EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

Vol 15, No. 1

The Journal of the International Society for Educational Planning
PROMOTING THE STUDY AND PRACTICE OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

International Society
for Educational Planning

EDITORIAL REVIEW BOARD

Robert Beach
Alabama State
University

William Cunningham
Old Dominion University

A. P. Johnston
Drake University

Donna Ferrara
Long Island University

Dan Inbar
Hebrew University
of Jerusalem

Ron Lindahl
Alabama State
University

David N. Wilson
Ontario Institute for
Studies in Education

Walt Polka
Georgia Southern
University

George Crawford
University of Kansas

C. Kenneth Tanner
University of Georgia

William McInerney
Purdue University

Riva Bartell
University of
Manitoba

Editor
Linda K. Lemasters
The George Washington University

Assistant Editor
Adam Nir
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Reprints: Articles and reviews are available from the editor. Please contact the editor for availability and costs.
Translations: *Educational Planning* will attempt to provide readers with major language translations of journal articles. Interested members should contact the editor regarding availability and costs.

©2006 International Society for Educational Planning
All Rights Reserved

Educational Planning is the refereed journal of the International Society for Educational Planning (ISEP).
Educational Planning is published quarterly by ISEP which maintains editorial offices at One Old Oyster Point road, Suite 200 Newport News, VA 23602.
The Journal is assigned ISSN 1537-873X by the National Serials Data Program of the Library of Congress. 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 electronically or mechanically 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.

For more information visit our web site: www.isep.info

EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

A JOURNAL DEDICATED TO PLANNING, CHANGE, REFORM, AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATION

VOLUME 15 NUMBER 1

2006

About The Authors 3

Community Reinforcement of Education in Egypt: An Evaluative Study.
Mahmoud A. Abdeen 4

From Statehouse to Schoolhouse – and Back Again: Policy Recommendations for State-led Educational Reform
Annette Ligett, A. P. Johnston, Thomas Lane, Jennifer Lindaman, Leslie Moore, Jody Ratigan, Carol Richardson, Kimberly Thuente, Dennis Wulk....................17

Maintaining or Delegating Authority? Contradictory Policy Messages and the Prospects of School-Based Management to Promote School Autonmy.
Adam Ni..27

School Building Quality and Student Attitudes: Is there a Connection?
T. C. Chan, J. Eric Tubbs, Roy Rowe, and Leslie Webb 39

Invitation to Submit Manuscripts 45

Invitation to Fall Conference..47

Membership Application 48

Introduction

Linda K. Lemasters

Educational Planning has been under the leadership of P. Rudy Mattai. During his tenure, research on educational reforms, policy, planning, and other pertinent topics were examined as part of educational leadership. He provided the guidance that gave others the opportunity to view educational planning through an international lens.

I especially would like to thank the authors of the articles and Glen Earthman for their hard work and efforts on this issue. Appreciation goes out as well to the ISEP Board and the membership for their support and willingness to help.

The articles in this issue were accepted for publication for a previous issue; however, the content continues to be pertinent in 2006. This is exemplified by simply reviewing the topics of schools in rural Egypt and their impact on women's literacy, school-based management and school autonomy, building quality and student attitudes, and, finally, state-led educational reform.

The journal is back in business after a brief respite; the goal is to continue to make a significant contribution to international leadership in the realm of planning and change.

About the Editor

Linda Lemasters, Ed.D., is Program Advisor for the Masters/EdS in Educational Leadership and Administration, Department of Educational Leadership, Graduate School of Education and Human Develop at The George Washington University.

About the Authors

Adam E. Nir, Ph.D., Policy and Administration in Education, is at the School of Education, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israel. His current work involves an international project intending to explore the capacity of centralized educational structures to absorb change initiatives oriented towards school empowerment and autonomy.

Annette M. Liggett & A.P. Johnston
Former Professors, Drake University, Des Moines, IA

Thomas Lane, Ed.D
Superintendent, Carlisle Community
Schools, Carlisle, IA

Jennifer Lindaman, Ed.D
Asst. Principal, Ankeny High
School, Ankeny, IA

Leslie Moore, Ed.D
Math/Science Consultant, Prairie
Lakes AEA, Webster City, IA

Jody Ratigan, Ed.D
Principal, Waukee High School,
Waukee, IA

Carole Richardson, Ed.D
Chair of Education
Department, Simpson College, Indianola, IA

Kimberly Thuente, Ed.D
Supervisor of Curriculum &
Instruction, Heartland AEA, Johnston, IA

Dennis Wulf, Ed.D
Superintendent, Norwalk Community
School District, Norwalk, IA

Professor Mahmoud A. Abdeen is Professor of Planning, Administration and Economics of Education, Chair, Foundations of Education Department, Faculty of Education, Suez Canal University, Ismailia, Egypt.

Professor T.C. Chan, Professor of Educational Leadership, is part of the Bagwell·College at Kennesaw State University and Coordinator of the Doctoral Program. Dr. J. Eric Tubbs is an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Leadership. He is also the practicum coordinator for the department. Dr. Roy Rowe is Chair and associate Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership at KSU. Dr. Linda Webb is Program Coordinator for the Master's Degree and Add-On Certification programs in Educational Leadership at Kennesaw State University.

COMMUNITY REINFORCEMENT OF EDUCATION IN EGYPT: AN EVALUATIVE STUDY

Mahmoud Abbas Abdeen

INTRODUCTION

Community Action in Support of Education (CASE) is a project basically financed by the National Council for Negro Woman (NCNW) (Document 3) and implemented by CARE International (Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere) in Egypt over two periods. The first extends over 18 months and the second over 42 months.

The main aim of the project was to build and enhance the capabilities of 20 Community Development Associations (CDAs) in Fayoum (11CDAs) and Sohag (9 CDAs) in the field of planning, implementation, an d evaluation,
in support of education, particularly among girls and women (Document 1).

The 20 CDAs selected (see Annex one) fulfilled very objectively strict conditions and adopted multiple methods and strategies set forth by CARE. CDAs in cooperation with CARE managed to establish Small Schools literacy, and adult classes, nursery and kindergartens, and build strong institutional relationships with local educational organizations to complement the infrastructure of some government primary schools in Fayoum and Sohag.

AIM OF THE STUDY

The intent of the study was to achieve the following:

(1) Analyzing the main aim of the project to some subsidiary objectives and some other means. This is bound to make the evaluation process more objective and scientific;

(2) Evaluating each of these objectives and means; and,

(3) Supporting gains and redressing negative aspects to enable these CDAs to effectively reinforce education, particularly between girls and women.

EVALUATING METHODOLOGY

Many strategies were used in the evaluation process including the following activities:

(1) Examination of the documents of the project, enrollment statistics, success and failure rates, number of dropouts, and other data (see, list of documents in Reference Section);

(2) Field visits and encounters (Fayoum, 5-7 Nov. 1999; Sohag, 12-14 Nov. 1999). Many visits were made to small schools; meetings were held with many groups: facilitators, students at small schools, the women groups, educational teams, and parents; and,

(3) An in-depth case study on the training programs was offered by the project, particularly the one on training small school facilitators.

During the evaluator's (also referred to in this document as the researcher) visits to small schools and literacy classes, he tested some students' reading, writing, and calculating skills in an intensive manner, using such simple media as blackboards. The evaluator is of the view, however, that those classes go beyond the scope of merely teaching the basic skills of reading, writing, and calculating.

Thus, the main method adopted in this study was the Action Research Technique (Robertson, 2000; Arhor & Buck, 2000; Atkinson, 1994), together with some societal approaches.

STRATEGIES AND MEANS ADOPTED BY CARE

CARE adopted a variety of means to achieve the aspired goals, making full use of its experience in developing local communities and upgrading the standard of services. It would have been desirable to cite all or most examples of such means and strategies here; however, the remainder of the paper will provide such explanations.

FINDINGS

The evaluation covers an overall assessment of the extent to which CARE and the CDAs have managed to achieve their stated objectives, including a more detailed analysis of these objectives that is provided by a case study. In addition, three subsidiary objectives, which have been analyzed from the main aim of the study, will be stated and evaluated as follows:

Overall Achievement of Objectives

The First Subsidiary Objective

This objective dealt with building up and enhancing the 20 CDAs capabilities as regards to determining needs, diagnosing problems, planning, implementing, following-up, and evaluating processes in a way as to instigate self-reliance and progress. The project also was concerned with providing education for girls and women, raising the community's awareness of the important role of woman, and mobilizing all resources to overcome the difficulties impeding girls' and woman's education efforts.

Documents and visits indicated that this objective was achieved with a "Very Good" estimate. The following points provide evidence of this:

(1) Having reviewed CDAs project design forms (Document No. 11.a), the final reports on villages educational status (Document No. 11.b), and questionnaires (Document No. 10), and having encountered educational teams, CDA board members, and some other groups, it was clear that the CDAs capabilities of diagnosis, planning, and needs determining had been greatly enhanced.

(2) CDAs enhanced their capabilities of sound implementation, follow-up, and accurate temporary and final evaluation. CARE officials' visits played an unmistakable role. The intent was accomplished to hail the thorough design of forms, particularly the one concerning institutional strengthening, which covered 9 main sections and included 41 items. Filling in all the items by CDAs managed to increase their capabilities of sound diagnosis and planning.

(3) Periodical reports (quasi–final ones) on financial status indicated CARE's keenness on training CDAs to make the best use of their potentials, which was manifested in the funding conditions stipulated in CARE's contracts. This was one factor of success, which was enhanced by CARE's provision of financial report samples (models) and phasal and final achievement reports.

The researcher was satisfied that there was accuracy in coining the items of grand contracts, a matter which helped to ensure sound manipulation of financial resources and redress of any infringements. Monthly follow-up on financial status in Small Schools was also very praise worthy. An auditing checklist proved to be correct.

(1) There was an observed positive change in attitude towards girl's and woman's education on the part of girls, women, parents, and local leaders. This was manifested in high attendance rates of the girls in Small Schools and the women's keenness to be present in literacy classes and women groups. (CARE statistics provided in Document No. 4 also illustrated this).

(2) The fact that financial commitments were designated in a clear-cut manner by CARE was instrumental in increasing CDA's capabilities of mobilizing resources for educational projects. CARE provided financial and real assistance to CDAs to maximize their resources as it will be noted in Section VI.

(3) Exchange of visits between educational teams in different CDAs played a role in exchanging expertise and reaching consensus on the general principles necessary for enhancing education, notably of girls and women.

(4) Monthly meetings between CARE's and Parent Teacher Associations (PTA's) representatives to discuss such issues as school absence rates contributed in increasing attendance rates.

(5) Adopting objective and scientific methods in selecting the communities and CDAs worthy of assisting ensured a well-balanced spread of educational service through CASE.

(6) A close view of educational status final reports (Document No. 11b) presented by such CDAs as Gazaer Guota, Abou Gander, leads to the following positive aspects:
- Scientific methods are manipulated in reports all through.
- Accuracy in stating figures. Actual numbers of school leavers were mentioned. Dropout percentage was precisely stated.
- Accurate explanation of the community's problems through examining the social, cultural, economic, and educational factors. Educational aspects were particularly detailed in terms of school facilities, curriculum, and the school-village distance.

The CDA's reports conducted under the guidance of CARE's officials were beneficial in:
- Enhancing CDA's skills in diagnosing and planning;
- Providing suitable solutions for the problems; and,
- Instigating CDA's self-reliance that they can work independently when CARE's task is over.

The Second Subsidiary Objective

It was intended to reduce the number of drop-outs as well as the number of those bereft of education, particularly girls and women, and to increase basic education enrollments. One important point about this objective was to draw the teacher's attention to the pivotal role women can play in the community. This was accomplished along with achieving an increased relevancy to the schooling system and the needs of the community and the society at large.

Statistics and field indicators showed that this objective was attained at a grade no less than "Very Good." The following are some of the pieces of evidence, beginning with the first approach, "Small Schools."

The first approach: small school. The small School project (Document No. 6) contributed greatly in assimilating increasing numbers of students, particularly girls in remote villages, which are served by CADs (11 in Fayuom, 9 in Sohag) as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Numbers and percentages of enrollments at small schools in Fayuom and Sohag according to sex

Region & Classes	Boy Students		Girl Students		Total	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Fayuom: 25 classes	106	15 %	590	85 %	696	100 %
Sohag: 14 classes	81	20 %	318	80 %	399	100 %
Total: 39 classes	187	17 %	908	83 %	1095	100 %

The total number of Small School classes in Sohag and Fayoum is 39 classes attended by 1095 children. The percentage of enrollments thus greatly increased, particularly among girls as targeted by the project (85% in Fayoum, 80% in Sohag; 83% overall percentage of female enrollment.)

The variance in male/female enrollment at Small Schools was attributed to the fact that those bereft of education were mostly girls. The construction of Small Schools was a step to redress male-female enrollment balance.

It also was observed in field visits to the small schools that students attending the first three grades (1, 2, 3) made exceptional progress. So great a number of students enrolled in the first year made such an outstanding success during 1998/1999 that they were promoted to the third year directly in 1999/2000, which betrayed a high quality of education.

Students of all levels were in the classes (multi-graded), which is similar to the philosophy of the one class schools of government education. In addition, visits to the Small Schools and encounters with those in charge showed the following positive aspects:

(1) The concept of Small School was well assimilated by facilitators, educational teams, CDAs board members, and all those in charge of the project. This was due to the work of the CARE's officials and the training programs. Reviewing the identification and description of the Small School, it was clear that responsibilities and commitments were delineated in a manner as to ensure accuracy and objectivity and secure self-reliance on the part of schools when CARE gradually pulls out.

(2) Facilitator selection criteria also were objective. CARE closely adhered to them as stipulated in Small School identification documents. Concerning testing system, the researcher reviewed some written test samples used by CARE. The Arabic language test was creative and well-integrated, as well as the common knowledge test. The arithmetic test was nearly equivalent to the level of the first three primary grades. It is anticipated that more advanced tests will be used in the future.

(3) The researcher noted the use of the term *facilitator* instead of *teacher*. This was quite in conformity with the concept of self-learning applied in modern education, which no longer relies on teacher-centered methods.

(4) Pre-and in-service training programs provided by CARE played a role in raising the vocational standards of facilitators.

