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ABSTRACT

Elementary and secondary schools in the United States lack a singular pattern of organization. Each of the separate school districts can, and often does, introduce different types of changes at different times. Yet a piecemeal description of an educational system unduly complicates the task of understanding that system. As the number of changes introduced into the school system increases, a means of developing a coherent portrait of education is clearly required. Such a portrait may serve to enable a summary assessment by policymakers and planners, and to act as a tool for educating a confused public in times of rapid social change. Primarily this scheme should define the basic elements of the school system and designate the nature of some of the relationships between specific elements in that system. It is possible to delineate appropriate categories for analyzing the structural and interpersonal process at any given point in time while also allowing consideration of the dynamic aspects of the situation. On the other hand, the internal structure of the school system may be viewed as a series of interrelated decisionmaking components, each with its own set of alternative decisions and constraints specifying limits of appropriate action. (Author/WM)

WORKING DRAFT

APPROACHES TO STUDYING ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

by

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I

INTRODUCTION: THE PROBLEM

Descriptions of trends and forecasts for American elementary and secondary education are commonly presented in a fragmented manner coinciding with the present state of the system. Elementary and secondary schools in the United States are without a central governing board or singular pattern of organization; each of the separate school districts in the United States can, and often do, introduce different types of changes at different times. However, a piecemeal depiction of the educational system unduly complicates the task of understanding the American educational system./ As the number of changes introduced into this school system increases, and concomitant speculative accounts of possible future states multiply, the assessment of a particular state of the school system is a task beyond the capabilities of even the most interested and informed public. A means of developing a coherent portrait of education is clearly required.

The potential import of being able to describe an area such as the educational system cannot be underestimated. The development of such portraits may be important as an educational tool directed to an interested but confused public. This can be most important during times of rapid social change when the particular states of the complex system are being questioned.

Moreover, the development of a coherent description of the school system may also be important to enable a summary assessment by involved policy makers and planners./ The relevance of this latter function can be understood in the light of changed requirements surrounding decision making and planning programs today. This is suggested by Dean George Gerbner of the Annenberg School of Communication.[1] He notes that the decision time on the part of those responsible for official response or policy has decreased. This has occurred, in his view, as a corollary to the widespread popular use of the mass media, such as radio or television. In his words:

> Instantaneous decisions have to be made because the awareness of the event about which we have to decide is instantaneous and because such a decision is expected (by the public).[2]

Instantaneous decisions, and for that matter even the more deliberate decision, made on the basis of a partial and highly impressionistic characterization of an institution can easily result in increased confusion and unanticipated consequences.

One means of obtaining some understanding of the present or even future state of the educational institution is to devise a heuristic scheme which can be used in analyzing the school system structure. Primarily, this scheme should define the basic elements of the school system. In addition, it may also designate the nature of some of the relationships between specific elements in that system. Such a heuristic scheme could serve the following functions:

1. The outline should accommodate descriptions of trends and counter trends and issues present at any "present" time.

2. The outline should provide a checklist suitable for examining possible future states of the educational system.

It is readily apparent that a conservative bias would be assumed if traditional modes of analyzing schools are uncritically accepted in the development of the proposed scheme. Analytic schemes restricted to studying the structure of existing social units (e.g., "schools and bureaucracies," "community schools," or for that matter "educational parks") may prove to be limited by time and place. In order to reach the objectives cited for this paper, the delineation of specific characteristics of educational systems must allow maximum flexibility in the exploration of alternative models of education. A preliminary step in the construction of such categories of analysis is a statement of the perspective to the school system to be employed. This is presented in the following section.

II

PERSPECTIVE

Beginning with some elementary, but important points, education is defined as a social, rather than psychological process. This is so, because education involves interaction between two (or more) persons. Broadly defined, education (or socialization) occurs in all types and sizes of social groups. All groups remaining together as a unit develop some division of labor, a means of limiting hostile behavior and a definition of potential recruits.[3] Members of these groups then must be taught the appropriate skills and attitudes.

Education, however, can be viewed as either planned or unplanned activity. In any social group that wants and expects to persist over an extended period of time, education is a planned activity. That is, some special segment of the groups is designated as primarily responsible for the education of the young, otherwise newly recruited or deviant members of the group. The specific structural features of the group and the setting within which education occurs, of course, varies.

Most nation states as one type of social group, have institutionalized settings organized to accomplish the task of education. This is necessary to maintain the stability of the state by maximizing predictability of political, economic and other social behavior. Such structures, in the United States, have been described as formal organization.[4] The educational enterprise in the United States, then, may be analyzed as formalized, complex organizations.

Schools, as formalized organizations, have been traditionally analyzed by social scientists from one of two perspectives, each having different implications for focusing research interests.

The oldest tradition of organizational research has been labeled the rational approach and includes the schools now known as the scientific or administrative management schools.[5] Using this perspective the elements of the organization are deliberately chosen on the basis of hypothesized contribution to a specific goal; discussions of organization structure center on the form

expected to attain the highest degree of efficiency. A closed system of logic is introduced into schemes using the rational systems approach in order to maximize predictability. As James D. Thomson has noted:

> The rational model of an organization results in everything being functional, making a positive, indeed an optimum contribution to the overall result. All resources and their allocation fits a master plan. All action is appropriate action, and its outcomes are predictable.[6]

In the extreme, educational research emphasizing a rational model of organization is concerned with such variables as economic inputs, the presence or size of physical facilities such as libraries, and the number and types of degrees held by the staff all as means of assessing the effectiveness of particular schools. The efficient utilization of man-hours and the span of control over subordinates serve as additional examples of key areas of interest to those using this model.

A second sociological approach to the analysis of bureaucratized systems has been the natural systems approach.[7] Here attention is generally focused on variables which are not included in the rational model of organization, such as sentiment, cliques, and social control via informal means. In the natural system approach greater allowance is made for considering influences which cannot be predicted on the basis of organization blueprint, or controlled by the formal hierarchy. The variables chosen for use in empirical research, however, are not necessarily conceived as sources of random deviation. Rather, it is assumed that informal groups emerge within the context of the formal organization and have some consequences for the formal structure. The behavior of informal groups is interpreted to be "patterned, adaptive responses of human beings in problematic situations."[8] That is, discernible recurrent behavior is examined within a context which may be defined as constraining or overly restrictive. An example of research using this perspective is provided in the work of James Coleman.[9] Coleman's concern is the emergence of student subcultures which have different implications for the school organization.

A second macroscopic version of the natural systems approach to the study of organization appears in the work of those emphasizing the relationship between

the organization and its environment. An example of school system research using this approach is provided by Burton Clark.[10] Clark's concern is with the maintenance struggle of an adult educational program in a community which does not highly value such a program.

Based on this rather cursory review of basic theoretical perspectives, it is evident that important questions to the analysis of school systems are raised by both traditions. Indeed, an important dimension of school system is included in the type of problems of interest to those researchers using the rational perspective. To ignore concerns such as the efficient utilization of resources, or the distribution of authority and accountability in an examination of schools, as they are established today, would be misleading. A good deal of the thought and the activities in schools today, like that in business and other bureaucratic units are concerned with just those problems.

Moreover, it is equally apparent that the participant behaviors associated with the natural system perspective also characterizes that which occurs in school systems. Reports of teacher-administrator negotiations, inter-departmental jurisdictional squabbles and student subcultures provide ample evidence that schools are influenced in a significant way by groups emerging within the formal structure and by elements in its environment.

