiences, they all had similar views and standards for completing the collaborative project. They worked around difficulties and respected individual differences. They continually asked one another for feedback on the work and were genuinely concerned about quality in the finished product. Their work consistently reflected complete collaboration on all fronts. No one individual carried any more weight than other, but they utilized individual expertise and experience to enrich the finished product.

In particular, the following characteristics aptly describe the Collaborative Collective Culture:

- Task- oriented
- Motivated, eager
- Set time lines
- Followed timelines
- Mutual respect for individual differences

- Willing to overcome difficulties
- Sought help on problems
- Very high standards
- Work was seen as an important exercise
- Work seen as a future resource
- Team inter-dependence in process and product

An appropriate phrase to describe the efforts of this type of culture is, "a place for everybody".

The Collaborative Connective

This type of culture was not consistently engaged in the work. They waded in and out of the collaborative process. In the beginning they worked in a consistent team effort to clearly formulate a vision of the final picture. They were clear on what they wanted in the end. Once they had established the final objective, they assigned individual members to work on certain tasks. Each member became responsible for her or his section of the project and worked mainly in isolation. From time-to-time the group members would re-convene to discuss their progress, at which point they would offer suggestions to those having problems with the work.

They were committed to finishing the project, but the individual pieces were worked on largely in isolation. As a result, there was a lack of consistency in the final product that is present in the product of the first type of culture. Although it was a collaborative vision, and a collaborative undertaking, much of this unit was completed in isolation.

The following characteristics describe the Collaborative Connective Culture:

- Very good group dynamics (very personal)
- Worked as a team, solidarity (in effort and spirit)
- Failed to address certain difficulties (worked around them)
- Set some timelines
- Loosely followed timelines

- Fairly high work standards
- Valued team effort (but each were individual players)

An appropriate phrase to describe the efforts of this type of culture is, “everyone in their place”.

The Collaborative Collision

The final product submitted by this type of culture was a collection of individual pieces compiled to conform to the notion of a collaborative piece. Unlike the Connective culture, these pieces did not always fit with one another. There was inconsistency in the caliber of work as well as the themes. The final submission was not well presented. These cultures tended to connect a series of activities related in name only. As a result, one piece did not always coincide with the others.

For the most part, the members of this type of culture worked in isolation from start to finish. Although there was an apparent attempt to make concessions in the early stages of the project, this effort quickly dissipated and the group members went their own way to do their own thing. In the end, they basically cut and pasted a collage of work efforts together to make a collaborative project. In many instances the work was vastly different and in some cases totally unrelated to the general theme of the overall project. They then redefined the theme of the project to fit the final product instead of reworking or fine-tuning to be consistent with the original intent. Speaking of the original intent, that is where the problem began. They never did clearly establish what it was they intended to do.

The following characteristics describe the Collaborative Collision Culture:

- Group focus very social, sub-divided into cliques
- Did not set or follow timelines
- Low standards (done for the sake of doing)
- Little sense of ownership for the task
- Did not work to overcome difficulties
- Did not work around difficulties (regarded them as excuses)
- Very little work communication amongst group members

A phrase to describe the efforts of this type of culture is, “I am the sum of all my parts”.

DIFFICULTIES OF THE THREE COLLABORATIVE CULTURES

The difficulties that arise in collaborative work cultures cannot be overcome. They are deeply entrenched and are insurmountable. Unlike problems, work culture difficulties cannot be solved. Difficulties typically stem from two distinct categories, reluctance to change attitudes and epistemological differences. In addition, some difficulties are directly related to conceptual, methodological and personal issues. The Collective culture did not have many difficulties because they were very selective as to with who they worked. As a result, members of this work culture were more compatible. The Collision Culture, on the other hand, experienced many difficulties. These participants were not compatible.

PROBLEMS OF THE THREE COLLABORATIVE CULTURES

The problems encountered in collaborative efforts fell into three main categories: conceptual, methodological, and personal. Unlike conceptual, methodological, and personal difficulties, these problems could be resolved as they were not insurmountable. The degree to which they were solved depended upon how hard the teachers were willing to work toward resolution. The Collision Culture was not very willing, while the Collective Culture was.