(5) The observation was made that cooperation in Small School management, among facilitators (being technically responsible for Small Schools), the educational team representatives, CARE officials, and the PTAs was exemplary and worthy of replicating.

(6) The idea of forming a "Small School Board" in the villages that hosted more then one Small School was particularly instrumental in the exchange of expertise. The suggested formation was a balanced one, including facilitators, coordinators, teachers and learners.

(7) There was a positive role played by parents' boards, which are comprised of parents, education officials, and the coordinators. These players bring to the table for discussion the topics of concern, such as absence rates and learners' progress, conducting tours or camps, and other pertinent issues. Solutions and suggestions are put forward.

(8) Libraries inside Small Schools are very attractive for learners. They include hundreds of stories. It was observed that facilitators made the best use of the stories and books available.

(9) In addition to the availability of storybooks, some elastic substances as argil were also available for student artistic activities. The latter was available to instigate the students' creativity and to make school a more attractive place.

(10) Some books were available for the special use of facilitators and women's self-help groups. These were provided to assist in extending their knowledge base.

(11) The researcher indicated further support for other positive aspects such as:

- Conducting parties to pay tribute to top students;
- Assisting facilitators to do their job properly, being members of educational teams; and,
- Examining all children medically.

(12) Summer activities practiced by the Small Schools were very innovative. Most summer activities in fact were focused on relevancy to the local community and in support of a sustainable education concept.

(13) There was full cooperation with the Education Directorates in Sohag and Fayoum. The fact that exam papers were prepared and marked under the supervision of the Education Directorate lent confidence in the educational process run by Small Schools. Potential competition between government schools and Small Schools portends increased educational standards in general.

(14) Health insurance systems were applied for those schools upon the approval of the ministries of Education and Health. This was most welcome in view of the students' low standard of living.

(15) Facilitators, educational teams, parents, and other small school supporters hailed the treatment they received from CARE's representatives, which helped to solve many problems.

(16) Observations were made of the Fayoum and Sohag education officials of their readiness to cooperate. They even found the objectives sought by the project quite in line with their own. There was a correspondence between Small Schools and one-class schools, hence exchanging expertise is an expected outcome. Officials were enthusiastic about literacy programs and the Small School project. Both parties worked together to solve problems (i.e., the Fayoum Ministry of Education undersecretary's intervened to solve the problem of delayed book delivery to Small School students).

(17) Seriousness and accuracy were manifested in the facilitators' lesson preparation notebooks, test samples, and attendance sheets.

(18) Discussions with Small Schools and literacy class students displayed a hectic enthusiasm for learning. Most students acquired some reading, writing, and calculating skills; although, females rarely excelled males.

The second approach: literacy and adult education classes for men and women. This is the second approach to attain the second subsidiary objectives of this project. The methods and strategies have brought down considerably the number of illiterates. The total number of classes and enrollments at Fayoum and Sohag CASE project was as high as 66 classes and 1455 learners, the majority of them (93%) were female as shown in Table No. 2.

Table No. 2
Numbers and percentages of enrollments at adult classes in Fayuom and Sohag according to sex

Region & Classes	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Fayuom: 31 classes	---	---	665	100 %	665	100 %
Sohag: 35 classes	96	12 %	694	88 %	790	100 %
Total: 66 classes	96	7 %	1359	93 %	1455	100 %

In all instances literacy classes in this project help mitigate illiteracy problem in remote villages in Fayoum and Sohag, particularly among women.

In addition to the indicators shown by statistics, field visits to the research sites exhibited the following positive aspects:

(1) The researcher sensed a yearning desire on the part of female learners to gain more knowledge. They felt that doing so they could be of great assistance to their children and could make their life much easier. It was easy for them to assimilate family planning concepts.
(2) Local leaders were greatly motivated to encourage girls' and women's education.
(3) Evening classes were carefully located beside the women's houses, so that they could attend on a regular basis.
(4) High rates of success were recorded in some literacy classes (at Gazaer Guota, for instance). However some learners did not take the final exam for fear of failure; others quit after getting married.
(5) It was observed that facilitators kindly treated female learners, so that they attended regularly. Facilitators also made a great effort in teaching the illiterate women.

At Gazaer Guota 150 women were selected to attend literacy classes (out of a total number of 650 illiterate women). Only 59 women took the final exam of the 150. Fifty-six succeeded (95% success rate). Marriage was the primary reason for not taking the exam. The other reason was premised on some learners' poor educational standards. Those who did not take the exam were not left behind. They were assisted to get qualified and sit for the exam in cooperation with the Public Authority for Literacy and Adult Education (PALAE).

The third approach: nursery and kindergartens. The nursery and kindergarten classes had many educational and social gains. They prepared children for primary school, hence cut down the number of drop-outs. The total number of classes was 25, and the distribution of the students is as shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Numbers and percentages of enrollments at nursery and kindergarten in Fayuom and Sohag according to sex

Region & Classes	Male Child		Female Child		Total	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Fayuom: 11 classes	71	47 %	79	53 %	150	100 %
Sohag: 14 classes	150	60 %	101	40 %	251	100 %
Total: 25 classes	221	55 %	180	45 %	401	100 %

This was a very promising start for those classes, which had many positive aspects:
(1) Nurseries and kindergartens catered a sound educational environment for children that prevented them from street play hazards. The researcher observed the facilitators teaching children some of the basic skills; however, he advised facilitators against over education.
(2) In a surprise visit to CDA, Yaacoup (60 kms. away from Sohag), the researcher had a unique experience in discovering that four of the nursery classes were clean and magnificently built. Some recreational facilities were constructed for children as well.

The fourth approach: training. It included the following:
(1) CARE multiple training programs for facilitators, women's self-help groups and the educational team and
(2) Training programs for government primary education and a one-class school system.

The main objective of those programs was to upgrade the standard of facilitators, teachers, and the other leaders in a way as to enhance the educational process and cut down dropout rates. A case study later in this paper will detail all pre- and in-service training programs.

The fifth approach: complementing the infrastructure of some government schools. This project sought to modernize some of the primary school construction and utilities, such that children would enjoy a healthy educational medium. The project also attempted to strengthen ties with governmental education, particularly that the objectives were shared by both CARE and the governmental bodies.

The costs incurred in infrastructure involved CARE and some government bodies. The total costs of infrastructure at Fayoum reached L.E. 10751 (CARE contributed L.E. 4872, i.e., 45% of the costs, while the society contributed L.E. 5879, i.e., 55% of the costs). One thousand seven hundred eighty people benefited from the services rendered (996 men, 56% and 784 women, 44%).

The total costs of the projects in Sohag reached L.E. 6494. CARE incurred 3421 at a rate of 53% whereas the society contributed L.E. 3078 at a rate of 47%. One thousand three hundred thirty-five people were served (692 men, 52% and 643 women, 48%).

The following are some examples of infrastructure projects that were found beneficial:

- CARE and CDA, Gazaer Guota (Fayoum) built a fence round the primary school building, which provided safety for children during break periods. CARE incurred 35% of costs, and the remaining 65% were contributed by CDA Quota.
- Lanterns and electricity were maintained in Menyet El-Heit (Fayoum).
- Sanitary sewers were provided for Gaa'fra (Fayoum)
- A new fence was built around Abou Gander primary school (Fayoum). CARE funded 50% of the total costs.

Supporting infrastructure projects were closely relevant to the second subsidiary objective, which sought to provide safety for students, make schools more attractive, and hence cut down the number of absentees and drop-outs.

The Third Subsidiary Objective

The intent of this project was to set replicable strategies and methods to enhance the community's educational standards, particularly the educational status of girls and women. The achievement of the first two main objectives helped to attain the third one; this deserves a " Very Good" estimate.

The experience of Small Schools was a good one and worthy of replication. Attention should be drawn to training facilitators and the other staff on how to mobilize resources and establish links with the local community and government bodies. The same could be suggested for literacy classes. Training on how to convince people to come to classes and on preparing good places for this purpose should always be a concern and goal. Seeking the assistance of the PALAE was also so important and crucial.

Nursery and kindergarten classes represented a good model to be followed. Based on the results of the project, it was suggested that the project be extended in view of the many benefits it yielded.

Transfer of expertise to other CDAs was very important. The participant CADs gained a lot of experience, and due to interaction with community institutions is bound to attain an overall development. Expertise transfer can be best-done through CARE and/or participant CDAs.

Field visits showed that some projects are still in the making. These projects are about to get implemented soon. The prominent example of these projects is CDA, Abou Gander's nursery and kindergarten, which can be implemented with CARE's assistance, in view of the experience it gained from such projects. What would be of help to the project is for the facilitators to receive efficient training courses; the project is about to start with as few as 50 children (3-6 years of age).

THE CASE STUDY

Pre and In-Service Training Particularly for Facilitators

The evaluator's attention was drawn to the sincere efforts made by CARE in training facilitators on educational and administrative work. Therefore, he selected this issue as a case study.

All documents and reports (Document No. 13) on facilitator training were carefully reviewed. The training offered for primary school and one-class school system teachers also was scrutinized. Field visits gave the evaluator some insights in the type of theoretical and practical training offered. Some positive aspects were observed:

(1) Training programs played an essential role in eliminating all fear the facilitators felt towards this new job. They were only secondary school graduates and stepping into a teaching job was not without fear for them. All facilitators encountered by the evaluator expressed the importance of magnificent role training played in their new vocation. For them, success would have been far-fetched had it not been for the introductory and in-service training.

(2) The topics discussed in training were very important. They dealt with all issues of relevance to the educational process, such as setting the objectives, using teaching media, preparing lessons, evaluating methods, and communicating.

(3) Interactive methods were applied in training and prepared the trainees to be facilitators, in the sense that they helped students learn independently.

(4) Instigation sessions provided for facilitators (in- service training) helped them to surmount the problems they came across and gave them impetus for more work.

(5) Daily evaluation of training shortcomings helped address problems right away.

(6) The training sessions for government primary school teachers and one-class school teachers were a good example of cooperation between CARE and education officials in Fayoum, Sohag, and Kafr EL -Sheikh governorates. The cooperation was only possible because of the common goals shared by all institutions involved.

(7) Training sessions held for women's self-help groups and education teams gained the evaluator's admiration. They trained trainees on how to work collectively. One training course was held in Gabal Elzeena (Fayoum, 6-9 September, 1999) on "Women's Issues and Rights." It had an appropriate advocacy role; however, more sessions need to be conducted to propagate the feminist questions and communication approaches.

(8) CARE carefully selected the women facilitators so that local people became convinced that woman's work is no disgrace.

Despite the many positive aspects mentioned, some other observations need to be pointed out:

(1) No effort was made to make better use of university potentials. Though Fayoum's Faculty of Education was nearby, assistance was only required from Salama Moussa Organization for Education and Development (SMOED) situated in Minya. The Faculty of Education in Fayoum could have been a positive asset in cooperation with SMOED, regarding such activities as the training workshops for Small School facilitators (4-8 September, 1999).

(2) The report on training sessions for one-class school teachers in Fayoum and Kafr El Sheikh held in Sers Ellayyan (Menoufia) has exhibited a positive cooperation between CARE, SMOED, and the Ministry of Education. No assistance was sought, however, from University Faculties of Education, and the number of trainees was not listed in the report.

In Sohag there was interaction between CARE and the South Valley and Minya Universities' Faculties of Education. Full cooperation was manifested in the training course provided for "Future School Teachers" held in Sohag (8-11 February, 1999) between the universities, SOMED, National Center For Educational Research and Development, CARE, and Sohag's Education Directorate officials.

(3) Facilitators expressed their need for training sessions on how to deal with the poorly motivated and less capable students. They also asked for training sessions on Level 4 and 5 advanced arithmetic courses.

(4) Facilitators felt some anxiety about their careers when the CASE project is over.

(5) Facilitators expressed a desire to be covered by the health insurance services, which were equally provided to children.

Some other gains along objective achievement

In addition to the objectives achieved the project brought about some other gains thanks to CARE's association with CDAs:

(1) CARE assisted in securing an approval from authorities to construct a new prep-school in Gazaer Gouta.

(2) CARE helped CDA, M. Abd -El-Mageed obtain a financial grant.

(3) CARE helped CDA, Etsa to establish strong relations with primary schools.

(4) The problem of the rented school building at Heisha was discussed and officials were designated to solve this problem. The head of the Directorate Planning Section paid a visit to the village and inspected the new patch of land where the school is to be built. The society will pay a part of the cost.

(5) CARE contacted the Ministry of Education Undersecretary in Sohag to provide the necessary equipment for Beit Allam School.

(6) In cooperation with the "Children of Special Needs Association," a learner at Beit Allan Small School was operated on. She was provided with a paralysis apparatus.

(7) Awlad Elew village was adequately assisted such that local leaders in the village were able to obtain charts and graphs from electricity authorities. CDA, Awlad Elew, together with the village board, received the necessary help to secure assistance from the World Bank.

(8) A three-year old girl at the Awlad Elew Small School was given the necessary medical treatment by "Children of Special Needs Association" in cooperation with CARE.

(9) CARE helped CDA Yaa'coup in obtaining a L.E. 33,000 fund from the Ministry of Social Affairs.

(10) Assisting CDA, El Khyam got the authorities' approval to replace the old school with a new one.

(11) Some equipment was provided to the women's literacy classes at CDA, El-khyam by the Public Authority for Literacy and Adult Education (PALAE).

(12) El-Kosh'h's nursery received an exceptional grant with the assistance of CARE.

(13) Attention was drawn to the hazards to which school students were exposed. Elkosh'h's Wooden School was visited by the Planning and Follow-up Manager at Sohag's Education Directorate, and some solutions were put forward. CERTAS, Egypt officials visited the village's wooden school to report on its hygienic conditions.

(14) Some government school teachers working at El-kosh'h government school took part in the training sessions held in cooperation with CRS on "Sound Nutrition." Some nursery school supervisors participated in the training sessions.

REMARKS, PROBLEMS, AND DIFFICULTIES

Objectivity requires that the researcher should mention the negative points observed. Some already were mentioned in the case study. The following are other items of note:

(1) Despite the important role played by Khaaf Estate School affiliated to CDA, Abou Gander, no sign or notice was hung to indicate that this was a school. Moreover, 35 learners belonging to levels one and three were crammed into a small room, while two

other rooms were left free. It could be questioned as to why not assign each level a classroom.