Of course, serious students of organization analysis today do not accept the limitations imposed by rigid adherence to either one of the two perspectives presented here. Indeed, it has been noted that the burden of modern organization theory is to reintegrate the formal and informal organizations. For example, Hollander and Hunt report:

> What modern systems theorists have in mind is the idea that the distinction between formal and informal organization is much more conceptual than actual. In reality a functional organization is a complex synthesized resultants of dynamic structural and interpersonal processes rather than an uncertain marriage of expedient convenience between separate and competing formal and informal systems.[11]

Assuming, then, that in the United States some segment of the population will continue to be primarily responsible for the educational process, we should

be able to define the dimensions of analysis which describe the structural and interpersonal process at any given point in time. In accord with the quotation cited above, however, such analytic categories must allow consideration of the dynamic aspects of the situation. One attempt to delineate appropriate categories of analysis is provided in Section III.

A second proposal for the analysis of school systems is presented in Section IV. This perspective views the school system as a problem-facing, problem-solving unit.[12] The internal structure of the school system consists of a series of interrelated decision making components, each associated with sets of alternative decisions and constraints specifying limits of appropriate action. Here attention is directed to the decision making units, some of the limitations on alternatives open to the decision makers, and to the decision making process itself.

The two approaches to the analysis of school system presented here are not completely unrelated. The range of alternative decisions reflecting perceived and actual constraints on decision making define the form of possible organization structures which can be expected. In turn, the consequences of decisional implementation effecting changes in the school system structure affects the socialization process. The nature of the socialization experience and outcome, on the other hand, provides one basis of community interest group reaction. This then can lead to attempted or successful participation in school decision making which can be expected to have different consequences for alternatives open to decision makers. The two approaches are also related in that participation in the decision making and implementing processes usually center on issues defined by the dimensions of school system structure.

III

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM COMPONENTS

One framework for examining elementary and secondary educational systems is provided through identifying its basic characteristics. Consistent with the perspective outlined in the preceding section, the deliberate process of

educating young people occurs as persons come together and focus their activities to that end. The definition of persons who should constitute such gatherings is provided through the delineation of the boundaries of the education system, and procedures employed in recruiting participants. Both of these dimensions of the educational system, in turn, are directly affected by the financial resources available to it.

Providing appropriate educational experiences for young people is an important task when viewed from the perspective of the larger social group (i.e., community or nation). To insure the recurrence and uniformity of this activity over a given area, a division of labor is formalized and paths are outlined controlling participant movements through specified sequences of experiences. The institutionalization of curricula assures some uniformity in exposure of students to specific information and skills, and a standardized means of evaluating participants is adopted by the system directly concerned with assessing the relative efficacy of the educationa program, as planned.

A list of the basic dimensions of the school system and more detailed specification of these dimensions is provided below.

I. DISTRICT BOUNDARIES
   - A. Degree of flexibility
   - B. No. of school boundaries within a state

II. FINANCIAL RESOURCES
   - A. Sources (Federal, state, city, district, private)
   - B. Allocation of funds
     1. Proportion of variable to fixed cost
     2. Allocation over staffing, facilities, equipment or changes in instructional approach
     3. Mode of allocation (e.g., direct payment to students, schools, school districts, etc.)

III. DIVISION OF LABOR
   - A. Degree of specialization
     1. Within administrative levels
     2. Within instructional staff
     3. Between administrative and instructional staff
   - B. Autonomy of school system participants
     1. Relationships to other schools, local district office, state educational organizations
     2. Relationship between teachers and administrative component, administrative components at different levels, and school staff and other professionals

IV. RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS

A. Students
   1. Basis of recruitment (selectivity)
   2. Age of recruit

B. Professional Staff
   1. Credentialling procedures (local state control)
   2. Hiring procedures - criteria for selection and personnel resource pool

C. School Board
   1. Mode of recruitment
   2. Source of recruits

D. Paraprofessionals
   1. Mode of recruitment
   2. Source of recruitment

V. CAREER PATHS WITHIN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

A. Students
   1. No. of alternative school careers open to each student
   2. Criteria for placement along a particular career path
   3. Locus of decision for placement in career path
   4. Mode of processing (e.g., individual-batch)
   5. Length of required attendance
   6. Mobility between career paths

B. Professional Staff
   1. Mobility within a specialization
   2. Mobility between schools or school systems
   3. Mobility between instructional and administrative staff

VI. CURRICULUM

A. Scope of coverage (The proportion of students exposed to specific segments of the curriculum)

B. Relative weight of specific areas of the curriculum (e.g., amount of time, resources, proportion of total resources expended in a particular curriculum area)

C. Pervasiveness (Control by the school over activities conducted outside of the school time and physical boundaries)

D. Source of curriculum guide and specificity in detail

VII. EVALUATION OF PARTICIPANTS

A. Students
   1. Criteria of evaluation (e.g., attendance, knowledge, skills, attitudes, etc.)
   2. Frequency and mode of evaluation and feedback
   3. Codification of evaluative procedures

B. Instructional Staff
   1. Criteria of evaluation (e.g., technical skills, no. of college credits, student achievement)
   2. Frequency and mode of evaluation and feedback
   3. Codification of evaluative procedures

C. Administrative staff
   1. Criteria of evaluation
   2. Frequency and mode of evaluation
   3. Codification of evaluative procedures

The categorical scheme can be used to make an analysis of school systems more manageable in at least the following ways: first, portraits of hypothetical or existing alternative school system structures can be developed through attaching different values to the dimensions of the school system structure. Of course, exhaustiveness in the listing of categories and variables is not claimed. Empirical research provides a means of refining, if not restructuring and elaborating these categories.

Second, and more important than its possible utility as a categorical scheme for the development of hypothetical school system structures, this outline may also contribute to identifying some of the consequences of changes in one part of the school system structure for other parts of that same structure, or for the socialization process. It should be noted that the categorical listing of the basic components of the system does not imply that a change in the values of one dimension is expected to be unrelated to the conditions of other parts of the system.

Generally, a survey of the seven school system components suggests that in looking at alternative structures, at least two different units may be used to define the parameters of school systems as they persist today.[13] The school district can serve as one focal unit within which changes may be effected. In addition, decisions altering the school system structure are also made within individual schools. The school, then, (or school sets, i.e., a secondary school and feeder elementary schools) may be considered as a second focal point in the analysis of today's. Of course, just as decisions or changes instituted at the school district level must be understood within the context of state, regional and national conditions, changes in the school system structure at the individual school (or school set) level must be examined within the context of conditions set by school district and the community.

The designation of the two different units of analysis is important because the nature of the basic elements in the decision making structures of the two units of school system analysis and the process through which decisions are made to alter school system characteristics may differ. These differences may in turn have consequences for the rapidity in the diffusion of innovation, as well

as flexibility in the introduction of changes. For example, macro-school systems which include many widely scattered units tend to be more bureaucratic than smaller school systems. Larger numbers of offices result from the greater coordinative requirements of such an enterprise. However, the decision making process, although more formalized in some respects, is diffused over the large number of offices. In spite of the greater bureaucratization then, (in terms of the number, types and levels of offices) there may be less direct control by any single office over many of the decisions which are made. In the New York City school system, as reported by Gittell, for example, the sheer complexity of the structure, and the physical distance between the schools and the central administrative offices has served to prevent frequent evaluation or surveillance of day-to-day activities and decisions. Ironically then, in spite of the greater rigidity which may develop along some dimensions of a highly bureaucratized system over a long run, more autonomy may be exercised by the various decision makers of a large, compared to a small, school system leading to changes in its structure. And, too, sheer unit size in this instance can be expected to have an insulating effect for any given office within the structure.