POSSIBILITIES OF THE THREE COLLABORATIVE CULTURES

Despite the difficulties and problems in collaborative cultures, there are also a number of possibilities in cooperative work situations. Possibilities typically revolve around conceptual and methodological approaches to the project. In addition, epistemological similarities, as well as personal similarities and differences contribute to the benefits of collaborative work cultures. The most successful groups were willing to accent the positive and draw on strengths.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR SHAPING A POSITIVE COLLABORATIVE CULTURE

Hargreaves and Wignall (1989) report on what they call fragmented individualism in cultures. People work alone with their doors closed. They are fragmented and cut off from others in the work place. Lortie (1975) attributes at least part of this isolation to the egg crate-like structure of the workplace. They are structured in a way that divides people in a compartmentalized fashion. A team (collaborative) approach aims at eliminating the possibility of isolation.

A number of important points emanate from this study on collaborative teacher work. Listed are a few points to bear in mind when taking about a collaborative endeavor. These points could alert members of a collaborative team to unforeseen difficulties or problems.

In addition, taking these points into consideration may enhance collaborative possibilities. These are:

- Provide choice for member selection
- Select team members based on work compatibility (not social)
- Develop a clear conceptual framework for the endeavor
- Develop a clear methodology
- Set strict time lines
- Work on two or three items at the same time
- Do not stall on one item (work on another)
- Participate in decision-making (consensus of all members in decision-making)
- Set high standards and do not compromise (particularly, near the end)
- Recognize frustration as natural (vent it)
- Build in time to reflect upon the final draft of the project
- Revise your work after a fresh view
- Share your results with others and ask for feedback
- Encourage diversity of input (backgrounds and expertise)
- Allow an adequate time frame
- Celebrate success

CONCLUSION

It has been well documented that collaborative work efforts not only encourage creative thinking but also can work to tap the strengths of all involved in the project. Although a number of shortcomings of collaborative work relationships have been documented in this study, these are not necessarily reasons to shy away from collaborative work relationships. Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) say, "in collaborative cultures, failure and uncertainty are not protected and defended, but shared and discussed with a view to gaining help and support" (p. 48).

The collaborative relationship must “also tolerate disagreement and to some extent actively encourage it” (p. 48).

Further, there are a number of possibilities for collaborative teamwork. Many positive attributes evolve from the process, enhancing productivity. One must reflect upon practice and continue to work towards understanding the processes at work in a collaborative culture in order to fully benefit from the fruits of collaborative efforts. It is only through this understanding that one can make suggestions to improve collaborative work relationships within the sphere of educational planning. “Effective collaborations operate in the world of ideas, examining existing practices critically, seeking better alternatives and working hard together at bringing about improvements and assessing their worth” (Fulani & Hargraves, 1991, p. 55). By doing so one can highlight the positive and continue to reap the successes of collaborative efforts, while working to eliminate the negative, thus making the collaborative process both positive and productive. In conclusion, educational planners would do well to take on board these findings whilst engaging in collaborative endeavors, with the view of maximizing “educational reliability and productivity at decreased cost” (Sergiovanni Sergiovanni, Burlingame, Coombs, & Thurston, 1987, p. 103).

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PLANNING FOR TECHNOLOGY: ISSUES AND CONCEPTS

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This study was conducted to determine the perceptions of selected site administrators regarding the planning process involved in the implementation of technology in schools that have received substantial funding for technology innovation. A qualitative methodology was chosen for the study, utilizing both structured and semi-structured questions designed to elicit data which participants shared concerning their involvement in planning for technology. Participants were chosen from a large, southeastern state with a recent history of supporting technology implementation.

The participants indicated that they spent very little time in planning for technology implementation. They also reported that they perceived no substantial difference between planning for administrative and instructional applications of technology. Further, the participants stated that they had received little or no training in planning during the administrative preparation program and they were less than enthusiastic about the assistance they had received from district or resource personnel assigned to assist with the planning. Finally, the participants acknowledged the need for a technology planning process that was reduced to written form and not just conceived and stored in the mind of some administrator or planning team.