(2) The two classrooms of Oufi Small School affiliated to CDA, Abou Garder were poorly-lit. Using fluorescent lamps would have been more comfortable.

(3) Learners at Motul Small School complained that they had to study at the facilitator's house. They also had not received their set books when the evaluator made his visit to the place on (6th November, 1999). Board members were responsible for this. CARE's evaluation of this school was appropriate to the standard of service offered. CARE reported it as a poor CDA. The following criteria were used by CARE in evaluating CADs:

- The learners' educational standards;
- Relationship holding CDA, society, and partners;
- Educational team efficiency standards; and
- Facilitator's efficiency.

The criteria herein used were very accurate. CARE's officials were sincere enough to state all difficulties and negative components. The researcher admired the CARE officials' diagnosis of CDA, El-Grew's problems particularly, as regards the weakened ties between the educational team and local people. Local inhabitants were expecting too much from the educational team; they even thought it was the education team's duty to construct them a bridge on Naga'a Hamady West Canal. Services were judged by CARE's officials as poor.

The poor standards of both Motul (Fayoum) and El Gerew (Sohag) (though the latter is better) do not stigmatize the whole work. It is normal to find negative aspects in successful projects.

(6) It would have been much more appropriate if cheaper and less heavy furniture was used in Small Schools.

SUSTAINABILITY

First, credit needs to be granted to the conditions set forth by CARE regarding selection and cooperation with local NGOs. The conditions are:

(1) It is essential to have a CDA in the communities.
(2) Educational teams and women's self-help groups should be formed.
(3) All financial accounts of CDAs must be thoroughly audited by CARE officials.
(4) CDAs should be willing to pay at least 50% of the relevant project's costs.
(5) Prior successful experience on the part of CDAs is required.

These conditions are quite momentous in selecting serious CDAs. The training offered to the CDAs in the areas mentioned on discussing the first objective achievement enhanced their capacities and instigated self-reliance.

However, it remains to say that the problems encountered by these communities are so many. Foremost among them is the problem of school leavers and illiteracy. The fact that the CDAs can work independently, without CARE's help, is still questionable. It is suggested therefore that CARE continues its follow-up of Small School learners, until the learners complete their primary school certificate and join first year prep schools. CARE's follow-up should go hand-in-hand with their training programs to gradually increase the CDA's self-reliance skills. CDAs, according to this method, can take over the whole job by the year 2002/2003.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The CARE project strived to achieve one main objective that ramified into three subsidiary objectives. The evaluator's methodologies were based on: field visits to a group of CDAs in Fayoum and Sohag and an accurate review of the relevant documents.

The field visits provided documentation that the three subsidiary objectives were successfully achieved with "Very Good" estimates, which means that the main objective was equally achieved (with 'Very Good' estimate). This success was significant.

Fourteen beneficial points were mentioned by the evaluator, along with the main aim of the project; although, they were not planned. Some four remarks on the difficulties and the problems encountered also were made by the research evaluator. To support gains and redress the negative aspects, the following recommendations and suggestions are provided:

(1) Signs and notices should be attractively made and appropriately mounted on Small Schools and literacy classes. This is an important factor in advocacy activities, particularly when those signs are homogeneously designed.

(2) It is advisable to assign a class for each Level (or even two Levels) instead of placing all Levels in one class, notably because by the next year (2000-2001) it is expected to have five Levels in each Small School. Even if this is against the ideology of Small Schools, it is bound to help facilitators do their job more properly.

(3) The researcher is of the view that this project should be extended further due to the wide magnitude of the problems. More students are enrolled in primary schools; however the recorded dropout rate makes such programs imperative.

- The literacy project at Gazaer Quota (Fayoum) assimilates only 150 women out of a total number of 650. The unassimilated and dropouts reach approximately 400 girls and women and 200 young boys. Small schools accept only 60 out of 600 children.
- The same could be said about CDAs Awlad Elew, Beit Allam and Ya'agoup, and other in Sohag.

(4) It is recommended that CDAs stop collecting the 3-pounds received from learners' parents on joining the Small School. The same could be said about the one-pound monthly fee. This is because of the families' very low standard of living. It is suggested the Ministry of Education pay the fees instead.

(5) It is recommended that Channel 7 of the Egyptian television play a more active role in the project.

(6) Efforts should be coordinated with PALAE to provide women literacy classes with sewing machines, particularly at El grew CDA, in addition to helping women acquire knitting and embroidery skills. It is advisable to extend this service to all CDAs.

(7) Strict action needs to be considered against CDA, Motul, for its very slight efforts.

(8) It is advisable to widen the scope of training provided for women's groups and educational teams to include such topics as leadership skills, extending interaction with the community, and mother and child care.

(9) The research evaluator wishes to suggest that training courses be provided for facilitators on how to approach the low achieving and the poorly-motivated students and how to prepare students to assimilate advanced arithmetic.

(10) If more highly qualified facilitators are recruited in the future extension of the project, it is proposed that arithmetic tests for selection be developed so that they go beyond those provided in primary schools. Help can be sought from Methodology and Curricula Departments in the Faculties of Education.

(11) Following the termination of the CASE project, the Ministry of Education can recruit the Small School facilitators in one-class schools.

(12) Finally, it is recommended that health insurance services cover facilitators as equally as they do with Small School children.

REFERENCES

Arhor, J., & Buck, G. (2000). Learning to look through the eyes of our students: Action research as a tool of inquiry. *Educational Action Research, 8*(2), 327-339.

Atkinson, S. (1994). Rethinking the principles and practice of action research: The tensions for the teacher-researcher. *Educational Action Research, 2*(2), 383-401.

Kaufman, R., & Thomas, S. (1980). *Evaluation without fear: New viewpoint.* New York: Franklin Wolts Publishing Company.

Meade, P., & Woodhouse. (2000). Evaluating the effectiveness of the New Zealand academic adult unit: Review and outcomes. *Quality in **Higher Education,** (6)*1, 19-29.

Robertson, J. (2000). The three Rs of action research methodology: Reciprocity, reflexivity and reflection-on-reality. *Educational Action Research, 8*(2) 307-326.

Wentling, T. L. (1980). *Evaluating Occupational Education and Training Programs* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon, Inc.

DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THE PROJECT

Examination of the documents of the project

1. CARE's Activity Proposal of the Project.
2. Background Papers on CARE.
3. "Evaluation Scope of Work" written by NCNW.
4. Detailed statistics provided by CARE, which include the projects planned and executed in cooperation with the 20 CDA s in Fayoum and Sohag.
5. The Agreement on the CARE's CASE project executed in cooperation with 20 participant CDAs. The 5-page agreement details the responsibilities charged by CDAs, Ministry of Social Affairs, CARE, Ministry of Education, and the PALAE.
6. Identification paper on the activities of "Small Schools." (Nine pages prepared by CARE).
7. (a) A model of "Grant Contract between CARE and CDAs for Small School project" and its attachments.
   (b) A model of the monthly financial report on the Small Schools in each CDA.
8. Facilitator Selection Tests in Small Schools prepared by CARE.
9. CDA's Institutional Strengthening Form designed by CARE.
10. Questionnaire Forms made to seek the public opinion on educational needs.
11. (a) "Project Design Forms" prepared and filled in under the guidance of CARE.
    (b) Final Report Samples designed to study educational status in villages (e.g. Gazaer Guota and Abou Gander).
12. Education Team Form.
13. The report package on teacher and facilitator training, notably the following reports on:
    - Small School facilitator training workshop: Basic Training (21-28 August, 1998) in cooperation with Collective Training Scientific Association (CTSA) under the patronage of the Fayoum governor. The report covers 400 pages.
    - Small School Facilitator Training workshop: Specialized Training (4-8 December, 1998) in cooperation with Salama Moussa Organization for Education and Development (SMOED) under the patronage of the Fayoum Governor.
    - The Training Course for the One–classroom School Teachers at Fayoum and Kafr El-Sheikh (at Sers El–Layyan center) (12-16 December, 1998) in cooperation with CARE, the Ministry of Education, and SMOED.

- Training Course for Future School Teachers in Sohag (8–12 February, 1998) under the patronage of the Sohag governor. The workshop was a model worthy of quoting for effective cooperation between CARE and the Sohag Education Directorate.

Annex One

List of 20 CDAs participating in the project:

Fayoum:

1. Shakshouck
2. Gazaer Gouta
3. Abgeg
4. Abou Denqash
5. El-Gaa'fra
6. Manshyet Abdel El-Maged
7. Etsa.
8. Demeshqein
9. Abou Gander
10. Motoul
11. Meniet El-heit

Sohag:

1. El-Heisha
2. El-Gerew
3. Mazata
4. Aly Bahnacy
5. Beit Allam
6. Awlad Elew
7. El-Khyam
8. El-Kosh'h
9. Yaa'coub

From Statehouse to Schoolhouse--and Back Again: Policy Recommendations for State-Led Education Reform

Legislators find it more fun to be Moses and deliver the commandments than to be the rabbis and priests who had to carry them out.

Joseph Califano

Annette M. Liggett, A. P. Johnston, Thomas Lane, Jennifer Lindaman, Leslie Moore, Jody Ratigan, Carole Richardson, Kimberly Thuente, & Dennis Wulf

Introduction

Research on the implementation of state level education policy making is in its fourth decade, and we still have much to learn about how state policy can effectively guide local implementation (Bardach, 1977; Elmore, 2002; Odden, 1991). A good answer to this fundamental governance question still hangs in political limbo, yet life goes on in schools as local educators have to adapt as best they can to this reciprocal arrangement of statehouse and schoolhouse influence (Cohen & Hill, 2001).

At the time this study was completed, Iowa was the only state that did not have some form of state standards. But the Iowa Legislature in 1998 passed a law, House File 2272 (House File 2272), which required local districts to report their own measures of student academic achievement as a means of public accountability. This study focuses on that law, specifically to describe what legislators, state department of education appointees, policy advisors, and others, who were actively engaged in writing HF 2272, said about why they passed the bill in the first place and what they think of it now. At the same time, interviews were conducted with Iowa administrators, teachers, and school board members, who were well informed on the implementation of the mandate, to find out why they thought the bill was passed, how they thought it worked, and based on this experience, if they had recommendations for making better education policy.

Methodology

This two-year policy study began in January 2001 and was a collaborative effort of nine people: 5 school administrators, 3 higher education faculty, and one area education agency consultant. This team approach was used partly because of the scope and complexity of the project, but at least as important were the particular complementary strengths each team member brought to the interviewing process and the technical adequacy of the project (Hafernik, et. al., 1997). The qualitative methodology used was based on assumptions of naturalistic inquiry explained by Charmaz (2002) and Glaser & Strauss (1967), and it was especially helpful for systematically documenting and analyzing how HF 2272 was actually working. Consistent with recent policy implementation research, this study sought information and insights from policy influentials (Fuhrman, 1991) at both the state and local district levels; however, there was no intent to evaluate school implementation efforts, to compare district efforts, or to generalize the findings beyond what the reader deems acceptable to a larger statewide school district population (Creswell, 1994; Patton, 1990). What is reported here is limited to the perceptions of policy makers and practitioners (Rubin & Rubin, 1996).

Site Selection and Data Gathering

This research project proceeded in stages using two sources of data: semi-structured interviews (Seidman, 1998) and relevant documents. Initially the team spent six months reviewing legislative documents pertaining to HF2272, studying local district school improvement plans, and talking among themselves and with other local and state level personnel familiar with the implementation of HF2272. Based on this information, the research team developed four interview protocols that focused primarily on the broad research questions regarding the intent of the mandate and how it was working but also included questions that paid attention to the role and experience differences among state policy makers, school administrators, teachers, and board members. Having similar, yet different interview protocols, resulted in a process of exploration that allowed the researchers to pursue issues and ideas as they arose and, we believe served to strengthen the iterative quality (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) of the data analysis described below.

We used networking (Glesne, 1999) techniques for selecting sites and interviewees at each site. We considered the state level as one site and asked state policy influentials and local district educators for "knowledgeable elites" (Odendahl & Shaw, 2002), whom they thought could provide insightful statewide perspectives regarding this particular piece of legislation. For the local district perspective, we asked people in the Department of Education, Area Education Agencies, professional organizations, and district level personnel to identify districts and/or schools of varying sizes that fit a description of "active user"– one that does not wait for rules or regulations to be imposed on them, but engages in similar work long in advance of a mandate (Odden, 1991, p. 10). Assuming that interviewees from active user sites would most likely provide thoughtful information to the questions asked, we then narrowed sites to those frequently mentioned as fitting that description.

Feasibility issues of time, resources, and the ability to conduct in-person interviews also influenced our choice of sites and interviewees (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). All of the state level interviews took place in the metro area in and around the state capitol. At the local level people from seventeen schools in fourteen local school districts were interviewed. Two-thirds of the sites were located in the central and north central portion of the state, others were scattered throughout the state. All seventeen sites included two elementary schools, three middle level schools, three mid-sized high schools, three large high schools, and six K-12 districts. Six of the sites were in rural districts, four in towns, three were in suburban school districts, and one school was in an urban district. In all 189 interviews were conducted: 26 interviews with state level policy makers and 173 interviews in local districts with superintendents, curriculum directors, selected board members, school principals, and teachers. All the interviewees were assured of anonymity; and, gender references, demographic descriptions, and role/position characteristics that might lead to the identification of specific districts, schools, or people were omitted from the findings. All of the interviews were tape recorded, transcribed, coded, and analyzed for themes that over time led to the rationale and logic described in the results of the study.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data followed procedures suggested by Lincoln & Guba (1985) and Miles and Huberman (1994), including coding and development of themes utilizing a constant comparative analysis and data source triangulation in different contexts. Initially descriptive reports were written for each site. Interviewees were given an opportunity to review their respective site description and offer clarifications and/or suggest changes. Team conversations were held both online and in person to discuss site reports. Although district contexts varied substantially, the sites were analyzed using a common methodological structure. This comparative approach allowed for generalizations to be made through a cross-site analysis. To provide additional assurance of the dependability of the research, a recognized scholar in qualitative research conducted an audit of the draft report.

The findings of this study include perspectives from both state officials and local educators and respond to the broad research questions regarding 1) the intent of the policy and 2) how it worked in the schools. The third research question, regarding implementers' ideas about effective policymaking, is folded into conclusions and implications.

