DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 086 800 CE 000 803

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TITLE "Microville II": A Simulation-Gaming Device Designed to Instruct Community Leaders in the Development of Programs on a Community-Wide Basis.
PUB DATE 72
NOTE 30p.; See ED076853 for Microville I

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS Behavior Change; Change Agents; Community Change; *Community Development; *Community Leaders; Decision Making; *Educational Games; Leadership Training; Management Education; Management Games; *Models; Problem Solving; Program Development; Program Improvement; Self Evaluation; Simulated Environment; *Simulation; Training Techniques
IDENTIFIERS *Microville

ABSTRACT

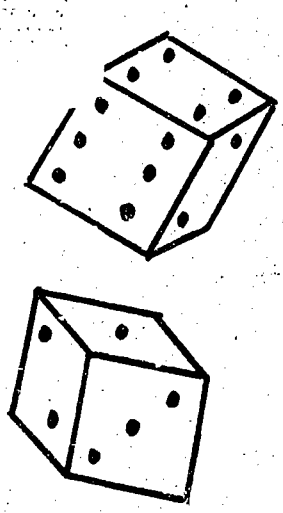
"Microville II," a simulation-game idea, is a creative effort to develop and apply resources, processes, and programs necessary to resolve contemporary problems faced by rural and urban leaders. The strategy is that a community council has been established within the community of "Microville" and participants assume the various roles of the council members who represent a variety of community agencies. The simulation-gaming device is designed as a model for securing substantial changes in management behavior of community leaders and in their inter-personal perceptions of their professional roles as change agents, facilitators, coordinators and energizers. Participants of the simulation-game experience are exposed to the identification and utilization of concepts most relevant to program development as well as the social processes involved in decision-making and problem-solving. The instructional model consists of five key components: philosophy; needs and wants (strategy, kinds of data, analyses, priorities); objectives; implementation (human, physical and financial resources); and evaluation. (EA)

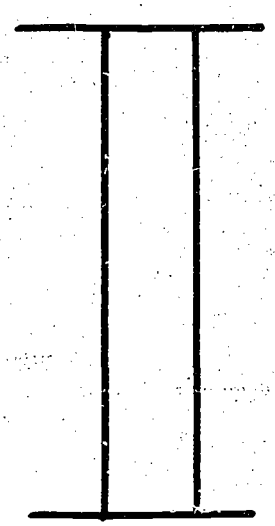
'MICROVILLE II'

A Simulation - Gaming Device Designed to Instruct Community Leaders in the Development of Programs on a Community-Wide Basis

by John C. Snider

- ***Community Organization***
- ***Community Development***
- ***Community Improvement***





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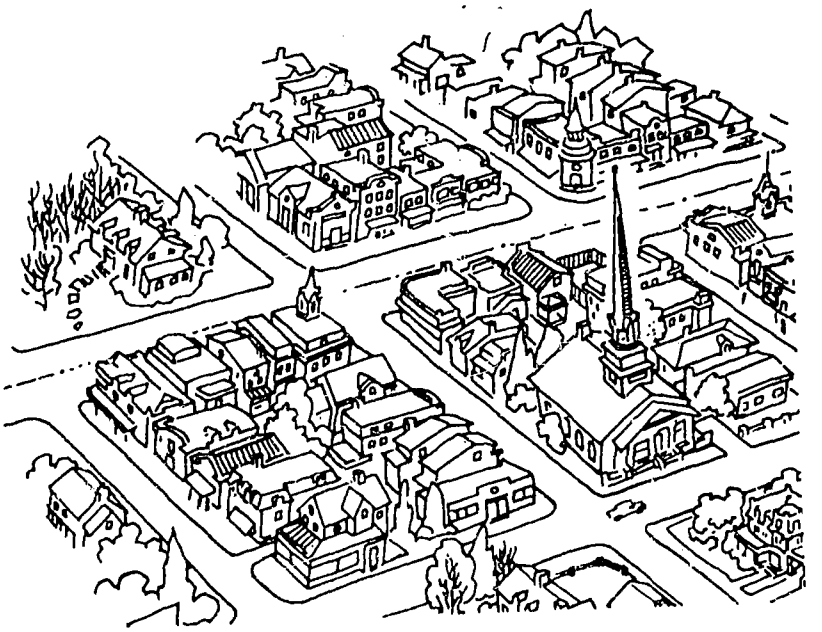

INTRODUCTION

"Microville II" is a simulation-gaming device that is designed to instruct community leaders in the development of programs on a community-wide basis. "Microville II" is an outgrowth of "Microville," which was developed at Florida State University in 1969 for the purpose of training adult educators in program development processes. "Microville" has also been used by the Department of Education (Continuing Education) at Colorado State University since 1970. Other institutions using "Microville" as an instructional device, both on campus and in the community setting, are: University of Nebraska; University of Illinois; Georgia Southern College; Holland College (Canada); and Florida International University.