However, a limitation to the degree of autonomy actually exercised by a particular official of a large school system is provided by the career line paths open to him. Rigidly designated opportunities for upward mobility in the system (e.g., from school principal to school administrator) and the mode of recruitment (e.g., appointment) can seriously constrain the judgment of individuals aspiring to upward mobility. Thus rapidity in the introduction of innovations may be controlled.

Small school systems, on the other hand, are expected to be more unified and under the direct influence of an individual (or small group) at the top of an administrative hierarchy. The school district is perhaps the most appropriate parameter for the examination of changes in school system structure in this instance.

Since small school systems are commonly located in relatively small towns, the activities of the school system decision makers, no doubt, has greater visibility to the people it serves; the school system decision making process

therefore may be expected to have to operate more cautiously and within parameters set by the townspeople.

In spite of the possible surveillance of activities, however, innovation, when introduced in a small school system, can be expected to be more quickly diffused throughout the system. Changes therefore may be more visible to the public. However, since the introduction of innovations is probably subject to more intense scrutiny by the various interest groups prior to introduction, they may occur with somewhat less frequency than in a macro-scale system. Of course, control over the amount and type of innovation introduced into a school system may be obtained by means other than surveillance of activities of school system participants. Selective recruitment of key personnel and mode of recruitment,[14] again, provide two conditions which must also be considered.

School System Structure and Socialization

The successful implementation of changes in the school system structure which categorically falls within any of the seven basic dimensions suggest many implications for the socialization process. Alternative modes of structuring the educational enterprise and some of the possible consequences for socialization are introduced here as examples of the possible relationship between decisions to change the school system structure and socialization outcome.

In an examination of the first organization dimension, the most obvious point to be made is that, as presently organized, the district and internally drawn school boundaries define the composition of the student population. To the extent that groups or persons of similar socio-economic, race or religious characteristics reside in identifiable communities with boundaries which are inflexibly drawn, one can expect a homogeneous student body population. Decisions pertaining to the establishment of school system boundaries can directly and indirectly affect many facets of the school operation.[15] For example, the socio-economic status of the community population affects the relative financial resource available to the local district from the community, and can also affect the nature of the educational Program (curriculum) designed to meet the 'needs' of the population served by the schools, as defined by professional educators. Educational programs designed to provide a large number of students with specific

work-oriented skills, for example, suggests that funds must be allocated differently from a school which maintains a program emphasizing the preparation of youngsters for higher education. Either mode of resource allocation can serve to detract fr e lternative programs open to students within a specific district or school.

In some instances, the manner in which a particular district is bounded can affect educational units which serve as alternatives to public systems. Community members whose preferences (or values) are not met by the public school system curriculum will tend to send their children to private or parochial schools. This may serve to homogenize the population of a particular school which in turn will have consequences for the socialization experiences of these groups of youngsters. As a result of a homogenization of school populations, for example, differences between the groups can become exaggerated and reified in the students' attitudes toward "they" and "we."

And, too, the parents of school districts which include a large population of youngsters attending private or parochial educational facilities may be under the dual burden of supporting two school systems. The first two school system dimensions (district boundaries and financial resources) in this manner provide one way of defining the school system relationship to the broader community.

Focusing on the second organization dimension (financial resources) once resources are obtained, the nature of decisions about the internal allocation of the funds is of primary importance to the socialization millieu.[16] Although the internal allocation of funds may be in part constrained by the sources of funding (e.g., prescribed expenditures by federal or private granting agencies) in considering the internal allocation of funds, one must consider at least one other important factor. That is, consistant with the prevailing conception of the schools held by those who make decisions about allocation, there is usually a specified proportion of the budget designated as the minimum amount with which the existing system can operate. Only excesses beyond this fixed cost are thought to be relevant to discussions of allocative decisions. That is, only the "surplus" funds are thought to be open to flexible distribution. However, decisions concerned with the allocation of funds, based on a fixed cost idea

can serve to perpetuate characteristics of the existing school system. This is true when "fixed cost" is defined as expenditures necessary to maintain ongoing programs; and, too, the problem is exaggerated by the fact that school officials are confronted with the task of justifying expenditures of public funds. The resistance to change will hold true until the conceptions of schools held by those in decision making positions, long-range financing and resource allocation are all seriously re-evaluated and changed.

Knowledge of decisions concerned with the division of labor between administrative and instructional staff is basic to an understanding of the educational enterprise. Generally speaking, administrative staff function may be defined as coordinative or authoritative.[17] The definition of professional autonomy permitted the instructional staff differs under each of these conditions. Whereas instructional staff autonomy may be maximized under the condition that the administrator serves as a coordinator (e.g., most university systems),[18] the instructional staff are today held accountable to those higher up in the hierarchy and therefore more closely resemble an authoritative system.

Vertical differentiation between members of the instructional staff in any given school today is minimal. There are, for example, usually only five or six English teachers, five or six math teachers and so on. In part, this is due to the size of "community schools." Differentiation between teachers at present is along the dimensions of tenure or subject matter specialization. An alternative to the present organization of individual schools (e.g., educational parks) would allow greater differentiation between teachers within each subject matter area. This in turn may be positively related to the perceived career opportunity of teachers and make possible a higher level of professionalization.

Professionalism in this instance refers to the process whereby efforts are made by an association of colleagues to control the types and standards of work done. Although the many implications of increased professionalization for student socialization cannot be developed at this time, some of the positive consequences can be inferred from a listing of the criteria of professionalization noted by Edward Gross. Gross indicates that the criteria of professionalization include:[19]

1. Work with unstandardized products, made possible through the application of a general knowledge to particular problems.

2. A high degree of personal involvement which extends the scope of work evaluation beyond the degree of technical competence exhibited.

3. A sense of obligation to one's art which implies that a professional "is expected to use only the best or most efficient techniques."

4. A keen sense of identity with one's colleagues which in turn allows control over standards of work by one's colleagues.

Without minimizing the importance of the analysis of activities internal to the schools which might be conducted, changes concerning the differentiation of roles in the school system personnel can also be viewed as contributing to an analysis of the school community relationship. Using Talcott Parson's conceptual scheme of formal organizations,[20] it is evident that depending on the specific division of labor within the school system, the groups (or suborganizations of the schools as they presently exist) have different relationships to the community.

Parsons suggests that the organization is made up of three major suborganizations: the technical, the managerial and the institutional levels. In the instance of the American school, as discussed earlier, the tasks are differentially assigned so that the board of education (institutional level) provides the major nexus between school and community. In fact, within the context of the generalized social norms and values, it is though the board's representative function in the local community that much of the support needed by the other two suborganizations to attain a degree of autonomy has been legitimated.

The technical (or instructional) level of the organization contacts the community through its work with the pupils. Traditionally, however, the major task of this unit has been defined as obtaining the students' cooperation necessary to effective instruction; and the accomplishment of this task has been contained within the boundaries of the physical plant and the time prescribed by law. The administrative (managerial) suborganization, on the other hand, has been concerned with at times mediating the teachers and the pupils. They also

procure the resources necessary for carrying out the instructional task, thus linking the instructional and the institutional (or board of education) sub-organizations. According to Parson's analysis, then, the primary contact between the school and the community as it is conventionally conceived has taken place at one point in the school structure: the institutional level. This may be true when the unit of analysis is the school district. However, this is not true when the individual school is being examined. Here, the principal has served as the major point of contact between community members and the school system.