Findings

Policy Intent

Legislators and other state-level officials agreed as well as disagreed among themselves and with local educators about what was intended by the legislation.

Accountability: State interviewees and local educators alike saw the mandate as an antidote to a "decrease in statewide test scores . . . " and a way to bolster Iowa's reputation as "the best in the nation" in education. This central issue was a matter of state pride and identity. As one interviewee put it: "Education is our Mt. Rushmore . . . we are very proud of education." Others saw the legislation primarily in terms of holding schools and teachers accountable. The "reason given to the public was that we need to hold teachers accountable," according to one legislator. Others pushed the idea further and presumed that this accountability might have been a veil to take action against education because "schools had something to hide," and that educators are spoiled and needed a wake-up call. Besides, at the very least, it would be healthy for schools if scores could be compared across the state.

Community involvement. The intent, some state-level interviewees thought, was to stimulate community activity around the schools, "where the grass roots stimulate growth," and involvement, it was predicted, would increase communication, which in turn would increase community interest and therefore stimulate both school improvement as well as the time-honored tradition of local control. In short, ". . .the thinking was only that 'we need more information'" to effect improvement.

Efficiency and Federal pressure. The intent according to this view was to consolidate reporting requirements for local schools, In the view of a top DE official, 2272 was to simplify the reporting procedures, "so if this is a federal requirement, then we roll it into the state requirement so that the school districts aren't trying to respond to two different masters." Others focused more on the perception that the Federal government was forcing reporting of standardized scores and that this was simply Iowa's response.

Politics. Education, according to both state and local interviewees, had become highly charged politically, first in the sense that legislators wanted to show that they were doing something about bolstering an important Iowa value. This was interpreted at both the state and the local level as using education to garner votes. Second, some saw 2272 as a way of reigning in teachers who had become too powerful politically. Third, accountability also was seen as political cover for doing indirectly what they did not dare to do directly, consolidate small schools. The latter was not voiced by the largest districts, but of great concern to others.

A Guide for Schools. A local perception of the legislation was that it was intended by the legislature to be a guide to what was important for schools. According to a teacher, HF 2272 "in my mind was designed to set up 'here are the things we think are most important that a student should know.'" As a principal put it, 2272 was supposed to "actually drive instruction." On the other hand, for others it was decidedly unclear as to what was intended; as one person put it, "it was a fuzzy goal from the beginning."

Communication of Policy

Legislative intent was communicated through many channels both within and outside of educational networks, but the rules for implementing kept changing. Implementers spoke of having to "do, undo and redo" the requirements. A principal averred, "I think everybody was kind of flying blind." Even four years after 2272 was passed, uncertainty remained. "You think that you know all the rules of the game and then somebody just comes in and says here is one more thing that you are going to have to do . . . ." There was sympathy that the state officials were getting new rules from federal officials, but regardless of source, after four years there was a certain resignation about it all. A superintendent lamented: "just tell me what you want us to do and we'll do it...we're tired of redoing it."

Leadership

Leadership Prior to the Law. The active districts studied in this research were able to respond quickly to 2272 because they had been planning, studying, and implementing a variety of school improvement processes for several years, some for more than a decade. For some, planning and working together was just "how we've always done things here." In every district there were teacher school improvement study teams that had long ago simply become a "natural part of the district culture." As a principal summed up, " . . . we were beating the curve" on district planning and in implementing school improvement policies.

Leadership during Implementation. Whether it came from the central office, the principal's office, or through the actions of teacher-leaders, leadership was the central implementing activity in these active districts. "The leadership of that team, being the administrative staff, really put the plan together, put the pieces of it together" according to one local educator. The role of the central office, the superintendent, and curriculum director in particular served critical leadership and support roles. These leaders set the tone for improvement, developed and managed plans for implementation, set the expectations, encouraged and supported teachers and other administrators. They "stayed aware of upcoming trends," identified and gained access to services from outside the district (e.g., Area Education Agencies, Iowa School Board Association, private consultants), and wrote grants to secure increased resources for reading, math and science. The curriculum director in particular was the hands-on critical link in each of the districts, serving as interpreter, enforcer, and "chief communicator to and from the state regarding the implementation of this law."

As would be expected, principals and teachers were the foot soldiers for the reform with the principals being "the center of school improvement and the instructional leaders." Teacher leaders proved critical as "role models, [those] informal leaders among the faculty who... everybody knows... and everybody knows how important they are." A curriculum director talked about teacher leaders as "those who influenced the others" to help with improvement efforts, even when they had to "take the heat" for unpopular things that had to be done.

Future leadership. Even though local boards and local educators in this study were aligned with the accountability intent of 2272, they were wary of where 2272 was taking them in terms of state-local relationships. One concern was that the state made no attempt to distinguish between those districts that were out in front, active and leading the way in school improvement and those who had done little. An administrator summed up his frustration this way: "One school screws up so we make a rule for all schools . . .some things didn't have to be done." In the end, some reflected, there was a disincentive to take the lead in future efforts.

A second worry about this type of mandate was whether what was reported did in fact happen in some districts. Mandates can focus people, but as one superintendent put it, "the tough thing about state mandates is [getting the action all the way to the] classroom. [Mandates] don't create that mentality that says I believe in this. Just because you tell me I have to do it doesn't mean I am going to do it when you're not looking."

Finally, the state control that came with the mandate put into question the meaning of local leadership. For a superintendent, the meaning of leadership got unclear when "the state is telling you how to do your work . . . what room does it leave me to be dynamic?"

Community Participation in School Reform

The role of the community in making HF2272 effective evoked a clearly divided opinion between state and local officials. In fact this turned out to be the most pronounced area of disagreement between state policymakers and local educators. As indicated above, the state view was that the law would support local control: "There was . . . very strong support to say if schools are required to report student achievement the communities themselves will hold school districts accountable. The state does not need to go to a sanctions . . . mentality because the communities own the schools in Iowa (and they will do) the right thing . . . ." A legislator thought that 2272 would lead to more involvement of the community in student lives and "get that community pride back."

From a local perspective, this talk of local control from the state was "such a bunch of bologna." Most spoke of an excellent working relationship between schools and their communities, but they viewed reporting to the community as a matter of course, a public service done routinely and often through local newspapers, meetings, and over coffee more than "accountability" by the numbers and in a more formal sense. Beyond the accountability question, locals questioned the actual impact of the law on school-community relations. Most suggested that its main impact was to formalize the process, others saw that the short timelines and prescriptive nature of the law precluded engaging in their traditional collaborative efforts with their community.

Barriers to Implementation

Time. Interviewees spoke of different dimensions of time that were needed. One was time to learn. Implementation is a complex business that involves not only trying to understand what the policy was intended to do but to then translate that into the classroom and meaningful learning for students. Time was needed for everyone to understand the connection of the policy to "what they do in the classroom." Teachers "need to talk to others. . .who have actually made those changes and have seen progress and then they'll be more likely to give it a chance at least." Sometimes, a teacher observed, "you have to go slow to go fast."

Another meaning of time was that there was a very short implementation time-line. Collaboration and team building around a policy takes time, but for the sake of efficiency, staff had to be excluded in the implementation of this law: "One of the down sides I think is the process; I felt that we lost a little bit of our collaboration in the district because of the speed we had to implement. We lost a little input from our staff because we'd bring pre-established plans to our team, where in the past we'd build those together."

Time was a factor also in that the teachers who were taking a leadership role in implementation felt that it was taking them away from their primary duties as teachers. "People are teachers because they want to teach school, they want to look in somebody's eyes and teach them." But teaching time and implementation time came into direct competition and created a chronically hectic pace leading one teacher to lament that we can't "keep up this pace, to keep doing it without additional time." In response to this, districts often "found" time through hiring substitute teachers: "we did most of our standards and benchmarks through hiring subs and sitting down a day at a time and knocking stuff out." The problem with this approach, many pointed out, was that teachers still had to prepare the lessons, grade the papers and often review what the substitutes did before they could go forward.

Money. No matter how justified the state was in passing this legislation, having no extra funds to get the work done was seen by interviewees as a constraint to successful implementation. A board member complained: "it is another unfunded deal and you've got to kind of scramble to make it work." Part of the "scramble" was to write grants and redirect resources wherever possible, but some felt that the implicit perception among policymakers was that this kind of work was easy or that teachers need to work harder without additional pay. One educator put the relationship between money and 2272 this way: "they don't come up with the support, so I guess they don't care."

Broad Assessment of Impact on Local Districts and Schools

In the broadest terms, there was a general feeling that the intent of 2272 was good in that it provided a needed focus. As a curriculum director noted, "it made us get better at setting goals around academic areas" and "focus on raising student achievement." On the other hand, there were serious misgivings. A legislator suggested, "If ever there was a law that I would take back it would certainly be this one." Another added, "If I were to do one thing over . . . I'd try to get this bill stopped; just plain killed." The complaints focused on the prescriptive and in some aspects not well informed nature of the law in terms of what it measures of student learning. Similarly, a local superintendent thought that 2272 ". . . resulted in a major rewrite in a much more prescriptive chapter in Iowa code than we've seen in the past" and in his opinion it unfortunately required "the virtual adoption of ITBS." In the end, it spun off a number of unintended consequences.

Unintended Consequences

Local educators and board members described five consequences of 2272 that were likely unintended and in the eyes of many, undesirable as well.

High stakes tests. First, 2272 drove what many saw as the introduction of high stakes tests to Iowa. An administrator noted that it will "change the environment" from emphasis on broad learning "to learning specifically what is tested." The standardized tests are high stakes because "we are going to penalize and we are going to reward based on those assessments." In addition, because they are high stakes, much more time is being spent in the classrooms in getting ready for the tests.

Curriculum narrowed. There was wide agreement that the curriculum was being narrowed, though some disagreement as to the extent to which this was a good thing or a bad thing. One teacher expressed a not uncommon view that the focus was helping her "to do a better job of teaching." On the other hand, teachers and administrators felt that more focus came at the expense of an interpretation that the scores in core areas come to stand for what schools were about. A curriculum director reported that "we have three goals in the district: becoming better citizens, active parent engagement, and improving student academic achievement in the right areas. When we report to the board or our community, the first two they really don't care about because I can't put numbers with them."

Increasingly centralized decision-making at the local level. Curriculum directors readily admitted that 2272 centralized decision-making within the district. Speaking of her increased power one director said: "it never hurts to say 'hey, the state is making us do this. It's good to be able to say 'well, you know, next year the state's going to come in and see if we are doing anything." Another curriculum director averred that yes, "I use the state sometimes; when they put it into legislation it gave a lot more teeth for me." Often the curriculum directors became in large measure the official interpreters of the requirements that put these directors in a position of increased power. Decisions that had been made in classrooms and in individual buildings were now made in curriculum director offices, clearly a move with implications for teacher decision-making.

Paperwork, personal burdens, and questions of trust. "It's a good thing I like to write, because I do a lot of it." Paperwork was an acknowledged necessity, but teachers and administrators spoke of how the paperwork put an endless burden on their personal and professional lives. "Legislators don't realize how far this stuff reaches into people's personal lives" with little reward or expectation that the paperwork will decrease. The day-to-day job for those teachers who had joined the school improvement teams felt like the emphasis had shifted to paperwork and away from teaching, more time on the job and less time for their families, and a clear signal from the state capitol that policymakers were losing confidence that teachers would or could do the right thing for Iowa's children.

"The school down the road" actually may not be doing what they are portraying to their communities and the state. Interviewees worried that some districts--always those "down the road"--may have been less than totally forthright in reporting to the state and their communities, with neither the wiser. A teacher felt that "you can tell our state [anything], but is it actually getting done?" She felt that the state would never know. An administrator said that one district "took our plan word for word. They put zero [into the plan] and [the Department of Education] got the same plan. Nothing ever came about from that, so I think they have pulled off one of biggest charades in the state." Some expressed a lack of confidence that in the end the state could enforce its own law.

Conclusions

Mixed messages of intent

The legislation meant many things to both those who passed it and those who had to implement it. But legislative intent was gradually defined as rules and regulations rolled out, a process that continued with some confusion even after four years. Getting into compliance may be described as akin to a pinball game, as the evolving rules for implementation ricocheted off of first one then another district, bouncing back to the Department of Education for approval, back to the districts, and so on. This clearly irritated many in the field as they felt that they were being asked to do something that no one really understood. Having to "do, undo, and redo" through multiple iterations led to a feeling of frustration, exasperation, and a sense that sometimes it was just a paper game. In short, it was felt that clarity of policy expectations would have not only provided the target but also precluded the worst of the endless trial and error of implementation.

Policymakers took no visible responsibility for how 2272 was actually supposed to work

Effective policymaking has to include knowing how things work in practice, understanding causation sufficiently to know that if an education action is taken (in this case state policy) that there is at least a reasoned probability that the desired results will occur in schools and classrooms (Johnston & Liggett, 1991). Policymakers seemed to think that one of two things would work as a "theories of action" (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Massell, 2001). Either reporting to communities would stimulate communities to make their schools better, or added requirements would improve schools by forcing small schools to consolidate. From the local view, the first "theory" was fantasy and the second a case of chicken politics. Interviewees were clear that the policy as designed could have at best a vague relationship with policy intent (since that was vague in itself) and that it only worked at all because the implementers made it work. Repeatedly we heard the refrain "come talk to us" if the policy goal is genuinely school improvement.

The study of an effective theory of action is beyond the scope of this paper, but the actions of legislators on 2272 bear out what Cohen and Hill (2001, p. viii) make clear from their large-scale study of education reform in California. Few policymakers, they said, make any serious effort "to bring evidence and analysis to bear . . ." and most were not well informed "about the effects of their endeavors; they made no attempt to learn systematically about how the reforms played out in schools and classrooms" (p.187). In his studies of reform efforts in other states, Elmore (2002, p.3) also found this a common phenomenon: "state policies set expected levels of improvement in schools without any evidence or theory about how schools actually respond to external pressure." For policymakers everywhere "a failure in implementation is always the fault of the implementers, not a problem with the policy design" (DeSoto 2000, p. 199). Ever since education was enticed or forced off the sacred ground of being 'above politics,' "the problem of who is actually responsible for student failure has become deeply politicized" (Elmore 2002, p. 9). Results from this study were no exception. Local educators portrayed their implementation efforts much in the way Michael Lipsky described "street-level bureaucrats" as foot soldiers to state policymakers and to a large extent captives of the conditions that enmesh their work efforts. While bureaucratic foot soldiers may be immune to various forms of command and control, there is little they themselves can accomplish without the aid of facilitating steps by their superiors" (Stone 1985, p. 488).