Introduction

In recent years nothing has effected education as profoundly as the advent of technology and its uses in the classroom (Williamson, 1996). Classes are no longer taught strictly through lectures with the teacher spewing words of wisdom as the students busily write notes (Mitchell, 1989). Computers have become universal in most schools with e-mail and the web parts of normal school operation (Guernsey, 1998). The depth, diversity, and value of computer information continue to grow at an incredibly rapid pace (Tenopir, 1993). The Internet has made finding information and doing research much less difficult than before its conception (Young, 1997). Some have speculated that technology might widen the division between social classes; rather, technology may be the great equalizer by allowing all students access to huge volumes of information on the Internet. It is true that many low-income families will not be able to afford computers with Internet connections, but the importance of schools cannot be overlooked (Jones, 1997; Solomon, 1995; Williamson, 1996). Students will have free access to computers in the classroom and in the public library (Young, 1997).

Committees at schools have been formed to study the effects of technology as well as the ramifications of the changes created by technology (Groff, 1983; Kiernan, 1998). There is the constant search for money to replace and upgrade aging hardware and software to keep the schools on the cutting edge of technology (Jones, 1993). However, much of the technology is out of date by the time it is purchased by the schools (Cradiler, 1994).

What the new technologies do is to free administrators from the secretarial function, both in administration and the classroom - the literal transmission process for moving information (Bielefeldt, 1997). In a sense, this diminishes the role of the classroom and the teacher. But, in another sense it liberates the teacher and allows him or her to focus on the class and to bring the human touch fully and firmly back into the educational experience (Davis, & Botkin, 1995). In that sense, some deeper and profound changes are underway with the advent of technology (Williamson, 1996).

Furthermore, the new technologies make possible economies of effort that bring enhanced quality to the administrative process (Jones, 1997). One mistake often made by information technology advocates is to sell information technology on the basis of cost reduction (Spyers-Duran & Mann, 1985). It can be argued that technology provides no cost savings, but rather has led to an increase in expectations from faculty and students, demands for ever more rapid shifts of equipment and software, and an ever mounting increase of staff to support the effort (Williamson, 1996). According to Oberman (1991), the connection between critical thinking and the information explosion is due to the increase of computer technology. He says the user may be confused because of extra choices due to the availability of databases. Oberman also says, "the 'cereal syndrome' suggests that extra choices do not make Technology is causing changes to occur with such rapidity that the future of education may be impossible to imagine (Saunders, 1998). With the appropriate support from faculty, administrators and computer services, the transition to a technology-based instructional design and delivery system can be very positive (Ross & Stewart, 1993). Without support and planning, less effective programs will be developed which will disappoint clients and administrators (Needham, 1997; Waterhouse, 1991).

PLANNING

Wynn and Guditus (1984) define planning as a "road map;" while Drucker (1976) stated that planning was a means for obtaining a desired future. Simply stated, planning is a process of deciding what to do and how to do it before some action is required. Lewis (1983) states that planning was "developing a plan of action to respond to changes within a school organization" (p. 3). Lewis goes on to state:

. . . educational planning is the process of identifying, collecting, and analyzing essential and critical internal and external data about a school district to arrive at current and useful information

for preparing and executing long- and short-range plans in an effort to help realize the district's basic purposes, mission, and operational goals p. 6).

Often, planning will be shaped by the degree to which planning is viewed as being important to those in leadership positions (Kaufman, Herman & Watters, 1996). In planning for technology, the most often used planning technique is referred to as contingency planning, which implies that there is no one best way to think about and manage the educational organization. That is not to say that any way is as good as any other: the concept is that different organizations exist in different conditions and face different problems (Lewis, 1983). Therefore, administrators need to think about those conditions and adapt their planning and administrative style to them (Pisapia, 1997). Planning provides the systematic means to design and evaluate the goals of the school. Although it is important that careful consideration be given to planning prior to technology implementation, it is equally important that policies be established so the technology can be modified as needed throughout the implementation phase (Kaufman, Herman & Watters, 1996; Uebbing, 1995).