Shifts in the patterns of associations, however, between school agents and community participants are presently indicating other possible points of articulation between the community and school. For example, as student groups organize and rebel against school officials, and as teachers' associations are being more actively involved, groups emerge within the community to question the efficacy (if not the legitimacy) of official action. Parsons' analysis of the primary point of articulation between school and community, then, may be most appropriate during times when students are considered to be "raw material" to be processed, and teachers dutifully perform their "assigned" task.

The recruitment of paraprofessionals (aids and volunteers from the community) to assist in the instructional task in some school districts can also serve to increase the points of contact between different levels in the organization and community.[21] This is also true with the addition of professional staff such as social workers and counselors or some other specialized community-school agent. However, an alternative means of increasing the contact between the instructional level and the community may be provided through redefining the teacher role.[22] The teacher, rather than serving as a solo classroom practitioner as she presently does, may be redefined as a teacher-counselor. The redefined role of the "teacher-counselor" is described by Morris Janowitz. She is directed to serving the needs of her pupils by not only assuming responsibility for the pupil's formal education, but also to see that he has contact with an expanded pool of people within the community. The model of education provided in part by the redefinition of the teacher role extends the locus of learning from the school to recreational, social and work experiences in the community. Such a role

definition requires a general re-interpretation of the instructional staff role and is possible only with basic changes in the modes of teaching which predominate today. For example, it may be possible to effect a changed teacher role with an increased use of aids and volunteers (paraprofessionals) in order to allow a re-allocation of the teacher's time and energy.

The recruitment of members of the school system, which is the fourth organization dimension, has to do with the conditions under which members enter the school organization and the type of personnel admitted. And, although the age and nature of recruitment of the student (e.g., voluntary-compulsory, individual or large groups) is no doubt related to the success of the socialization attempt, the nature of the recruitment of staff is obviously related to the student's socialization experience while he is within the organization.[23] For example, at the present time, instructional and administrative staff recruitment for the most part is controlled by individual school principals, school district personnel and state licensing procedures. Ease in the addition of new personnel is depressed to the extent that certification procedures are rigidly maintained by these people. The addition of increased numbers of diversified instructional staff permitted with a relaxation of certification procedures could mean a richer and perhaps more individualized learning experience for the student.

Of course, it may appear paradoxical to speak of relaxed certification procedures and increased professionalization within the same discussion. This paradox is more apparent than real. One mode of effecting a "relaxation" in certification procedures is in fact consistent with increased professionalization. More specifically, teachers, once having achieved some control over work conditions and through strong colleague support, perhaps will not feel as threatened as they presently do by the introduction of "helpers" or specialists. Different personnel then may be introduced into the educational system which would allow student enrichment; assuming, of course, that they are selected and used in an effective manner.

Alteration of career paths for teaching and administrative staff, the fifth school system component listed can also affect the nature of the socialization environment. Upward mobility within the school system, if defined as moving

from teacher to the administrator role, for example, can possibly result in the upward movement of the most highly regarded instructional personnel into administrative posts. This can be seen to have negative consequences for the nature of student socialization. This could be avoided if administrative staff and instructional staff were to be rigidly defined by recruitment and certification procedures; and under the condition of possible upward mobility within each of these groups through greater internal differentiation within specialties. Under such conditions, and with the institutionalization of merit promotions (rather than tenure-based promotions), instructional staff professionalization can be expected to increase as larger number of persons may come to consider teaching as a legitimate lifetime career.

The category of analysis labeled career paths within the school system can also be applied to students, as well as to the professional staff. Students may have no alternative paths provided for their school career. They may all proceed through their socialization experience by moving from grade level to grade level, all being exposed sequentially to the same core material. At the other logical extreme a student career path may be defined for each individual student.[24] In this instance, the curriculum, the teaching role, the mode of instruction and evaluation and perhaps even the relative allocation of funds over staff and materials would all have to be altered in order to accommodate the diversification in programs. Decisions would also have to be made consonant with the particular alternative plan chosen. There are, of course, a number of alternative means of instructing students which fall between the extremes noted here.

Curriculum and evaluation of school personnel, the sixth and seventh school system components are both important to an understanding of how schools operate and change. Curriculum construction provides a critical area of control over the educational process. The weight given to special areas of the curriculum reflect the values of those preparing the educational outcome. The degree of consonance of these values, in turn, with those of the community served by the school can set one of the concrete bases of conflict between community residents and school system personnel.

A description of the evaluation of student and staff performance is important to the understanding of the school system, in that the mode of evaluation, like the curriculum, visibly represents the implementation of the organization's goals (or values) to the participants. The evaluation system represents the organization's goals by concretely identifying rewards and negative sanctions associated with particular behavior or achievement. There is then a normative, as well as behavioral and achievement aspect to evaluation. Changes in the criteria of evaluation employed, as well as mode of evaluating participants may well serve as one indicator of change in the educational system.

This then concludes the introduction of one mode of approaching the analysis of elementary and secondary schools. The utility of the categories of analysis can be assessed only through empirical exploration and further conceptual explication.

IV

A SECOND APPROACH TO THE ANALYSIS OF EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

As discussed in the previous section, alternative arrangements in the components of the educational enterprise define the alternative portraits of the school which can be drawn. However, in creating alternative portraits of school systems, recognition must be made of the present state of the system, and the social processes underlying the dynamic aspect of that structure. This recognition should extend beyond a mere description of school system structure.

A second approach which can be used in the attempt to understand school system dynamics is developed in the work focused on school system participants and decision making. Clearly this can be viewed as a related or complimentary approach to that presented in the preceding section. Specific decisions are requisite to alteration of the school structure as it exists today. And, too, interest group participation on a more or less intermittent basis center their attention on specific organizational characteristics (or dimensions).

A review of the literature on school system analysis using the decision making approach reveals that much attention has been directed to identifying

various school system decision making participants and the decision making process itself. Other areas of interest to those using this approach include questioning the conditions associated with the necessity for making decisions and the probability of implementing decisions which are made. A summary of these discussions is presented here.

The Core System Participants

As in the instance of all institutionalized systems, the components of the school decision making structure can be identified as officials charged with the authority to control specific events in the operation of that system. These participants are labeled the core school system decision makers and are to be differentiated from groups or individuals who may have only an intermittent interest in the operation and outcome of the school system.

The core decision makers for a particular school system, at a minimum, include the local school board, the school superintendent and his administrative assistants, and teachers. Each of these groups operates within the context of federal and state agencies concerned with education, students, parents and community special interest group demands and expectations. Further, the core decision makers must also operate within the limits set by the interdependencies of the various components on the other.

Drawing from reports of empirical examination, the following characteristics can be identified as the most common definitions of core school system participant roles.

The School Board

The school board is legally defined as the official policy making body for the school system. This conception of school board responsibility is based on state constitutions and statutes which confirm the historical development of the educational institution during the nineteenth century. That is, in accord with the article of faith held by most Americans, public schools are supposed to be locally controlled.[25] It is presumed that the people of a local school district should exercise their control through an elected school board. The

board, in turn, is to appoint a superintendent to act as the chief executive of the district. In general, the expected role performance of the school board members includes establishing policies under which the school system will be administered and assuring that the types of educational programs desired by the community are provided.