This Iowa-based research, involving policymakers at the state level and educators in seventeen of the states' most active school improvement sites, has documented how things seemed four years after 2272 was passed and has reached conclusions about how they might have been done differently for greater effect. As a way of focusing the importance of this conclusion, this research suggests that legislators earned two grades: First, an A for intent (as that came to be interpreted). Everyone agreed on the importance of accountability. Sirotnik (2002) is of the opinion, however, that politicians and policymakers should not be left off the hook quite so easily. There is, he says, a "gap between what politicians and policymakers say they want for public education and the actual mustering of will, commitment, and resources necessary to do something authentic about it" (p. 671). For the second part of the conclusion, their part in policy design and support, state policymakers get a grade of D.

Initiating and Supporting Change

Deep, long-term, and meaningful school improvement is complex. A policy that proposes to bring about such results, according to the interviewees, needs to be attentive to the following practical concerns.

Professional development required for long-term improvement. The research literature across other states emphatically supports the contentions of Iowa teachers and administrators regarding the importance of professional development for teachers. McLaughlin (1998) affirmed from decades of research on policy implementation that "bureaucracies have to work through professional communities" to effect deep change. Teachers must have the "opportunity to talk together, understand each others' practice, and move as a community to visions of practice. If teachers are not learning together, reflecting together, examining student work together, changes in governmental structures. . .will likely mean little in terms of student outcomes" (p. 81). Cohen and Hill called this focus on professional development the central finding of their ten-year study. There were instances of success in policy implementation, they said, " but only when teachers had significant opportunities to learn. . . ." (2001, p.2).

Change is not cheap. If money is not available to carry out improvement efforts, at least that should be acknowledged and accountability adjusted accordingly. As Elmore asked: "are schools nevertheless accountable for their performance if neither they nor anyone else has the resources and other support to meet the accountability standard?" (2002, p. 28).

Time. Administrator time, teacher time, and timelines that are realistic in terms of the complexity of the task are essential. Bay et al. (1999, p. 504) emphasized that it is important for administrators to learn more about the importance of their support for teacher learning. This was a conceptual issue as well as an administrative issue for school administrators, but they also needed to understand that their attitude "had an enormous impact on teachers' continued efforts. . . ." More than a decade earlier Crandall (1986) had reached a similar conclusion about teacher and administrative time to learn. Without meaningful time, real improvement was little more than whimsy. Deep change takes time, perhaps five to ten years. This is not a politician's timeframe, but a timeframe that is required for beyond-compliance change in practice.

Multiple assessments are best developed with broad support. While HF 2272 requires districts to use multiple measures of assessments, many local educators did not have the vital resources or technical adequacy to develop such measures. Even the more resource-rich districts were finding such work difficult. All districts in this study used standardized testing (primarily ITBS and ITEDS), which interviewees reported had become not *a* measure among several, but *the* measure of accountability in most peoples' minds. Quite simply, local educators saw the already developed standardized tests as the de facto accountability measure for Iowa. These de facto "Iowa tests" along with other requirements of 2272 were having an effect as seen by Sirotnik, "namely the narrowing of what gets emphasized and how it gets emphasized . . . .[to] only the subjects tested. . ." (2002, p. 665). From all accounts across Iowa, scores stand out in neon as the measure of a school's merit.

A flexible policy is difficult to write but Iowa educators in active districts are willing to help design such a policy

A question posed repeatedly by interviewees was why, if a district had a history of school improvement and was well along in those efforts, it needed to conform to the same rules and regulations as those applied to districts which had done little to advance school improvement. In fact, the active districts selected for this research already had moved well along their own paths in implementing school improvement prior to 2272, and though they had to change most or all of their processes, they were in philosophical agreement with the emphasis on academic achievement. Many of these active districts even found that HF2272 provided a policy hammer when needed to persuade their schools to stronger action in moving their own agenda forward, "actively orchestrating state policies around local objectives. . . ." (Fuhrman et al., 1991, p. 209). But the law would have been more effective, at least in the eyes of these leaders from active districts, if it had set a goal to be achieved rather than regulations to be followed.

In sum, active districts had learned to improve by improving (Astuto and Clark, 1986, p. 60), and though these districts were most likely to succeed in implementing state policy, they were also less in need of it. In contrast, ". . .schools that have a weak instructional core. . .tend to respond by "gaming" the system" (Elmore 2002, p. 19). It seemed reasonable to Iowa educators that state policy should spotlight and assist those districts whose efforts were less satisfactory, perhaps who were even gaming the system, and honor and learn from those who had been historically active in school improvement.

References

Astuto, T. A., & Clark, D. L. (1986). Achieving effective schools. In E. Hoyle & A. McMahon (Eds.), *World Yearbook of Education: The Management of Schools* (pp, 57-72). New York: Nichols Publishing Co.

Argyris, C., & Schon, D. A. (1974). *Theory in practice.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Bardach, E. (1977). *The implementation game: What happens after a bill becomes a law.* Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Bay, J. M., Reys, R. J., & Reys, R. E. (1999). The top ten elements that must be in place to implement standards-based mathematics curricula. *Phi Delta Kappan, 80*(7), 503-506.

Charmaz, K. (2002). Qualitative interviewing and grounded theory analysis. In J. Gubrium & J. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of Interview Research: Context & Method* (pp. 675-694). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Cohen, D., & Hill, H. (2001). *Learning policy: When education reform works.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Crandall, D., Eiseman, J., & Louis, K. S. (1986). Strategic planning issues that bear on the success of school improvement efforts. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 22*(3), 21-53.

Creswell, J. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative and quantitative approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

DeSoto, H. (2000). *The mystery of capital: Why capitalism triumphs in the west and fails everywhere else.* New York: Basic Books.

Elmore, R. (2002). *The problem of stakes in performance-based accountability systems.* Paper presentation at American Educational Research Association annual meeting. New Orleans, LA (April, 2002).

Fuhrman, S. (1991). Research on education reform: Lessons on the implementation of policy. In A. Odden (Ed.), *Education Policy Implementation* (pp. 197-218). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of ground theory: Strategies for qualitative research.* Chicago: Aldine.

Glesne, C. (1999). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction (2nd ed.).* New York: Addison Wesley Longman.

Hafernik, J., Messerchmitt, D., & Vandrick, S. (1997), Collaborative research: Why and how? *Educational Researcher, 26*(9), 31-35.

House File 2272, 77th Iowa General Assembly, (1998). *An act requiring the state board of education to adopt rules relating to the incorporation of accountability for student achievement into the education standards and accreditation process.*

Johnston, A. P., & Liggett, A. M. (1991). Linking policy and governance through planning. In R. Carlson & G. Awkerman (Eds.), *Educational planning: Concepts, strategies, and practices.* (pp. 109-123). New York: Longman.

Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (1999). *Designing qualitative research (3rd ed.).* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

McLaughlin, M. W. (1998). Listening and learning from the field: Tales of policy implementation and situated practice. In A. Hargraves, et.al. (Ed.), *International Handbook of Educational Change*, (pp. 70-84). Great Britain: Kluwer Publishers.

Massell, D. (2001). The theory and practice of using data to build capacity: State and local strategies and their effects. In Fuhrman, S.H. (Ed.). From the capitol to the classroom: Standards-based reform in the states (pp. 148-169). NSSE 100th Yearbook. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Miles, M., & Huberman, A. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook (2nd ed.).* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Odden, A. (1991). *Education policy implementation.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Odendahl, T., & Shaw, A. M. (2002). Interviewing elites. In J. Gubrium & J. Holstein (Eds.) , *Handbook of interview research: Context & method* (pp. 299-316). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Patton, M. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods (2nd ed.).* Newbury Park: Sage.

Rubin, H., & Rubin, I. (1996). *Qualitative Interviewing: The art of hearing data.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences (2nd ed.).* New York: Teachers College Press.

Sirotnik, K. A. (2002). Promoting responsible accountability in schools and education. *Phi Delta Kappan, 9*(82), 662-671.

Stone, C. (1985). Efficiency versus social learning: A reconsideration of the implementation process. *Policy Studies Review, 8*(3), 484-496.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory (2nd ed.).* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Maintaining or delegating authority? Contradictory policy messages and the prospects c school-based management to promote school autonomy

Adam E. Nir

Background

Because of its assumed contribution to improving educational outcomes and school effectiveness, the decentralization of educational systems is among the main restructuring initiatives in western democracies. However, decentralization policies initiated in centralized educational systems often fail to produce significant changes because of the magnitude of alterations required (Brown, 1990). One major problem involves the shift of power to lower levels of the educational hierarchy (Robertson, Wohlstetter, & Albers-Mohrman, 1995). This problem may be better understood by considering that central government officials often 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 (Weiler, 1990; Bray, 1985). This argument applies especially to countries that traditionally have featured a centralized structure of governance, in which civil service officials located in different divisions of the Ministry of Education are involved in the initiation, planning, and implementation of policy plans (Elboin-Dror, 1985) and maintain direct influence over schools.

As the number of voices calling for the decentralization of educational systems is growing, however, the pressure on policy makers to decentralize school systems is constantly increasing. Therefore, policy makers often tend to "hyperrationalize" (Wise, 1983) when initiating decentralization policies. This means that they tend to appear to be sharing authority without, in fact, surrendering authority to subordinate echelons.

Considering the limited scope of changes that the Israeli decentralization initiative proposes to introduce, the following study explores how echelons located at different hierarchical levels view the prospects of a school based management plan implemented in a centralized educational system to significantly alter schools' autonomy.

School-Based Management

School-based management (SBM) is one of the most prominent expressions of the current tendency to decentralize educational systems around the world (Sackney & Dibski, 1994). Simply stated, SBM refers to the increase of authority at the school site (Clune & White, 1988), emphasizing maximum delegation of decision-making power to the school within a centrally coordinated framework (Boyd, 1990, p. 90). SBM intends to extend the autonomy of schools that traditionally have operated in a centralized structure. Therefore, it typically involves a top-down delegation of authority, from policy makers to schools. The main assertion of SBM is that by increasing schools' authority and flexibility, schools' effectiveness will increase. This argument may be explained by considering that decentralized structures are assumed to encourage greater sensitivity to local needs (Brown, 1990) and operate more efficiently and rapidly in comparison to the commonly described slow and cumbersome centralized structures (Hanson, 1984, p. 123). However, in spite of many theoretical claims that argue for the potential contribution of decentralization and autonomy for school effectiveness, the empirical evidence investigating the link between SBM and school performance and internal dynamics is rather scarce (Summers & Johnson, 1994; Davies & Hentschke, 1994) and mixed (Caldwell, 2003; Nir, 2002a; 2002b; Firestone & Pennell, 1993). The available empirical evidence suggests that SBM does not guarantee school improvement (Malen, Ogawa & Kranz, 1990), especially when expectations regarding the connection between self-management and academic performance are not spelled out (Caldwell, 2003). While some studies have shown that schools with SBM do not look much different from schools that do not have SBM (Glickman, 1990) and that school personnel continue to behave as they did under the previous structure (Sackney & Dibski, 1994), other evidence coming from the English education system shows some improvement in children's performance over time (Levacic, 2003).

SBM is heavily determined by the context within which schools operate (Murphy & Beck, 1995, p.7). Therefore, educators' support in SBM policy plan may be viewed as important in determining SBM's possible contribution to school effectiveness and autonomy. Lack of support among senior officials may lead to the articulation of a rather conservative SBM policy plan and could end up being numerous "branch plants" (Calvert, 1989; Ball, 1990) that may hardly produce a significant change in the structure of the educational system and in the amount of authority delegated to schools.

The Introduction of SBM in the Israeli Educational System

With the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, one of the main challenges that faced the Israeli government was the need to integrate society and to build a nation out of an assortment of multicultural and ethnic groups of immigrants. The ethos of equality and unity was a main driving force that guided the initial absorption policies, which were aimed at diminishing the differences among immigrants and between the immigrants and the Israeli-born and ensuring social, political, cultural, and economic mobility for all. Therefore, since idependence, centralization was used because of its assumed potential effectiveness in ensuring equal distribution of educational services according to unified standards and its potential to satisfy a large variety of needs. A Minister of Education was appointed and educational policies were set by the central office located in Jerusalem and run by a political Minister and a Director General.

Since the 1970s, however, the highly centralized Israeli educational system has undergone a process of decentralization. The move towards decentralization was initiated because Israeli educators have long recognized the negative pedagogical effect of strong centralization, curriculum uniformity, and the fragmented nature of the system (Vollansky & Bar-Elli, 1995) and because all the other control mechanisms have failed (Gaziel & Romm, 1988).

In 1992, following an initiative of the Policy Planning Division of the Ministry of Education (which took responsibility later on for the implementation of SBM), 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 carried out during the 70s and the 80s ended with no significant changes in schools' autonomy or in the influence exerted by the Ministry of Education over schools.

The committee recommended introducing SBM in the Israeli educational system based on a set of guidelines:

1. Schools will develop a clear definition of focused goals.
2. Schools will develop a clear work plan that corresponds with their defined goals.
3. Schools will use and implement extensive monitoring and assessment methods.
4. Schools will be granted full independence in using their budget.
5. Schools' authority with respect to personnel matters will be broadened.
6. There will be a governing body for each school (recommendations 5 and 6 were postponed) (The Ministry of Education, 1993).

Based on the recommendations of the steering committee, a first step toward the implementation of SBM in the Israeli educational system involved an experiment conducted in the1995-96 academic year, which was expended in 2001 to over 40 Israeli cities (Volansky, 2003, p. 225).