All programs begin as a response to a stimulus. The stimulus might stem from a "gut" feeling of an administrator or a politician, a suggestion by a teacher or colleague, an idea obtained from research, an observation of another individual or program, or from a variety of other sources. The stimulus is not necessarily a program, although it could be, nor does it mean that a problem exists. However, someone (usually the source of the stimulus) usually thinks that an organization or individual need exists (Texas Education Agency, 1991). The program plan begins with at least a tentative identification of a need or problem, and almost always includes a proposed solution to the problem. The goal is also implicit in this initial insight into the program (Walster, 1995).

Lewis (1983) specifies several guidelines for effective planning, including:

- (1) An adequate data base for planning;
- (2) Keep the process simple;
- (3) Maintain flexibility;
- (4) Designate a planning coordinator;
- (5) Keep paperwork to a minimum;
- (6) Make it a well-coordinated and integrated process; and
- (7) Make planning a humanistic endeavor.

Lewis also specifies three separate and distinct types of planning:

- (1) Problem-solving planning, often called crisis management;
- (2) Operational planning; and
- (3) Strategic planning.

THIS STUDY

An increasing number of researchers advocate that research which deals with schools may best be conducted in natural settings (Sherman & Webb, 1988) using qualitative research methodology to examine the naturally occurring phenomenon (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Qualitative research allowed the researchers to process the meanings attached to the events under study. The meanings that people attached to real experiences provided the researchers with a greater understanding of the phenomena under study.

The purpose of the study was to examine the perceptions of selected Georgia principals concerning the planning process utilized to acquire and implement technology in public schools. Georgia's funding for technology has increased exponentially during the past several years with the passage and implementation of the lottery (Tanner, 1991). The two primary recipients of Georgia Lottery funds are public education institutions: higher education through the HOPE scholarships and funding for technology, and elementary and secondary education through technology and preschool funds (Kirby, 1994). However, little information was available concerning the planning which precipitated the allocation, purchase, installation, and utilization of technology. This study was an initial attempt to examine the perceptions of selected principals who participated in the initial acquisition of technology.

PROCEDURES

Ten Georgia principals were selected for participation in this qualitative study based upon their participation in the initial acquisition and implementation of computer technology for their schools. Of the respondents, four were elementary or primary school principals, two were middle school principals and four were secondary school principals. The demographic profile of the respondents was not justified for this research report. The researchers interviewed the participants over a period of three months in 1998 to examine their perceptions of the planning process used to acquire and place instructional technology in Georgia public schools. The researchers used a semi-structured format to elicit the responses (Fontana & Frey, 1994).

FINDINGS

The results of this qualitative study provided some fascinating insights into the conceptual bases for technology planning available to Georgia school principals. This paper presents responses in four areas:

- (1) Time spent in planning for technology acquisition;
- (2) Differences between technology to support administration and instruction;
- (3) Sources of assistance and amount of assistance received during the acquisition of technology; and
- (4) The need for a formalized planning process.

Responding principals indicated that they had little or no involvement in planning for educational technology.

"I was not involved in determining whether or not we wanted instructional technology. I received a telephone call from. . . in the district office that stated that we were scheduled to receive \$35,000 in technology funds and wanted to know how I wanted to spend the money. I was lost." (Respondent B,p.36).

"Our superintendent heard that some money was available and told me to find out how to get the money and the technology. I made several telephone calls and found that the technology money was easy to obtain. There were few strings attached and we opted to make the best use of the equipment that we could. But, no, there was no advanced planning about how to use the technology, or even whether or not the teachers wanted it." (Respondent F, p. 141). "Planning? I didn't know we were supposed to plan. My directions were to get the equipment and we could figure out how to use it later. Planning? I did not hear the word until after the equipment had already arrived at school." (Respondent E, p. 112).

Further, the respondents stated that in their initial reactions, they perceived little difference between technology used for administrative purposes and technology used for instructional purposes.