In fact, however, the types of activities which the members of the school board perform are much more limited than this description would imply. This is evident in the description provided by Marilyn Gittell of the New York City Board of Education.

> In the five areas selected for examination in the current study - budget, curriculum, selection of superintendent, salary, and integration - both Board's role ranged from superficial participation (in the budget process) for formulation and promulgation of policy - and failure to achieve it (in school integration). On the two major salary increases to emerge in recent years, the Board participated in early negotiations but was satisfied to shift final responsibility to the mayor or his mediator. Selecting a superintendent is the area in which the Board exercised most direct power.[26]

According to an analysis of school board participation is school system decision making by Thomas Elliott,[27] much of the actual limitation of board participation can be attributed to the professionalization of the school personnel. In effect, Elliott argues that if the schools are deemed by the school board and others in the community to be special province of professionals, then the school board's primary task, aside from directing the district's business affairs, is only to fire and support a professional as superintendent, insulate the school from public criticism, and persuade the people to open their pocketbooks.

Professionals in the Schools

The key professionals in the school system consist of two groups. Numerically the largest are school teachers. School administrators, latecomers as professionals, make up the group considered first.

The school superintendent occupies the top position in the hierarchy of school administration. Although there is agreement among the various researchers on the importance of technical competence as a key requirement in the success of superintendent,[28] the degree to which an individual superintendent can exercise power in the decision making process based on his office and expertise varies considerably. This variability is associated with the nature of the relationship between the superintendent and the local school board, as well as his relationship to his staff, and his ability to maintain rapport with community interest groups.

In Levittown, for example, as reported by Herbert Gans, the Superintendent of Schools exercised a great deal of power. School board action gave him full responsibility for establishing course content, teaching methods and staff recruitment. In a more highly bureaucratized school system, such as in New York City, on the other hand, Gittell reports that:

> Tenured supervisors hold top policy making jobs, allowing the superintendent little flexibility in appointments. All assistant superintendents receive tenure after a three year probationary period.
>
> ...The Superintendent is further debilitated by his dependency on the Board of Examiners. It is not uncommon for the Examiners to delay examination and approval of candidates for assistant superintendent whom the superintendent may wish to appoint to his staff.[29]

In the highly bureaucratized, specialized urban school of New York City, then, Gittell's report indicates that position incumbents of the central supervisory staff, rather than the superintendent himself, are the major policy makers. Their power is exercised as heads of divisions or departments such as the instruction and curriculum departments and the Board of Examiners, and is largely based on the peculiar characteristics of their position (e.g., tenure).

School principals, although near the bottom of the administrative hierarchy in the school system, maintain a fairly high degree of autonomy in the management of their schools.[30] This is possible because of the decentralized nature of

schools and the impossibility of keeping a close and constant surveillance of each of the schools within a given district. Although usually operating within the parameters set by the central administrative decisions, principals in a large highly differentiated specialized school system exercise a great deal of initiative in the operation of their schools. This is because in such a system, although many of the decision internal the school may be introduced by subject matter specialists or heads of departments, the final outcome of specific requests and instruction both from within the school and from the central administrative unit are passed through the office of the principal.

The role of a principal in a small town has been described in some detail by Vidich and Bensman.[31] Essentially, these researchers define the principal as the locus of authority in the school with power to determine such matters as the hiring and firing of teachers within his own school, setting the academic standards of classroom work, and introducing innovations (e.g., sex education) into the curriculum. The principal, in this instance, is however exceptional in that he is able to exert a great deal of influence in these matters because of the public support he is able to marshall through a local newspaper column and because of his direct relationship to the local board of education. As a member of the board, the principal of this small town highschool goes to the board meetings as the sole technical expert and administrator of board policies. As the only full time member of the school system on the board of education, the principal in this instance substitutes for the superintendent of schools and is able to enjoy a tactical advantage over the board members who are concerned about education only once or twice a month.

Teachers, although making up the largest proportion of professionals in the school system, have not been a powerful participant in the general school decision making process. Through the support of organized professional groups they ave exerted some influence in decisions pertaining to their own salaries and work conditions. However, as Gittell reports,

> ...the potential power of the (teacher) union to participate in other policy areas has not been fully realized because of its own decision to concentrate its attention on salary scales and related decisions.

> The teachers as a group do not participate, for example, in the most obvious area in which their expertise would be extremely helpful, the development of curriculum (with the exception of a few high school specialists). Nor is there any evidence to indicate that teachers were consulted on integration policy or about the problems of ghetto schools. Teachers are not at all involved in budgeting or selection of the superintendent, either through the Union or as individuals.[32]

By commonly accepted definition, teachers are to instruct students and for the most part their area of competence has been limited to an execution of this task within the confines of a particular school, and perhaps even limited to the boundaries set by their classroom.

In sum, these categories of core participants are presently held to be primarily responsible for the operation of the schools. Their authority has been, until recently, legitimated by popular consent and their decisions have operated within legal and informal role boundaries resulting in the school structure as it is traditionally conceived. However, one of the major problems confronting the educational institution today is concerned with the problem of establishing some balance in participation by local community groups, professional associations and school system participants in decision making. In some instances, for example, community interest groups are questioning the legitimacy of educators making all of the decisions in the schools. In other instances, internal to the school system itself, interest groups have formed to question the legitimacy of administrators or faculty to make certain of the decisions. Critical to an understanding of participation in school system decision making then is knowledge of the expectations and preferences of those involved and affected by the educational system.

The legitimation of the core decision makers is maintained under the condition that members of the school organization, subject to the governing leadership, agree that the demands made on them are fair and just. And, too, the decisions made by the core decision making participants are usually unquestioned by potential partisan groups such as parents or other interested community groups when there is a general satisfaction with how the schools are being

operated. Level of satisfaction can be defined in terms of the degree of congruence between the expectations held by potential partisan groups, and the outcome of the school system; or it can also be defined in terms of the perceived efficiency of the organizational processing. That is, assessed efficiency involves weighing the cost of operating the schools against the quantity and quality of educational outcome.[33]

These observations are consistent with those of other social scientists. This does not imply, however, that an elitist view of school system governance is being suggested. Rather, it is assumed that in any on-going organization, many of the decisions represent responses to recurrent issues, and are based on precedent set by past decisions. The stability of this regularity in decision making provided by a core school system participants insures an economic way of handling contingencies. Neither a simple elitist or pluralist version of control over decisions about the educational structure would appear to be adequate. Participation in school system affairs by representatives of community groups can be presently characterized as erratic or discontinuous. This is true in part because groups have tended to form as a reaction to specific problems rather than on the basis of more basic issues.

One obvious source of public discontent directed to the schools can be found in the resistance to change inherent to any institutionalized structure. That is, interest groups may form as a result of a series of experiences (or even a single drastic experience) which admits of a problem not solved by the existing school system affecting the level of "satisfaction" of some group with the operation of the school. The experience may be the inability of a number of persons to obtain a job because of an alteration in the number and types of skills required in the labor force.[34]

And, too, interest group attention may be drawn to decisions which have just introduced change. This can occur under the condition that the consequences of decisions and changes are felt to impinge upon the rights and privileges of various participants (e.g., teachers, students, parents or other community groups). However, an analysis of this situation may be complicated by the fact that innovations are many times introduced into the school system consistent with

social or technological changes. Thus, the official decision maker's authority to introduce change into the school system may be legitimated within this broader context.