Although the values inherent in SBM promote expectations of significant change in the Israeli educational system and the authority delegated to schools, a careful analysis of the plan reveals that the structural changes that SBM policy proposes introducing are relatively minor. Table 1 summarizes the major changes caused by SBM following the recommendations of the steering committee:

Table 1
Structural changes following SBM

Issues Restructured	Issues Maintained
1. Schools are budgeted per capita. 2. Schools are entitled to allocate budgets from private sector sources. 3. Schools are granted greater flexibility with respect to the use of funds. 4. The budget for supervision instruction purposes is allocated to schools rather than to the districts.	1. Zoning. 2. The basket of services for disadvantaged pupils. 3. The superintendent's role and the structure and tasks of the supervision system. 4. Central examinations of pupils' proficiency in elementary schools and central matriculation examinations in high schools. 5. Central control over personnel, including hiring, dismissal, and salaries (teachers and principals). 6. A binding national curriculum. 7. Education laws and regulations. 8. Collective labor agreements. 9. The number of weekly class hours and length of the school day. 10. The magnitude of parents' influence over the curriculum.

As Table 1 indicates, the number of changes introduced by SBM policy is limited both with respect to the magnitude of issues and the extent of authority delegated to the school level for decision making. Authority appeared to be most devolved in the area of budgeting and most limited in crucial areas such as curriculum, instruction, and personnel. Similar characteristics of SBM were found and reported in a study conducted by Wohlstetter & Odden (1992).

Although SBM has potential to create a revolution when introduced in centralized structures, the structural changes proposed by SBM in the Israeli educational system indicate a rather conservative move, which may indicate for the existing conflict between those wanting to change the schooling system and those who wish to maintain a status qua (Volansky, 2003, p. 230). It may be argued that the plan exhibits a discrepancy between the declared purposes of SBM regarding school autonomy and flexibility and the limited structural changes that it proposes to introduce. This discrepancy and the fact that the central authority that initiates SBM in centralized educational systems can withdraw powers merely by making an official announcement (Bray, 1985) may create doubts among subordinate echelons regarding policy makers' intentions and the prospects of SBM to actually increase school autonomy.

Hence, in considering the rather conservative SBM plan and the failure of past-centralized attempts to decentralize the Israeli educational system, this study attempts to assess to what extent a conservative SBM policy plan may potentially alter school autonomy when introduced in a centralized educational system. Specifically, the following study addresses two major questions:

1. Why are changes proposed by the Israeli SBM plan minor and the plan conservative?
2. How do subordinate echelons appraise the prospects of SBM to significantly alter schools' autonomy?

Data collection

Interviews were chosen as the major data collection method to enable large amounts of data about interviewees' perspectives to be collected relatively quickly and the immediate follow-up and clarification of equivocal issues to be accomplished (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). The interviews lasting from 60 to 90 minutes were conducted during 2001 academic year with ten school principals and ten district-level superintendents, who work in schools that implemented SBM over the last three years and with ten senior officials who work at the Ministry of Education.

In-depth open interviews were structured around a set of key issues that the literature identified as related to SBM, with particular emphasis on the qualities of the SBM plan introduced in the Israeli educational system. The use of an open-interview strategy enabled better exposure of personal perspectives of the interviewees (Paton, 1990) and of their deeper thoughts, emotions, and ambitions (Bromley, 1986). This less structured approach allowed the interviews to be much more like conversations than formal events with predetermined response categories, permitting the respondents' views to unfold, rather than the predisposition of the researcher (Marshall & Rossman, 1997, p. 80). All interviews were recorded with the interviewees' permission to ensure better accuracy (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). Later on, the recorded interviews were transcribed onto computerized text files, which eventually formed the data set.

Data analysis

Using the perspective of Marshall and Rossman (1997), who see qualitative data analysis "as a search for general statements among categories of data" (p. 111), and the procedures outlined by Marton (1988) and Forster (1994), comments were brought together on the basis of their similarities into categories that differed from one another in terms of the subject matter and meaning, which each category represented. The central themes in the interviewees' perspectives were captured, thus, by the analysis (Luborsky, 1994). To enhance the validity of the data categorization and of the interpretations, peer review and structured analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Reissman, 1993) were employed along with triangulation of data coming from principals and superintendents and, in some cases, senior officials at the Ministry of Education.

The data obtained from the interviews were analyzed and presented in two sequential stages: First, in light of the relatively conservative nature of the SBM plan, data coming from senior Ministry of Education officials were analyzed to enable better understanding of the motives and intentions of policy makers embedded in SBM. Second, data coming from school principals and district-level superintendents were analyzed to assess their view of SBM and prospects to significantly alter school autonomy.

Results

A major concern of the current study was to understand why the Israeli SBM plan is rather conservative and how it is perceived by subordinate echelons as a means to significantly alter school autonomy. Therefore, to answer the first research question, senior officials' view of SBM was studied to provide insight into the circumstances existing at the Israeli Ministry of Education in terms of central office units' support in SBM.

The interview data coming from senior officials at the Ministry of Education reflected the thought that the rather conservative nature of the SBM plan implemented in the Israeli educational system was not accidental. It was evident that the characteristics of the plan were an outgrowth of the disagreement existing in the Ministry of Education regarding SBM and the decentralization policy: [quotes are indented and in italics for ease of reading]

> *I fear that the delegation of authority to school principals will undermine our efforts to improve the educational system.*

On the other hand, several senior officials supported SBM either because they identified with SBM ideology or because they doubted the efficiency of central control over schools:

> *If we do not believe in our school principals and do not give them the power, we will never reach a stage in which they will consider themselves fully accountable for what is happening in their school.*

However, even senior officials responsible for the planning and implementation of the SBM policy were aware of the difficulties that a radical SBM plan was likely to create:

> *The full implementation of the ideas that school-based management intends to promote requires some major changes, which are difficult if not impossible to make. Although I personally believe that implementing SBM is the right thing, there are many people at the head office who object to the idea even now, when they see that the plan being introduced is rather conservative.*

According to head office officials, there are three intertwined sources of resistance that may account for the conservatism characterizing the SBM plan introduced in the Israeli centralized educational system. One source of resistance related to the tendency to maintain the status quo among the Ministry of Education units. In considering that SBM involves redistribution of authority and resources, this source of resistance is related to senior officials' fear of losing their influence at the head office.

> *Many senior officials at the head office are constantly under the impression that they have to resist SBM because it will harm their influence and power and decrease their ability to promote their interests at the head office.*

A second source of resistance involves the desire to maintain central control over schools. This source of resistance refers to senior officials' inclination to control schools and desire to stay in control:

> *What frightens me about SBM is not giving away authority and surrendering control. It is all about giving away my ability to check that schools are performing as they should.*

Finally, a third source of resistance to SBM involves senior officials' lack of trust in the professional conduct of subordinate echelons. Lack of trust is expressed when senior officials refer to school principals:

> *It is not a question of having faith in school principals. I hear about many principals who are doing a wonderful job, but all the information I have is based on rumors. I don't have any science-based information to support these rumors. And then, on the other hand, there are rumors about less proficient principals.*

Lack of trust is expressed also when senior officials refer to the municipalities:

> *There is an ongoing struggle between the head office and the districts on issues that involve control and power, which will never come to an end. The municipalities are interested to introduce SBM because they receive more funds from the Ministry of Education. However, we don't have the means to make sure that all the money that is being transferred to the municipalities actually reaches schools. It is possible that some of the money is used for other purposes. We cannot control it.*

The fears and resistance that SBM provokes and the ambivalence characterizing senior officials' attitudes towards it may explain the conservative SBM plan in terms of magnitude of changes that it proposes to introduce.

An additional consequence of this ambivalence, however, is evident in the contradictory policy messages coming from the Ministry of Education:

> *You can ask ten different people at the head office what do they mean by increasing school autonomy, and you will get ten different and contradicting definitions.*

One example that exhibits the contradictory policy messages involves the direct allocation of supervision instruction resources to schools:

> *It was decided that SBM schools will receive supervision instruction resources according to a predetermined formula, and principals will be entitled to do what they consider to be most beneficial for their school with these resources. Then, there was a problem with achievements*

> *in math, and the Ministry of Education instructed schools to allot part of these resources for the instruction of math teachers. So, on the one hand we tell school principals that they are free to do with these resources what they consider to be best for their schools, and, on the other hand, we force them to use these resources for a particular purpose, even if their schools have different needs."*

Hence, the interview data coming from the Ministry of Education points out the large number of obstacles and contradictory motivations that planners had to consider prior to implementation and may also explain the conservative SBM policy plan that was eventually implemented in the Israeli educational system. Although this policy argues for the promotion of school authority and autonomy, it ensures at the same time central control over most educational issues. This tension between releasing and maintaining central authority over schools and the tendency of central officials to stay in control, which characterizes the current decentralization initiative, resembles past central initiatives, which failed to alter significantly Israeli schools' autonomy.

Subordinate Echelons

Compared to previous centrally-initiated decentralization initiatives introduced in the Israeli educational system, SBM is a much more comprehensive restructuring initiative since it is being implemented nationwide. However, the magnitude of SBM is not considered by school principals and district-level superintendents as an indication for the seriousness of the Ministry of Education intentions to increase school autonomy.

Rather, although the interviewees sympathized with the theoretical ideas that SBM intends to advance, they considered SBM to be a manipulation intended to decrease central office responsibility by delegating authority to schools and increasing school-level accountability and effectiveness:

> *The most important advantage of SBM is that a school can determine its agenda and allocate its resources according to its needs. However, now I have to do all the work that was previously done by the municipality. I was selected to be a pedagogical leader and because of SBM, I have now become an administrator. Because of the regulations, I have very little flexibility and after I pay all the bills, there is very little money left. If this is what SBM is all about then I would be better off without it as long as I have enough pedagogical independence.*

A similar argument was stated by another school principal:

> *If you ask my opinion, SBM was introduced to enable the educational system to decrease its expenditure. The idea is a very simple one: The Ministry of Education allots a budget to the schools and from that moment on, they have to manage on their own. For example, a couple of years ago, the central heating system in my school broke down and could not be repaired. At that time we hadn't yet introduced SBM into the school, and after the parents wrote a letter to the municipality, they came two weeks later and replaced it. Last year, there was again a problem with the heating system, and I called the municipality and asked them to come over and fix it. They said to me: Now you are a SBM school. Deal with it yourself.*

Superintendents raise similar claims:

> *Today, everyone speaks about autonomy, but I believe that there are many hidden interests behind these messages. I know that the Finance Ministry agreed to go along with SBM not because of educational considerations but, rather, because of financial ones. However, I expect my office, the Ministry of Education, to present uniform messages regarding SBM and not various contradictory ones.*

And indeed, when school principals and district-level superintendents were asked to express their opinions regarding SBM, the main theme that repeated itself in the interviews was their mistrust and suspicion. The reasons for this may be grouped into three main categories:

One reason involves a sense of deception. This claim was raised in particular by school principals after realizing that the SBM policy plan proposes introducing only minor changes in school autonomy, yet, at the same time, to increase school effectiveness, educators' accountability and school principals' administrative workload:

> *After closely studying the [SBM] plan, I came to the conclusion that SBM is actually a conspiracy of the establishment and that both the Ministry of Education and the municipalities are part of it. The mechanism is rather a simple one: They [Ministry of Education] say that they give us autonomy. They wrap it nicely by calling it SBM, school autonomy and so forth, and then they actually place all responsibility on school principals' shoulders. Now, if there is some problem in school, they can come to us and say – well, you had the autonomy and could have done things differently. Why didn't you? You are fully responsible for things that happened in your school, so convince us that you used this autonomy the best way you could.*

Superintendents share a similar notion although for different reasons:

> *The educational system following SBM is more centralized than ever. Although the system provides the resources, in most cases, you are forced to act in accordance with central policies, standards, norms and guidelines, limiting the number of allowed modes of operation. Before SBM, I think that we could more freely incorporate pedagogical initiatives that were not directly related to the goals articulated by the Ministry of Education. Although I can see some benefits in these centralized goals, the bottom line is that almost nothing is left for our professional consideration.*

A second reason for the mistrust and suspicion are the contradictory policy messages coming from the Ministry of Education head office. One of the major issues raised by school principals involved the possible contradiction between SBM and social equality:

> *Israeli education has always emphasized equality. Therefore, I expected the Ministry of Education to seriously consider this issue before initiating a new policy such as SBM. However, this is not the case. There is no differentiation in the allocation of SBM resources to schools based on the economic strength of their students. All SBM schools, rich or poor, get money according to the same formula although the basket of services for disadvantaged pupils remained unchanged. We are allowed to charge more money from parents [i.e. for extra-curricular activities], but in my case, this is not an option because the parents of our children are so poor that they can't afford to pay any more. So, eventually, rich schools will become richer and poor schools – poorer. And, what about social equality?*

One of the superintendents raised a similar argument:

> *When the number of children that enroll to a particular school decreases, principals often find themselves in distress because their school budget decreases as well. Nobody thought about that when SBM was initiated. So, what happens in smaller schools or in schools in which parents cannot afford to pay for the extra curricular activities? The children of these schools pay the price.*

Another issue that exhibits contradictory messages involves the contradiction between various regulations initiated by different Ministry of Education units:

> *This year we received a budget from the Ministry of Education for supervision instruction purposes that enables us to hire an instructor for one day per week. Since this is hardly enough, we consulted a senior official who told us to cancel a number of lessons and use the hours for supervision instruction purposes. Needless to say, this is against Ministry of Education regulations but that seemed like the only way. Last week, I met with some of my principal colleagues and we all joked that the next principals' forum will probably take place in some nearby prison.*

Finally, superintendents raised the problem of the contradictory messages related to the issue of controlling schools. The problem of controlling schools may be understood by considering that the superintendents' formal role definition was never changed following the introduction of SBM in the school system. Hence, superintendents complain that they are constantly exposed to a conflict between controlling schools according to central regulations and permitting schools to conduct educational processes in accordance with local needs:

> *If senior Ministry of Education officials consider superintendents as the eyes and the ears of the central office in schools and at the same time do everything to by-pass the superintendents, our ability to supervise schools weakens. So now, following SBM, we experience embarrassing situations when on the one hand we are instructed to allow schools to act in accordance with their agenda and, at the same time, to make sure that they perform in accordance with central regulations. So, we find ourselves in a constant conflict.*

A third reason for mistrust and suspicion is the apparent transparency in the allocation of resources to schools. Although a major argument in favor of SBM is that it promotes transparency in the allocation of resources to schools, both school principals and superintendents argue that, in reality, this assumption fails to actualize:

> *We are supposed to get the exact figures of our budget in August [just before the beginning of the school year in September]. In practice, however, we get them in December. I hire and sign contracts with instructors, consultants, and others during the summer and in December I find myself in a situation in which I have to fire them because I never get the amount of money, which was promised to me. So I ask, what kind of self management is it if I can never plan ahead?*

Moreover, principals argued that the budget is not distributed equally among schools but rather according to Ministry of Education interests:

> *If they [the Ministry of Education] think that a particular school promotes a specific method, which the Ministry of Education approves or is interested to advance, they will allocate more resources to this school. They always advance schools that conduct educational process in accordance with their policy.*

One of the main obstacles in creating transparency in the allocation of budgets is related to the fact that the money is not transferred directly to schools, but rather to the municipalities. This is done because of judicial regulations, which prevent the transfer of public money directly to schools:

> *The municipalities get the money for schools from the Ministry of Education, and I hope that they actually transfer all of it to schools. Why do I use the wording 'I hope'? Because there is no way of telling what percent of the total budget actually reaches schools. Officials at the Ministry of Education know how much money they transfer to each municipality for educational purposes, but they don't have the means to control and monitor it. In considering that most municipalities in Israel are in a rather difficult financial situation, I am quite sure that they use some of this money for purposes other than education.*

The ambiguity in the distribution of financial resources to schools and the decrease in the school budgets have led many school principals to consider SBM as part of a long-range policy intended to cut down educational expenses:

> *Four years ago, when SBM was introduced in our school, we received NIS 780 per child. However, for the past three years, we have received only NIS 720 per child--about 8% less. So, in spite of the inflation and the devaluation of Israeli currency and the rise in the cost of living, you get less and less and, eventually, your pedagogical options decrease.*

Hence, although the SBM plan implemented in the Israeli educational system intends to increase schools' financial autonomy, it is evident that in practice, there are many obstacles that prevent a smooth transfer of resources to schools. School principals are expected to run their school budgets more efficiently after introducing SBM, although they continue to operate under a heavy cloud of ambiguity, similar to the one that existed before SBM was implemented.