"My directions were to get the computers. I was told that we could decide where and how to use them later; the important thing was to make use of the resources while we could and to get as much as we could. No teachers were asked about whether or not they would like to have the equipment or whether they would use it. We got the computers, but a few faculty members only used them. . . Most of those already had a computer either in the classroom or at home." (Respondent C, p. 46).

When respondents were asked about the help they received in planning for the acquisition and utilization of technology, their responses illustrated the diverse nature and lack of consistency evident throughout the research study.

"I asked for help, but couldn't find anyone who knew much more than I did. I asked the district office. I asked teachers on my faculty. I asked the media specialist. I even asked business people in the community. No one was ready to give me the help I needed. I needed to make some decisions about which computer system to purchase, what software to purchase, what software would run on what platform, etc. The most knowledgeable people were the vendors, but they had their own agenda, not mine, nor what was best for my school. It became terribly frustrating. It finally meant

that I had to spend a lot of time studying on my own. . . . I know that I may not have made the best decisions, but I did the best I could.” (Respondent A, pp. 5-6).

“I felt betrayed by the lack of support and assistance which I received. I am not the best with technology nor mechanical and I felt that I could not provide the direction that was needed to make decisions about which computers to purchase and which software to purchase. I finally talked with one of my faculty members who I knew was ‘into’ computers. He helped me to decide on how to use the materials and supplies that we had received.” (Respondent D, p. 81)

“I did not know who to turn to. The people in the Central Office were little help... I was basically left to decide what was best of the school with little support from the people whom I thought could be the most help. . . . What I found was that the people in the Central Office knew less than I did about technology. They put on a good front, but they didn’t know what to do. So, I was left to make the tough decisions. I wish that someone had been there to help me. Or that something could have helped me.. . . I still do not know whether or not I made the right decisions.” (Respondent J, p. 229).

Responses from the participants also spoke to the need for a formalized planning process that could provide guidance and direction.

“I wish to had access to a formal planning document, or even a planning process that I knew was available. I was left with little, no, I was left with no plan in place to follow. I didn’t know what the thinking of the superintendent or the Board was. I think that they were shocked by the amount of equipment which could be provided and were not ready for the decisions that needed to be made. I think we are still suffering for that lack of vision about what technology is and what it means and how it could be used. We had no idea about what to do. . . . I never heard the words planning and technology used together.” (Respondent A, pp 7, 8)

“I am amazed that we did as well as we did. The faculty and district office really worked with me to help do the best we could. The faculty was super. They knew that this was a knee-jerk reaction to an allocation of money with little thought and less support but they were great. We got together and worked out a plan for our school that worked for us. I could never have done it without their help. . . . But what we really needed was a formal plan before this all started.” (Respondent D, p. 94)

“My media specialist was fantastic. She provided a lot of help, but we had nothing to go on. We were caught without a plan to handle the equipment... and without any idea how it would be used. I’m fortunate that it worked out as well as it did... . It did

teach me a valuable lesson as an administrator; I now know the value of planning and having something in place as a proactive measure. . . . I will not be caught off guard again, it really taught me a good lesson in administration; one that I did not find in graduate school.” (Respondent G, p. 174, 175)

“We did not have a planning document when this happened. We do now. I think that the impact of technology, of us getting all this money, caused us to think more clearly about what was needed. I know the superintendent became more active in thinking about technology. He said it would not help him, but it could help some of such that would be around for a few more years. . . . We now have a process, in the board policies, for technology planning. It is very new, but very needed. It really gives us some direction for future growth.” (Respondent I, pp. 217-218)

“We now have a planning process in place. The new district technology consultant helped to finalize the document. Before that we had nothing. At least what we have now is better than nothing. . . . However, I am still concerned that we listen to the technology consultant too much. We (principals) need to be more actively engaged in the planning process.” (Respondent C, p. 66)

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The respondents indicated that they spent very little time in planning for either technology acquisition or implementation. They also reported that they perceived no substantial difference between planning for administrative and instructional applications of technology. The respondents clearly illustrated the lack of planning which took place with the acquisition of technology in Georgia schools. Based on a review of the current literature, the experiences of these principals is typical of most school districts in that few have definitive technology plans currently developed. Finally, the participants specifically stated that a technology planning document should be developed in their district, their school and in the state.