Changes in curriculum content, for example, in part may be legitimated by statistical fact concerning the number of women in the work force. The addition of home economic courses, family life courses, and extracurricular activities related to the family and extending the student's time in school each day can perhaps be seen from this perspective. The argument and justification for change in the curriculum, for example, may be developed in the following manner: An analysis of sex and age composition of the labor force strongly suggests a change in the (middle class) marital role relationship.[35] Of late there has been a decided increase in the proportion of married women working outside of the home. And indeed, since the initial discussion and decision to enter the labor force, the timing, and how long a woman with children should work are all made within the family unit, the implications for possible changed relationship between husband and wife (i.e., marital life) is clear. This has been documented through much empirical research. However, it should be noted that the implications, if any, of a change in the marital role for the parent role,[36] and in turn the educational process have not been fully explored. Until this is done, the consequences of changes in the family socialization experience, and its relationship to the formal educational process remains blurred. A strong argument for an alteration of the curriculum is untenable, but may still be used as a basis of legitimation. Hence, even when specific partisan groups have an interest in preventing the introduction of an innovation, the position of the core decision makers on the issue may not be particularly endangered or alterable by an attack.

Emergent Partisan Groups and the Decision Making Process

Having introduced the core school system participants who serve as the major decision makers, let us elaborate the discussion of partisan groups participating in school decisions on a more intermittent basis. A partial listing of such groups includes: students, parents, community members as taxpayers or

special interest groups and other professionals.[37] Occasional or intermittent participants of the decision making process can also include core school personnel who feel the need for, or are threatened by a particular decision with which they may not be involved on a routine basis.

In the preceding discussion we indicated that intermittent participation in decision making by interest groups occurs under the condition that expectations of rights and privileges are violated. More specifically, it is expected that interest will tend to focus on school policy and decisions which alter the existing distribution of power, prestige, or economic interest of participants within the schools or in the broader community, as they are perceived to be affected by the school system. The designation of these dimensions is based on the rather obvious line of reasoning that sub-groups identifiable along these basic dimensions will tend to share similar perceptions of the social structure, as well as subcultural sets of values. To the extent that differentiation along these lines also follows nationality, religious or racial differences and the people are confined to a given territory, the crystalization of subgroups can be expected.

Partisan group interest within a particular community then tends to form along the basic dimensions which differentiate and stratify community members. The extent of structural differentiation within any community provides one clue as to the number and types of attempts which might be directed to promoting subgroup interests. It is hypothesized that the greater the number of differentiated groups in the community, the greater the probability that multiple interests will have to be represented in the making of particular decisions. On the other hand, the relationship is not expected to be linear. That is, pluralistic participation in decision making cannot be expected to increase indefinitely as the number of groups increase. As the heterogeneity of the community is increased (e.g., through an influx of large numbers of different residents to the community, and a very <u>high</u> level of differentiation occurs), cross cutting linkages (or cross pressures) in group loyalties between different groups can be expected which may be reflected by a <u>less</u> intense degree of participation in any one movement.

It can also be expected that the greater the span of vertical differentiation, the greater the probability that the school system will reflect the values of those higher in the community stratification system. By the same token, if the core school participants are differentiated from the community members in terms of having more education, or prestige within the broader social context, the greater the probability that school policy and related decisions will be controlled by core school participants.[38]

Participation in decision making by community partisan groups can be discussed in terms of the resources which can be brought to bear on influencing the decision outcome. And, although the weight of resources may not be perfectly associated with the use of the power which could be brought to bear, the perceived power potential of a particular group may in some instances suffice to influence action by those in decision making positions.[39]

Power in this instance is conceived as deriving from imbalance in the interdependence between parties in the situation.[40] From this perspective, power is not necessarily seen as a generalized attribute of a particular unit, but is viewed as the obverse of dependency. This conceptualization of power provides the opportunity to assess net power in a social system, resulting from a set of relationships between units, or units and elements in its task environment. The conceptualization of power also admits of the possibility of increasing interdependence between units resulting in increased net power (e.g., coalition formation).

A participant's power resources can include technical skills, material resources, or in some instances merely their physical presence if this is important to the operation of the school. Alternative sources of skills or labor which prevent the disruption of school operation, or legitimate contradictory demands made by other groups tends to depress the amount of power which a particular group can bring to bear. A partisan group has power which can be brought to bear on decisions then, based not only on formally prescribed authority, as in the instance of core school participants, but also when the group has the capacity to satisfy the needs of other elements in its task environment and the extent to which it monopolizes that capacity. For example,

teachers, though not usually in organization positions which allow influencing decisions concerned with their salary or work conditions, have potential power based on skills which are necessary to the operation of the schools and in their ability to mobilize support from professional associations.

Resources of particular partisan groups can include their ability to mobilize "others" support, through forming coalitions, calling upon the strength of an existing organization in the community or through their ability to organize a heretofore disinterested public. In brief then, power can be exercised to the extent that the school is dependent on the partisan group support, or if a broader legitimacy can be attached to the particular demands being made.

Of course, it is not assumed that the power which particular decision making participants can bring to bear can be maintained indefinitely. An analysis of the school system must be conducted with the keen awareness that changes in the nature of the described relationships may occur at any time. For example, the degree of stability of the groups (or coalition of groups) must be considered. Intermittent partisan participation in the decision making process based solely on support deriving from concern with a single issue can be very deceiving. Participants described as powerful in one portrait of the school system may in fact disappear from the portrait of the same system at another point in time.[41] This is true because the commitment to demands made of the school district (or any specific body of decision makers) does not preclude commitments which the partisan has established elsewhere or necessarily involve his interest in all school-related issues.

Power which is brought to bear in the decision making process also can be diminished through another means. Representatives of community groups making specific demands may be formally coopted by the organization. Cooptation, or the absorption of new elements into the leadership or policy determining structure of an organization is a means of averting a threat to organization stability. Two forms of cooptation are identified by Philip Selznick:[42] formal and informal cooptation. Formal cooptation is implemented through devices such as appointments to positions on the decision making boards and may be used to legitimate the representativeness of a particular governing body. Cooptation occurs as a

formal process when the decision makers in key positions in the organization either fail to reflect the balance of power in the community on which the organization is dependent, or when decision making incumbents are unable to mobilize support for their action. In such situations, a dilemma may be posed for the partisan since he may be subordinated to those already in formal positions.

Informal cooptation or the exercise of influence occurs when the actual center of authority and decision making has shifted or is made more inclusive. Such changes are kept informal when the organizational decision maker deems it necessary to maintain relationships which, however consequential, must be kept covert because an adjustment to the specific group may be interpreted by others as undermining the legitimacy of the formal authority as representative of a theoretically undifferentiated community (i.e., representing the "people as a whole").

Aside from the power which can be brought to bear, partisan group participation in decisions can be also discussed in terms of the stage at which partisan groups enter the scene.

The decision making process generally consists of six stages:[43]

1. Issue recognition
2. Information collection
3. Formulation of decision alternatives
4. Evaluation of different decisions
5. Selecting a specific decision from among the alternatives
6. Implementing the decision chosen.

The degree of involvement in decision making for any single issue by any group can vary over its different stages. That is, community partisan groups may assume initiative when an issue is being introduced or during the period when a decision is being evaluated and selected. However, core school system participants whose primary responsibility rests with the execution of a particular decision may well decide its long-range fate through the manner in which it is implemented.

All of these conditions then introduce complexities into an analysis of a school system and it is clear that the analyst must assume a longitudinal perspective.