Promoting School Autonomy through SBM

Finally, school principals and district-level superintendents were asked to reflect on the prospects of SBM in its current form to significantly alter school autonomy. Most of them favored the theoretical ideas that decentralization emphasizes. They all shared serious doubts whether a restructuring initiative of such magnitude, however, would significantly alter school autonomy:

> *In theory, SBM is great. It suggests promoting schools' autonomy and flexibility, which are extremely important when dealing with a diversity of needs and expectations. In practice, however, SBM increased the expectations for efficiency and increased educational outcomes, yet, at the same time, it never provided us the authority and flexibility. I am sure that in ten years the educational system will not look much different and that we will still be dependent on the Ministry of Education for every move we make.*

Many of the interviewees argued that SBM is doomed to fail, as did previous decentralization initiatives, because of the strong centralized structure of the Israeli administration and the lack of preparedness of senior officials to surrender their authority to subordinated echelons:

> *When I reflect on SBM and on the many decentralization attempts that have been initiated in the last thirty years, I come to the conclusion that decentralization may not be applicable in the Israeli educational context. Although these initiatives were always centrally initiated, I think that they were made because politicians were interested in promoting new age ideas, which civil service senior officials never approved. So, eventually, SBM will become a bird without wings that can run from one place to another but can never fly high.*

Discussion

The decentralization of highly centralized educational systems is a second-order type of restructuring initiative (Watzlawick, Weakland, & Fisch, 1979). Therefore, it cannot actualize or significantly alter school autonomy, if planned and implemented as a rather minor and conservative type of change that maintains most educational contingencies unchanged (Sarason, 1982). This argument may be explained by considering that decentralization and the introduction of SBM in highly centralized educational systems requires a significant change in the structure of power and control. Moreover, SBM contains implications that go beyond the educational system, by virtue of its impact on a society's social agenda, norms, and values. These two issues are among the main obstacles that any decentralization initiative is likely to encounter when introduced in centralized structures. Ignoring these obstacles is likely to undermine the prospects of SBM to achieve its stated purposes. Using Levin's generalization, when educational planning and reform is directed towards altering characteristics of a society that derive from the basic political, economic, and social functioning and structure of that society, the educational reforms and plans will fail to achieve their stated objective (Levin, 1980).

Since the introduction of SBM in centralized structures implies major changes, one of the conditions for a successful implementation of SBM policy is a consensus regarding the values, norms, and objectives that SBM intends to alter and promote. Such a consensus has to be shared by all Ministry of Education units, by school and district-level educators, and by various social groups that public schools serve. However, such a consensus is difficult to achieve since decentralization initiatives are often in the middle of a debate between those who favor and those who object to the empowerment of local-level educators, fearing the negative consequences of SBM on the control of schools and on social equality.

And indeed, the conservative policy plan and contradictory policy messages coming from the head office provided evidence for the lack of consensus that exists among senior officials at the Israeli Ministry of Education regarding SBM. It is evident that although SBM is a centrally initiated restructuring policy supported by the Ministry of Education and by the Director General, powerful senior civil service officials of different units in the head office do not consider themselves obliged to follow SBM policy. Rather, they feel free to criticize SBM based on their unit's professional interests, past habits, and tendency to maintain their control over the educational system. This lack of consensus may be the reason for the rather conservative SBM plan that has been articulated. The characteristics of the plan may testify to planners' awareness of the opposition that a radical SBM restructuring initiative would be likely to encounter and to their tendency to avoid this opposition by articulating a plan that maintains most institutional contingencies unchanged. This tendency to avoid criticism has yielded a conservative SBM plan, which along with the contradictory policy messages coming from the head office promotes subordinate echelons' mistrust and sense of deception. This attitude is particularly problematic in centralized structures, since SBM is a top-down restructuring initiative and, therefore, its implementation and success greatly depend on the cooperation and trust of school and district-level educators. The findings showed that not only that a conservative SBM policy plan did not reduce resistance coming from within the Head office but rather, that it created subordinated echelons' antagonism being unable to decide what is the hidden agenda of SBM.

It may be argued consequently that a consensus is essential for the introduction of SBM in a centralized educational systems or, in the absence of a consensus, strong central enforcement of SBM policy at all head office units. Central enforcement is required in order to encourage senior officials to abandon past norms and habits, for creating new norms and regulations corresponding with decentralized circumstances, and for ensuring central officials' willingness to partially give up central control. Paradoxically, it may be argued that the decentralization of a centralized schooling system characterized by a strong civil service bureaucracy requires strong political enforcement that will prevent contradictory policy messages coming from the head office down the educational hierarchy and the development of a sense of deception among subordinate echelons.

Weiler suggests three arguments or models for decentralization: to redistribute and delegate power, to increase efficiency, and to alter the culture of learning by decentralizing educational content (Weiler, 1988, p. 2). Based on the findings of this study it seems that Israeli policy makers intended to alter the culture of learning and increase educators' accountability through SBM, hoping that school efficiency would increase, without redistributing or surrendering central power to schools. Unfortunately, such a strategy seems to increase mistrust and promote a sense of deception among subordinate echelons regarding central initiatives to decentralize educational systems such as SBM. Eventually, this strategy is likely to end up as a self-fulfilling prophecy if SBM fails to significantly empower school-level educators and to increase schools' autonomy as often happens when decentralization initiatives are introduced in centralized educational systems.

References

Ball, S. J. (1990). Politics and policy making in education: Explorations in policy sociology. New York: Routledge.

Bray, M. (1985). Education and decentralization in less developed countries: A comment on general trends, issues and problems, with particular reference to Papua New Guinea, *Comparative Education, 21*(2), 183-195.

Bromley, D. J. (1986). *The case study method in psychology and related disciplines*. New York: Wiley.

Brown, D. J. (1990). *Decentralization and school-based management*, New York: Falmer Press.

Boyd, W. L. (1990). Balancing control and autonomy in school reform: The politics of perestroika. In: J. Murphy (Ed.), *The Educational reform movement of the 1980's* (pp. 89-93). Berkeley, California: McCutchan Pub. Co.

Caldwell, B. J. (2003). A theory of learning in self managing school. In: A. Volansky & I. Friedman (Eds.), *School-based management: An international perspective* (pp. 93-116). Jerusalem: State of Israel, Ministry of Education.

Calvert, J. (1989) The dangers of school-based budgeting. *Our Schools Our Selves, 1*(2), 29-45.

Clune, W. H., & White, P.A. (1988). *School based management: Institutional variation implementation and issues for further research*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Center for Policy Research in Education, Rutgers University.

Davies, B., & Hentschke, G. C. (1994). *Locating US and English schools in the context of organizational autonomy*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans.

Elboin-Dror, R. (1985). Educational policy making in Israel. In: W. Ackerman, A. Carmon, & D. Zucker (Eds.), *Education in an evolving society: Schooling in Israel.* Jerusalem: The Van Leer Institute (In Hebrew).

Firestone, W. A., & Pennell, J. R. (1993). Teacher commitment, working conditions and differential incentive policies, *Review of Educational Research, 63*(4), 489-525.

Forster, N. (1994). The analysis of company documentation. In: C. Cassel & G. Symon (Eds.), *Qualitative methods in organization research* (pp.148-160), London: Sage.

Gaziel, H. H., & Romm T. (1988). From centralization to decentralization: The case of Israel as a uniq pattern of control in education. *European Journal of Education, 23*(4), 345-352.

Glickman, C. (1990). Pushing school reform to a new edge: The seven ironies of school empowerment, *Phi Delta Kappan, 72*(1), 68-75.

Hanson, E. M. (1984). Administrative reform in the Venezuelan Ministry of Education: A case analysis of the 1970s. *International Review of Education, 30*(2), 119-141.

Levacic, R. (2003). The development of self-managed schools in England: Combining local choice with central regulation. In: A. Volansky & I. Friedman (Eds.), *School-based management: An international perspective* (pp. 157-200). Jerusalem: State of Israel, Ministry of Education.

Levin, H. M. (1980). The limits of educational planning. In: H.N. Weiler (Ed.), *Educational planning and social change* (15-47), UNESCO, Paris.

Luborsky, M. R. (1994). The identification and analysis of themes and patterns. In: J. F. Gubium & A. Smakar (Eds.), Qualitative methods in aging research (pp. 189-210), Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Malen, B., Ogawa, R. T., & Kranz, J. (1990). What do we know about school based management? A case study of the literature – a call for research. In: W. H. Clune, & J. F. Witte (Eds.), *Choice and control in American Education: Vol. 2: The practice of choice, decentralization and school restructuring.* London: Falmer.

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (1997). *Designing qualitative research* (2nd ed.), London: Sage.

Marton, F. (1988). Phenomenology: A research approach to investigate different understandings of reality. In: R.R. Sherman & R. B. Webb (Eds.), *Qualitative research in education: Focus and methods* (pp. 143-161), London: Falmer Press.

Murphy, J., & Beck, L. G. (1995). *School-based management as school reform.* California: Corwin Press.

Nir, A. E. (2002a). The impact of School-Based Management on school health. *Journal of School Leadership, 12*(4), 368-396.

Nir, A. E. (2002b). School-Based Management and its effect on teacher commitment. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 5*(4), 323-341.

Paton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, California: Sage.

Reissman, C. K. (1993). *Narrative analysis.* Newbury Park, California: Sage.

Robertson, P. J., Wohlstetter, P., & Albers-Mohrman, S. A. (1995). Generating curriculum and instructional innovations through school based management. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 31*(3), 375-404.

Sackney, L. E., & Dibski, D. J. (1994). School-based management: A critical perspective. *Educational Management and Administration,* 22 (2), 104-112.

Sarason, S. (1982). *The culture of the school and the problem of change*(2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn Bacon.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research.* Newbury Park, California: Sage.

Summers, A.A., & Johnson, A.W. (1994). *A review of the evidence on the effects of school-based management plans.* Paper presented at the conference on Improving the Performance of American Schools: Economic Choices. National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences, Washington, DC.

Taylor, S. J., & Bogdan, R. (1984). *Introduction to qualitative research methods: The search for meaning*. New York: Wiley.

The Ministry of Education (1993). *School-based In-Service training*. Director General's Special Memorandum. Jerusalem: Ministry of Education (Hebrew).

Vollansky, A., & Bar-Elli, D. (1995). Moving toward equitable school-based management. *Educational Leadership*, *53*(4), 60-62.

Volansky, A. (2003). From experiment to educational policy. In: A. Volansky & I. Friedman (Eds.), *School-based management: An international perspective* (pp. 217-232). Jerusalem: State of Israel, Ministry of Education.

Watzlawick, P., Weakland, J. H., & Fisch, R. (1979). *Principals of problem formation and problem resolution*. Mental Research Institute, Palo Alto.

Weiler, H. N. (1990). Comparative perspectives on educational decentralization: an exercise in contradiction? *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, *12*(4), 433-448.

Weiler, H. N. (1988). *Education and power: The politics of educational decentralization in comparative perspective*. Stanford: Unpublished manuscript.

Wise, A. (1983). Why educational policies often fail: the hyperrationalization hypothesis. In: J. V. Baldridge, and T. Deal (Eds.), *The dynamics of organizational change in education* (pp. 93-113), Berkeley, California: McCutchan.

Wohlstetter, P., & Odden, A. (1992). Rethinking school based management policy and research. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 28, 529-549.

School Building Quality and Student Attitudes: Is There a Connection?

T. C. Chan
J. Eric Tubbs
Roy Rowe
Linda Webb

Introduction

Students housed in new school buildings have more positive attitudes toward the physical environment than students housed in old school buildings (Chan, 1982). Besides being new and old, however, does the quality of school buildings impact student attitudes toward the physical environment? This study is to examine if students housed in school buildings of different qualities exhibit different attitudes toward the physical environment of their schools.

A quality school building is a safe, healthy, adequate, suitable, accessible, comfortable, beautiful, and efficient building. It is anticipated that students as building users appreciate quality in the physical environment and will exhibit positive attitudes toward quality school buildings. As Proshansky (1970) stated, "Physical settings--simple or complex--evoke complex human responses in the form of feelings, attitudes, values, expectancies, and desires; and it is in this sense as well as their known physical properties that their relationships to human experience and behavior must be understood" (p. 28).