CONCLUSIONS

The most obvious conclusion is that the influx of Georgia Lottery monies caught most school administrators with an adequate plan for technology acquisition. However, the respondents were satisfied that they did the best they could given the amount of information and resources they had available to them. The second obvious conclusion is that planning is a necessary component of the administrative process and should be addressed in proactive terms rather than reactive. Although these respondents were satisfied with the results of their efforts, they

were less than enthusiastic about the process that they had to use and the conspicuous absence of any formal plan for technology. Third, if technology is really here to stay as indicated by the literature, then administrators should be actively involved in creating a viable technology plan for every school and every school district.

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INVITATION TO SUBMIT MANUSCRIPTS

The editor of *Educational Planning*, a refereed journal of educational planning issues, invites the submission of original manuscripts for publication consideration. *Educational Planning* is the official journal of the International Society for Educational Planning. The journal's audience includes national and provincial/state planners, university faculty, school district administrators and planners, and other practitioners associated with educational planning.

The publication's purpose is to serve as a meeting ground for the scholar-researcher and the practitioner-educator through the presentation of articles that have practical relevance to current issues and that broaden the knowledge base of the discipline. *Educational Planning* disseminates the results of pertinent educational research, presents contemporary ideas for consideration, and provides general information to assist subscribers with their professional responsibilities.

Articles preferred for inclusion are manuscripts from practitioners, reports of empirical research, expository writings including analyses of topical problems, or case studies. Unsolicited manuscripts are welcomed.

The following criteria have been established for the submission of manuscripts:

STYLE: All formatting should adhere strictly to the current guidelines set in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.

LENGTH: The manuscript, including all references, figures or illustrations, charts and/or graphs, should not exceed 20 pages. In addition, an Abstract (between 100-150 words on a separate sheet of paper), describing the focus/foci of the manuscript should be included at the beginning of the manuscript.

WORD-PROCESSING: Double-space all text, with 1.38 inches margins top and bottom, 1.75 inches left and right, and 1.00 header and 1.00 inch footer. Lengthy tables, drawings, and charts and/or graphs should be scaled to the dimensions given and should preferably be camera-ready.

FORM OF SUBMISSION: Send **four hard copies and a computer disk (3.25 floppy disk) in Microsoft Word** of the manuscript and abstract along with a cover page including the following information:

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2. Date of Submission
3. Author(s) name(s), complete mailing address(es), business and home telephone numbers, e-mail address, and fax number(s).
4. Biographical information about each author not to exceed 30 words per author.

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Editorial reviewers and editors will review all manuscript. Points of views are those of the individual authors and not necessarily of ISEP.

Please send manuscripts to: Professor P. Rudy Mattai, Editor, SUNY - College at Buffalo, Bacon Hall 312J, 1300 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14222-1095. E-mail - d.mattai@att.net

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<p>ORGANIZATION</p>	<p>The society was founded on December 10, 1970, in Washington, D. C. Over 50 local, state, national, and international planners attended the first organizational meeting.</p> <p>Since then its continued growth demonstrates the need for a professional organization with educational planning as its exclusive concern</p>
<p>PURPOSE</p>	<p>The International society for Educational Planning was established to foster the professional knowledge and interests of educational planners. Through conferences and publications, the Society promotes the interchange of ideas within the planning community. The membership includes persons from the ranks of governmental agencies, school-based practitioners, and higher education.</p>
<p>MEMBERSHIP IN THE SOCIETY</p>	<p>Membership in the Society is open to any person active or interested in educational planning and the purposes of the Society. To join the Society or renew a membership, please complete and submit the enclosed form.</p> <p>Please forward check/money order/PO to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ISEP Dr. Walter S. Polka Lewiston-Porter Central School 4061 Creek Road Youngstown, NY 14174</p>

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