V

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT TRENDS AND ISSUES IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Concluding the general discussion of approaches to examining educational systems, let us now consider some of the current trends and issues facing educators. A number of changes in the school system can be noted in such an overview. A summary discussion of these trends and issues provides an empirical guide to points which may be used as foci for more elaborated investigations developed from the approaches outlined thus far.

1. Innovations, in the form of special services and teaching practices, have been rapidly introduced into the existing educational structure.

Examples of the innovations introduced within this category of change include adding new staff (e.g., counselors, social workers, medical personnel and paraprofessionals), introducing equipment and new facilities (e.g., audio-visual equipment, science and language laboratory facilities), and implementing new instructional techniques (e.g., individualized and follow-through programs).

The introduction of the special services and programs into the school system appears to be in response to two parallel demands directed to the schools by its different publics:[44]

1. Academic excellence should be developed in a large number of pupils.
2. Academic competence must be achieved by all pupils.

These demands in part reflect basic alterations in expectations directed to the schools, in their role of preparing youngsters for responsible social participation. These demands can be linked to pressures resulting from social and technological changes which have occurred in the past ten to twenty years. Technological progress not only has been accelerated but is also more widely and quickly publicized. Simultaneously, the work place has been transformed through changed work requirements, standards of employment and trade unions, and through new legislation about the minimum wage.

The nature and the scope of the schools' responsibility for socializing the nation's youth, then, has been altered. Elementary and secondary schooling

is no longer one among many alternatives for preparing oneself for social participation. It has become, as Thomas Green recently notes, very nearly the sole path that one must tread on the way to a dignified adult status in the world.[45]

The demand for increased academic competence on the part of all students in public educational institutions as defined by the present standards of evaluation, however, is complicated by other social facts. This is most clearly evidenced in the situation of particular ethnic minorities in the United States today. Morris Janowitz observes:

> ...the educational "crisis" for the Negro student in the inner city reflects more than economic and technological change; it has cultural and psychological dimensions as well. Race prejudice has made the experience of the Negro in the public school system different from that of other minority and immigrant groups. In this sense the crisis is an old one. As early as in the 1930's, as a result of the work of E. Franklin Frazier, sociologists pointed to the profound disarticulation between educational institutions and the social organization and culture of the Negro family, which was fashioned by slavery and by postemancipation segregation.[46]

In response to the demand for academic competence on the part of all pupils then public schools across the country have developed programs designed to "meet the needs" of the heretofore undereducated proportion of the population. The recency in the introduction of new programs, commonly labeled compensatory education programs, is indicated in the introductory comments of a recent comprehensive review:

> Of the 76 programs for which starting dates were available, after responses to the first survey, 95 percent were begun since 1960 and 43 percent had been initiated in the school year 1963-64. Data subsequently received have doubled the number of cities participating and have generally related to programs of even more recent vintage.[47]

Although the various programs differ in the specific practices introduced, these programs appear to have in common two goals: remedial and preventative education. The programs are remedial in that they attempt to fill social,

cultural or academic gaps in a child's experience. The programs can be viewed as preventative in that by filling the gaps the aim is to forestall either an initial or continuing failure in schools, and by extension in later life. Consistent with these goals, then, the compensatory programs are directed either to pre-school children, or to youngsters who are identified as potential "dropouts."

For the most part, the newly introduced programs have only slightly changed the traditionally set organization and content of education of grades one through twelve. To date, other than a few widely scattered experimental schools, there has been no attempt to completely alter the educational process (i.e., to combine alterations in the total sequence of educational material, educational content and mode of instruction) which would in effect lead to drastic changes in the school structure.

That further alteration in the educational system may be necessary in order to effectively fulfill the socialization task is suggested by many changes in the social environment of our young. Exposure to mass media, increased physical mobility through improved transportation systems, changing ecological patterns of the population and the emergence of new youth cultures all suggest socialization experiences which can serve to compete, if not negate, the socialization experiences within the schools. The effect of these changes and exposure to new learning experiences has not been fully explored. Clearly the relevance of these changes to the student socialization experience and outcome must be understood by educators in order to most efficiently and effectively accomplish the task of socialization.

One consequence of introducing special services and programs for the internal structure of the school system, however, might be noted. The scope of dependence (in terms of advisement and help) of the traditionally defined educator and administrator has been increased and extended to new personnel. These persons in some instances may be included now as part of the core school system. The addition of new personnel, equipment and facilities all should contribute to changes in the patterns of relationships within the school system itself. The extent of change effected in the socialization process,

however, also remains as a question yet open to empirical analysis.

In addition to the many programs being introduced into the schools at this time, a second important issue paralleling these recent innovations can also be noted.

2. There has been an increased demand that the school system be more responsive to local community needs than it has in the past.

This issue has been labeled the "fight for local control," or the decentralization issue. One of the most publicized accounts of the struggle has been promoted through reports of the recent New York City teachers' strike and the relationship of this strike to the experimental Intermediate School 201 complex.[48]

In brief, the basic element underlying the demand for local control of the schools is the desire for an alteration of the relationship between community and school. Civil rights attempts to desegregate schools predominantly attended by black children has not been accomplished easily or rapidly. The state of the existing school system is held responsible for many of the problems which the young people in communities surrounding these schools have in attaining desired levels of academic achievement and obtaining employment. Community leaders, supported by the parents of school children, are demanding control over "our own schools and children." The desire for control is expressed through demands for representation on general policy making boards and changes in the school personnel recruitment and firing procedures. Robert A. Dentler, Director of the Center for Urban Education in New York, succinctly summarizes the desires of those demanding local control:

> ...Ghetto neighborhood parents have little time to invest in operating their schools from day to day. But they do want to change current relations between paid professionals and themselves.
>
> They want to help select the professional leadership, set some of the goals, and judge the overall performance. What they want is what privileged suburban and small town taxpayers have had routinely for more than a century.[49]

However, commenting on the same issue from another perspective, John R. Everett, President of the New School for Social Research, says:

> Most local communities in large cities, or indeed elsewhere, know very little of the literature projecting the nation's work force and professional needs. It is folly to think that the average non-professional citizen would have either the time or the inclination to keep up with the mountain of reports, articles, and books that come out on these subjects each year. Here lay boards must trust professionals, and the school system will meet community needs in exact proportion to the skill and effectiveness of the professional and his freedom from local community pressures.[50]

Everett goes on to state that the lack of distinction between community desires and community needs by advocates of decentralized school districts may produce "equally bad horrors and perhaps even worse results" than those obtained through the current organizational pattern.[51]

The quotation from Everett reflects an ideological position which has been assumed by many occupational groups attempting to impose or maintain their stand in the face of criticism and complaint by groups served. One mode of responding to the threat posed by those questioning the legitimacy (i.e., right) of such occupational groups is the movement toward increased professionalism. Professionalism implies autonomy. Autonomy in turn means some degree of independence from others' control. This, it will be recalled from Section III, defines power relationships in the system. Indeed, educators, like community development personnel, social workers, and chiropractors in the recent past, are attempting to professionalize. And, this is the third major trend in elementary and secondary education.

3. There is a struggle for professional autonomy exemplified by action such as increased teacher militancy.

Teacher militancy is defined as the withholding of work performance by teachers as a means of achieving the satisfaction of their demands. The Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Research Division of the N.E.A. have shown that

there has been a significant increase in teacher militancy since 1940. These statistics are reported in terms of teacher strikes, number of man-days lost, percent of man-days of instruction, and type of teacher organization gaining strength in terms of increased membership.