Research findings have documented better pupil performance and behavior as a result of more positive pupil attitudes (Abram, 1980; Alvord, 1971; Marcus & Sheehan, 1978; Parkway, 1981; Raivetz, 1980; Tatsuoka & others, 1978). On the other hand, more positive pupil attitudes toward physical environment were displayed in better facilitated school buildings (Artinian, 1970; Chan, 1982; Cramer, 1976; McGuffey, 1972; Stockard & Mayberry, 1992; Tatsuoka & others, 1978). Other studies have exemplified that some physical aspects of the classroom climate affected students' attitudes (Atwater, Gardner, & Wiggins, 1995; Ferreira, 1995; Lovin, 1972). Papdatos (1973) found that the use of proper color promoted students' positive feelings about schools. His findings were supported by Sinofsky and Knirck (1981). Maslow and Mintz (1956) studied the relationship of room aesthetics and student attitudes, and concluded that students in beautiful rooms had better attitudes. Chan (1988) reiterated that aesthetic environment was perceived as an influential factor on student feelings and attitudes contributing significantly to positive student learning.

Purpose of the Study

A review of the literature shows that research on school buildings and student attitudes was absent in the last ten years. In this lapse of time, while findings of previous studies need to be updated, more refined studies are needed to examine the impact of the school building on student attitudes. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate whether students in better quality school buildings have more positive attitudes toward their schools than students in poorer quality school buildings. Students' grade level, gender, and race were independent variables involved in the investigation.

Procedure

Nine hundred and twenty-one 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students in seven elementary school buildings in South Georgia participated in this study. These school buildings were selected because they represented school buildings of different decades, 1950's, 1960's, 1970's, 1980's and 1990's. The physical conditions of these school buildings also varied in design and maintenance quality. The Model for Evaluation of Educational Buildings (MEEB) developed by Carroll W. McGuffey (1973) was used to examine school building quality in ten categories: adequacy, suitability, safety, healthfulness, accessibility, flexibility, efficiency, economy, expansibility, and appearance. To collect data of student attitudes toward their schools, the Student Attitude Inventory, a 55-item survey developed by McGuffey (1972) was employed. All seven school buildings were prioritized by building quality as a result of the school building evaluation. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the student attitude scores to examine if students in better quality school buildings had more positive attitudes. In this process, students' grade level, gender, and race were also examined to determine if any of these factors could possibly contribute to the change of student attitudes.

Findings

Descriptive data of the school building evaluation were tabulated to indicate the physical conditions of the seven schools in the study (see Table 1). The summary evaluation score of each school was displayed. School F, the school building with the highest quality, received the highest score (687 out of 1000), followed by School C (662), School B (634), School D (630), School G (523), School E (511), and School A (357). The schools were then ranked by the evaluation scores with 1 being the highest rank and 7 the lowest. It is not surprising to see that School F, one of the modern school buildings in the study, was scored the highest; whereas School A, the oldest school in the study, was scored the lowest. Two exceptions were observed: First, School B, constructed in 1959, was among the highest ranking schools in the study because the school was renovated twice since 1959. Second, School G, the newest building of the study, was scored among the bottom three schools of the study because of poor maintenance.

Student attitude scores were compiled and averaged with the composite results shown in Table 1. School B attained the highest positive attitude score (33.79 out of 55), followed by School D (28.18), School C (26.76), School F (26.16), School A (25.25), School G (24.89), and School E (23.81).

Result of Analysis of Variance indicated that significant difference existed among the seven schools in student attitudes toward their schools (see Table 2). An F-value of 21.85 (DF=6) indicates a highly significant difference among the student attitudes of the seven schools in the study. A further examination of schools A, E, and G disclosed that these schools, which scored low in building evaluation, also scored low in student attitudes. Schools B and D were high on both student attitudes and building evaluation (see Table 1).

Other factors such as grade, race, and gender of students also were examined to see if they could possibly make any difference in student attitude scores. Result of the Analysis of Variance (F=44.71) showed that a significant difference existed in the student attitudes among students of different grade levels (see Table 3). Students in the higher grades exhibited more positive attitudes toward their school buildings than those in the lower grade levels. Grade 4 students, Grade 5 students, and Grade 6 students had an average attitude score of 27, 24.89, and 33.79 respectively (see Table 4). When race and gender of students were analyzed, no significant difference was found in student attitudes (F = .7 for race, and F = 1.01 for gender).

Discussion

Without doubt, the findings of this study confirmed the results of previous studies performed by Artinian (1970), Chan (1982), Cramer (1976), McGuffey (1972), Stockyard and Mayberry (1992), and Takuoka and others (1978). Clearly, the design of this study was different from the previous ones. It involved the field evaluation of existing school buildings through a well-established instrument. The schools selected for the study were representative of new, old, and renovated school buildings of different maintenance levels. The findings of this study contribute to the knowledge base by examining the relationship of school building environment and student attitudes through analyzing the latest data with a different comparative approach. Additionally, the finding that students of higher grades demonstrated more positive attitudes toward their school buildings was unique because it indicated students' improved appreciation of quality school environment associated with a higher level of mental maturity.

Conclusion

Since no study on the relationship of school environment and student attitude was performed in the last ten years, the findings of this study serve to fill the blank in the knowledge base on school facility research. It is not surprising to see that the findings of the study once again confirmed that school physical environment had significant impact on student attitudes toward school. Students housed in better quality school buildings tend to exhibit more positive attitudes toward their schools. This study is particularly meaningful because the design of the study incorporated school facility elements such as building age, design, maintenance, operation, and renovation as determining factors for school building quality. More in-depth studies on the impact of school facilities on student attitudes are needed. Future studies on student attitudes are recommended to focus on unique facility areas, such as facility locations, building size, temporary classrooms, and school aesthetics. In addition to studying student attitudes toward their schools, future studies could include student attitudes toward their academic success and schooling experiences. Much has to be done in documenting the relationship between school building quality and student attitudes.

References

Abram, M. J. (1980). *Is there an association between student's (1) self-concept, (2) liking for school, and (3) choice of time spent in subject areas and their level of preparation for fourth grade?* Hart County School System, Munfordville, KY; Western Kentucky University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 206 679)

Alvord, D. J. (1971). *Relationships among pupil self-concept, attitude toward school, and achievement on selected science exercises for the National Assessment of Educational Progress.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Iowa State University.

Artinian, V. A. (1973, October). The elementary school classroom: A study of the built environment. In *Proceedings of Environmental Design Research Association's Second Annual Conference.*

Atwater, M., Gardner, C., & Wiggins, J. (1995). A study of urban middle school students with high and low attitudes toward science. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching, 32*, 665-677.

Chan, T. C. (1982). *A comparative study of pupil attitudes toward new and old school buildings.* Greenville County School District, Greenville, SC (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 222 981).

Chan, T. C. (1988). The aesthetic environment and student learning. *School Business Affairs, 54*(1), 26-27.

Cramer, R. J. (1976). *Some effects of school building renovation on pupil attitudes and behavior in selected junior high schools.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia, Athens, GA.

Ferreira, M. M. (1995). *The caring of a suburban middle school.* Indiana University, Bloomington: Center for Adolescent Studies. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 385 011)

Lovin, J. C., Jr. (1972). *The effect of school's physical environment on the self-concepts of elementary school students.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia, Athens, GA.

Marcus, M. M., & Sheehan, D. S. (1978, April). *Relationships between student attitudes and selected background and achievement characteristics.* Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association, Toronto, Canada.

Maslow, A. H., & Mintz, N. L. (1956). Effects of aesthetic surroundings: Initial effects of three aesthetic conditions upon perceiving, "energy", and "well-being" in faces. *Journal of Psychology, 41*, 247-254.

McGuffey, C. W. (1971). *Our school building attitude inventory.* Athens, GA: Bureau of Educational Studies and Field Services, University of Georgia.

McGuffey, C. W. (1972). *Pupil attitudes toward existing schools as compared to new fully carpeted,* *air-conditioned schools*. Athens, GA: Bureau of Educational Studies and Field Services, University of Georgia.

McGuffey, C. W. (1973). *MEEB: A model for the evaluation of educational buildings*. Athens, GA: Bureau of Educational Studies and Field Services, University of Georgia.

Papdatos, S. P. (1973). Color them motivated–color's psychological effects on students. *NASSP Bulletin, 57* (370), 92-94.

Parkway, F. W. (1981, April). *The relationship between psychological characteristics and the achievement of black inner city high school students.* Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Education Research Association, L.A., CA. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 206 775)

Proshansky, H. M., Ittelson, W. H., & Rivlin, L. G. (1970*). Environmental psychology: Man and his physical setting.* New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Raivetz, M. J., & others. (1980*). High school for the creative and performing arts: Student attitudes and perceptions.* Office of Research and Evaluation, Philadephia School District, PA. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 208 049)

Sinofsky, E. R., & Knirck, F. G. (1981). Choose the right color for your learning style. *Instructional Innovator, 26*(3), 17-19.

Stockard, J., & Mayberry, M. (1992). *Effective educational environments*. University of Oregon. (ERIC Reproduction Service No. ED 350 674).

Tatsuoka, K. K., & others. (1978*). Attitudes and performances of military students in computer-based technical training.* Computer-Based Education Laboratory, Illinois University, Urbana, IL.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics – Building Evaluation Scores and Student Attitude Scores

School	Construction Yr.	Rank* (Building Score)	Rank* (Student Attitudes)
A	1952	7 (357)	5 (25.25)
B	1959	3 (634)	1 (33.79)
C	1962	2 (662)	3 (26.79)
D	1977	4 (630)	2 (28.18)
E	1982	6 (511)	7 (23.81)
F	1994	1 (687)	4 (26.16)
G	1995	5 (523)	6 (24.89)

* Rank 1 is the highest rank and Rank 7 is the lowest rank.

Table 2
ANOVA – Student Attitudes by School

Test for Significance
Student Attitudes

Source of Variation	SS	DF	MS	F
Within + Residual	28749.04	867	33.16	
Regression	307.73	4	76.93	2.32
School	4347.87	6	724.64	21.85**
(Model)	6550.05	10	655.00	19.75
(Total)	35299.09	877	40.25	

R-Square = .186
Adjusted R-Square = .176
** p < .01

Table 3
ANOVA – Student Attitudes by Grade

Test for Significance
Student Attitudes

Source of Variation	SS	DF	MS	F
Within + Residual	28858.55	870	33.17	
Regression	685.19	5	137.04	4.13
School	2966.35	2	1483.18	44.71**
(Model)	6440.54	7	920.08	27.74
(Total)	35299.09	877	40.25	

R-Square = .182
Adjusted R-Square = .176
** p < .01

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics – Student Attitudes by Grade

Grade	N	Mean	SD
Fourth	308	27.00	4.39
Fifth	531	24.89	4.55
Sixth	82	33.79	13.17
All	921	26.39	6.32

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 audience of the journal includes national and provincial/state planners, university faculty, school district administrators and planners, and other practitioners associated with educational planning.

The purpose of the publication is to serve as a meeting place for 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. Manuscripts preferred for inclusion are those 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 150-500 words on a separate sheet of paper) describing the focus of the manuscript should be included at the beginning of the manuscript.

WORD PROCESSING: SINGLE-SPACE all text using TIMES NEW ROMAN with a 10 point type. Headings and sub-headings should be in ARIEL with a 10 point type. Provide 1.0 inch margins top and bottom, and 1.5 inch left and right, with 1.0 inch header and 1.0 inch footer. The body of the manuscript must be no wider than 5 ½ inches to fit the paper. Lengthily tables, drawings, and charts or graphs should be scaled to the dimensions given and should preferably be camera-ready.

FORM of SUBMISSION: Send the manuscript to the Editor electronically in Microsoft Word as an attachment to an email. The email address is: lindal@gwu.edu

The manuscript should include the following:

Title Page

Title of the manuscript
Date of Submission
Author(s) name, mailing address, telephone number, email address, and fax number
Biographical sketch not to exceed 75 words

Abstract

An abstract not to exceed 500 words on a separate page

Body of the Manuscript

Text of the manuscript not to exceed 20 pages, including references, tables, etc.

If the manuscript does not meet the guidelines exactly, it will NOT be reviewed and will be returned to the author.

Author(s) name or any other identifying information should not be included on the abstract or the manuscript. Authors are responsible for copyright clearance and accuracy of information presented and submission implies that the same manuscript has not been submitted t other publications.

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

Please send manuscripts to: Dr. Linda K. Lemasters – lindal@gwu.edu

Thirty-Sixth Annual Conference of the
International Society for Educational Planning

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA
October 19-21, 2006

Conference Registration $350.00 USD
Includes:
Conference Registration & Membership
Breakfasts
Luncheons
Journal Subscriptions

To Register Visit: www.conted.vt.edu/isep

For further information contact:
Dr. Walt Polka, Conference Chair
wpolka@georgiasouthern.edu

Conference Hotel
Sheraton Pittsburgh
Single/Double Rooms - $124.00
Telephone: 800-325-3535
Web Registration: www.spg.com

Mention ISEP

ISEP
MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION FORM
(Please Print)

Name: ______________________________________
Last First Middle

Organization/Department ______________________

____

Mailing Address: _____________________________

____
City Province/State

____
Postal Code Country

Email_______________________________________

Fees: Professional Membership and Subscription to Educational Planning = $100.00 USD

Student Membership and subscription to Educational Planning = $50.00 USD

Payment by check, money order, or Purchase Order required with application.

RETURN MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND
PAYMENT TO:

Dr. Glen I. Earthman
Secretary/Treasurer, ISEP
2903 Ashlawn Drive
Blacksburg, VA 24060-8101
USA

ORGANIZATION

The Society was founded December 10, 1970 in Washington, DC. Over 50 local, state, national, and international planners attended the first organizational meeting.

Since then its continued growth demonstrates the need for a professions organization with educational planning as its exclusive concern.

PURPOSE

The International Society for Educational Planning was established to foster the professional knowledge sand 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.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE SOCIETY

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.

Please forward check/money order/PO to:

ISEP
Dr. Glen I. Earthman, Secretary/Treasurer
2903 Ashlawn Drive
Blacksburg, VA 24060-8101
USA

EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

EDUCATIONAL PLANNING
Dr. Glen I. Earthman
Secretary/Treasurer, ISEP
2903 Ashlawn Drive
Blackburg, VA 24060-8101