In an overview of teacher militancy, some specific trends can be noted:

1. Professional organizations are now providing more support of activities such as negotiation with school administration.
2. Teacher strikes are moving from the local to the state level (e.g., Utah, Kentucky, Florida, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania).
3. Teachers negotiate not only on issues such as salaries and benefits, but also on matters concerned with teaching loads, class size and curriculum decisions which they feel affect the quality of their work.

State legislatures have responded to the newly developed militancy with an increase in anti-strike legislation directed to public employees. One third of the st .es have laws prohibiting work stoppages by these employees. Twelve state court decisions have been interpreted as making public employee strikes illegal.[52]

In summary, the general issues cited thus far represent only a cursory review of the situations and issues current to American education. Social and technological change, and community pressures have been related to alteration in educational practices. In some instances, schools are now subject to closer scrutiny by communities which in the past left the education pretty much to professional personnel.

In part the apparent problem which the schools face today stems from the fact that the school system has been in existence for some time and for the most part has been able to establish a relatively autonomous character free of control by any single interest or political group. Professional educators, based on their experiences, training and predilections, feel that they can best judge the appropriate practices, content and mode of managing the schools. Most of the innovations which have been introduced to date into the school

systems, though responsive to and consistent with the public image of the school system, for the most part have been decided upon and implemented by professional educators. However, the innovations are felt by some community groups to be inadequate. The struggle for control described by the decentralization issue is on.

The changes in the school system and the struggles accompanying the changes should not represent a completely unexpected state of affairs. As a public service organization schools are supported for the most part by public revenue. A long standing debate has been over the sources, amount and the allocation of financial resources. And, too, as an important "people processing" organization, the schools are held to be primarily responsible for training one of the nation's most valuable resources: youth. Parents, business, the professions, labor unions, and the polity, not to speak of the students themselves, are directly and indirectly affected by student socialization experience and outcome. Each of these groups are justly concerned.

Three points, then, emerge as areas of basic concern to educational institutions today: the degree of community participation in decision making; extent to which innovations are introduced; and degrees of teacher militancy, which is viewed as a phase in the professionalization of teacher.

Formal hypotheses developed around the relationship between the three variables, based on the preceding discussion, are presented as a means of summarizing, in part, this presentation, and providing an example of how the approaches might be further elaborated.

If one begins with the assumption that teacher militancy is an indicator of one of the earlier stages in the professionalization of this occupational group, we may ask: Under what conditions of community participation, and introduction of changes (innovation) in the schools can we expect a movement toward increasing professional status?

Assuming a low degree of staff professionalization:

Hypothesis I - Teacher militancy, as an indicator of a move toward increasing autonomy (or obtaining professional status) can be expected when:

(a) community participation in decision making and school system change are both high;

(b) community participation in decision making is high, and the introduction of system change is low;

(c) community participation in decision making is low, and the introduction of change in the school system is high.

We may expect teacher militancy when community participation and school system changes are high because of the threat posed to the position which teachers have attained in the past, and retain to some degree today. Teacher activity within her classroom is not highly visible to outsiders. Teachers, for the most part, have been able to obtain a degree of autonomy in the practice of work in spite of a low degree of professionalization. High community participation and the rapid introduction of changes into the schools suggest a threat to control over the teachers' work by both the community and school system administrators.

Using the same simple logic, teacher militancy can also be expected when community participation is low, but the introduction of changes is rapid. In this instance the source of the threat is the administrative staff. Teacher militancy can also be expected when community participation is high, even when the introduction of innovation is low. This would be due to the threat posed by lay interference.

Looking at the relationship between community participation, the introduction of innovation and the professionalization of teachers from another direction, we may ask: When school system staff is highly professionalized, when can we expect to find conflict between participants in the school system?

Hypothesis II - Assuming high school system personnel professionalization high conflict can be expected to occur when there is high community participation, and few changes (innovations) in the school system.

In this instance we would expect to find that the high participation by community interest groups and few changes in the school system are associated with:

(a) A fairly homogeneous population

(b) Difference in the educational values (preferences) expressed by the educators and community members (i.e., vertical differentiation between the groups)

(c) Limited resources (financial and personnel) which in turn are probably associated with

(1) few alternative student career paths
(2) inflexible curricula

The portrait of the educational system in this case resembles, at least on the surface, that situation found in many urban ghettos today. As we had noted in our review of issues directed to the educators today, the educators' legitimacy to make the many decisions for youngsters in these communities is being seriously questioned. The demand for "community" control is being made.

Again, assuming the high professionalization of educators,

Hypothesis II-B - moderate conflict may be expected even when there is a consensus on the general values attached to educational practices. This can be expected when participation by community members is high and change (or innovations) is frequently introduced into the school system. This relationship in turn is expected to be associated with the following conditions:

(a) Predominantly middle classe communities (or school district)

(b) Resources which allow the development of

(1) a variety of alternative student career paths
(2) a flexible curriculum.

Middle class parents and community members will tend to participate in school affairs in order to assure the "adequacy" of their children's socialization experiences. This participation, and the availability of adequate resources will probably result in the introduction of fairly frequent changes (e.g., experimental programs, or enrichment classes, etc.). Frequent participation, however, associated with interest in their children's experiences, may lead

to a moderate level of conflict between educators and parents.

Hypothesis II-C - Conflict, at any given point in time, will tend to be low when there is a low community participation, but under the conditions of either rapid or slow rates of change in the school system.

In the instance of rapid introduction of change (innovations) into the school system, but low community participation, we expect to find:

(a) a predominantly middle class community

(b) adequate resources, which allow

(1) alternative student career paths
(2) flexible curricula

Flexibility in the students' educational experience is probably associated with satisfaction in the efficacy of the schools. However, rapidly introduced change in the schools is associated with low conflict only when there is congruency in the values pertaining to education held by educators and community members, and the changes are viewed as consistant with these values. Congruency in educator-community values would tend to hold true when community members are middle, rather than lower or upper, class.

On the other hand, although the conflict may be low at the time of any particular investigation of school systems, within the context of rapid social and technological changes in the society, educators are faced with conflict in the future in the instance of a school system which is not introducing change. This can be expected, as discussed earlier, when the population served by the school system is either concerned with other interests, or is highly heterogeneous. In the latter instance it is suggested that community members have not yet come together as articulate interest groups directing their attention to the schools.

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

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5. See for example discussions by:

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Horizontal differentiation and the emergence of organized social or special interest groups provide a potential source of support. Vertically differentiated groups, as discussed by Terry Clark (op. cit.) on the other hand can lead to the creation of separate structures which serve as distinct power bases. The lower sectors of the community in such instances are less likely than the upper sectors to participate in those organizations which allow mobilization of resources toward influencing attempts.

39. Ralf B. Kimbrough, "An Informal Arrangement for Influence Over Basic Policy," in Rosenthal (ed.), op. cit., pp. 105-136.

Marilyn Gittell, ("Professionalism and Public Participation in Educational Policy Making," in Gittell and Hevesi [eds.], op. cit., pp. 155-173) reports that in New York City public interest groups concerns had been minimal. She notes:

> Public participation in school policy formulation is circumscribed by the lack of visible decision making, the shortage of information available to the public on most issues, and a deficiency in the means for participation. Parent associations are active in individual schools, dealing with highly localized and personalized problems. The highly centralized organization of the school system is a deterrent to communication between parents groups and policy-makers. (p. 173)

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