Both "Microville II" and "Microville" have been used by Project Communi-Link, headquartered at Colorado State University, as a primary vehicle in training more than 6,000 community leaders who hailed from communities located in 14 western states and who represented a large variety of state and local agencies, institutions, and organizations.

Although both simulation games are still being field tested and are undergoing several modifications, they have already proved themselves to be functional instructional devices that show significant potential for the areas of adult education and community improvement.

CHAPTER I

PURPOSE AND RATIONALE

The purpose of this endeavor is to utilize a simulation-gaming device which will instruct community leaders in the development of programs on a community-wide basis.

The rationale is based on the belief that dedicated men and women through mutual and individual creative efforts can develop and apply the resources, processes, and programs necessary to resolve contemporary problems faced by today's rural and urban leaders.

Much has been written about the various forms of agencies and organizations which have contributed to community improvement at the institutional level. There are community institutions, such as schools, churches, businesses, and social service agencies, which perform well-defined social functions designated necessary by the community. There are formal associations, such as clubs, lodges, professional associations and unions, which are an important part of the American social organization, and then there are informal groups which develop around the varying patterns of social interaction which underlie the structure of the formal organization within the community.

As a result of the many institutions and associations referred to above, communities throughout the nation are developing programs which are designed to stimulate and encourage the improvement of community. These programs are organized under many different auspices and shaped to a myriad of forms and patterns. They may range in extent and variety from a "Clean-up, Fix-up" program being sponsored by the Chamber of

Commerce to a Y.M.C.A. class in judo or to a Cooperative Extension program in resource development techniques being conducted at a university experiment station. Year by year, increasing numbers of men and women from all age groups and all socio-economic levels are finding satisfaction and profit through their involvement in such programs.

Of considerable importance, however, is the concern of leading sociologists and educators who have pointed out that there is an insignificant number of well planned, well coordinated community-wide programs. Community leaders throughout the nation have stated the need for such programs as well as the need for better trained personnel in the area of program development at the community-wide level.

This simulation-game idea is therefore presented because of the great responsibility placed on community leaders today and because of the relative lack of knowledge of the processes that must be utilized in order to develop optimal programs. Consequently, the key assumptions of this project are:

1. That the dynamic, competent and creative efforts of community leaders are critical and prime factors in their ability to increase significantly the effectiveness of community-wide program development.

2. That the community leaders are willing and capable of devising better ways to make greater use of what is already known about community-wide program development.

3. That community leaders, because of their leadership positions, their experiences, and their desires to create and energize resources (human, physical and financial), can indeed develop optimal community-wide programs.

Of theoretical as well as practical importance is the assessment of the simulation-gaming device which is designed as a model for securing substantial changes in management behavior of community leaders and in their inter-personal perceptions of their professional roles as change agents, facilitators, coordinators, and energizers.

The overall significance of "Microville" must be measured in terms of the changes that actually occur in community agencies in terms of more adequately prepared staffs, the creation and implementation of new systems for wider involvement of community agencies, and a greatly increased rate of accomplishment in community-wide program development.

CHAPTER II

INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL

A preliminary assumption of the simulation-game strategy is that a community council has been established within the community ("Microville" is the designated community in the simulation-game) and that the participants assume the various roles of the council members who represent a variety of community agencies. With this assumption, they are ready to begin the experience. Before describing the game strategy, however, it is felt that an explanation of the instructional model is prerequisite.

The entire simulation-game experience is based on an instructional model which provides the participants with the opportunities to identify and utilize those concepts most relevant to program development. Also, the experience familiarizes participants with the social processes involved in decision-making and problem-solving which bring about the optimal development of programs.

The instructional model consists of five key components, each with several subcomponents (see Figure 1). These components are incorporated into the strategy of the simulation-game which facilitate the social processes relevant to the concepts identified in the components and subcomponents. The instructional model includes the following components:

1. Philosophy. It is felt that in order to function effectively as a community council, the individual members of the council must first develop through group process a philosophy on which to base their operations. This philosophy would be a result of the council's knowledge of

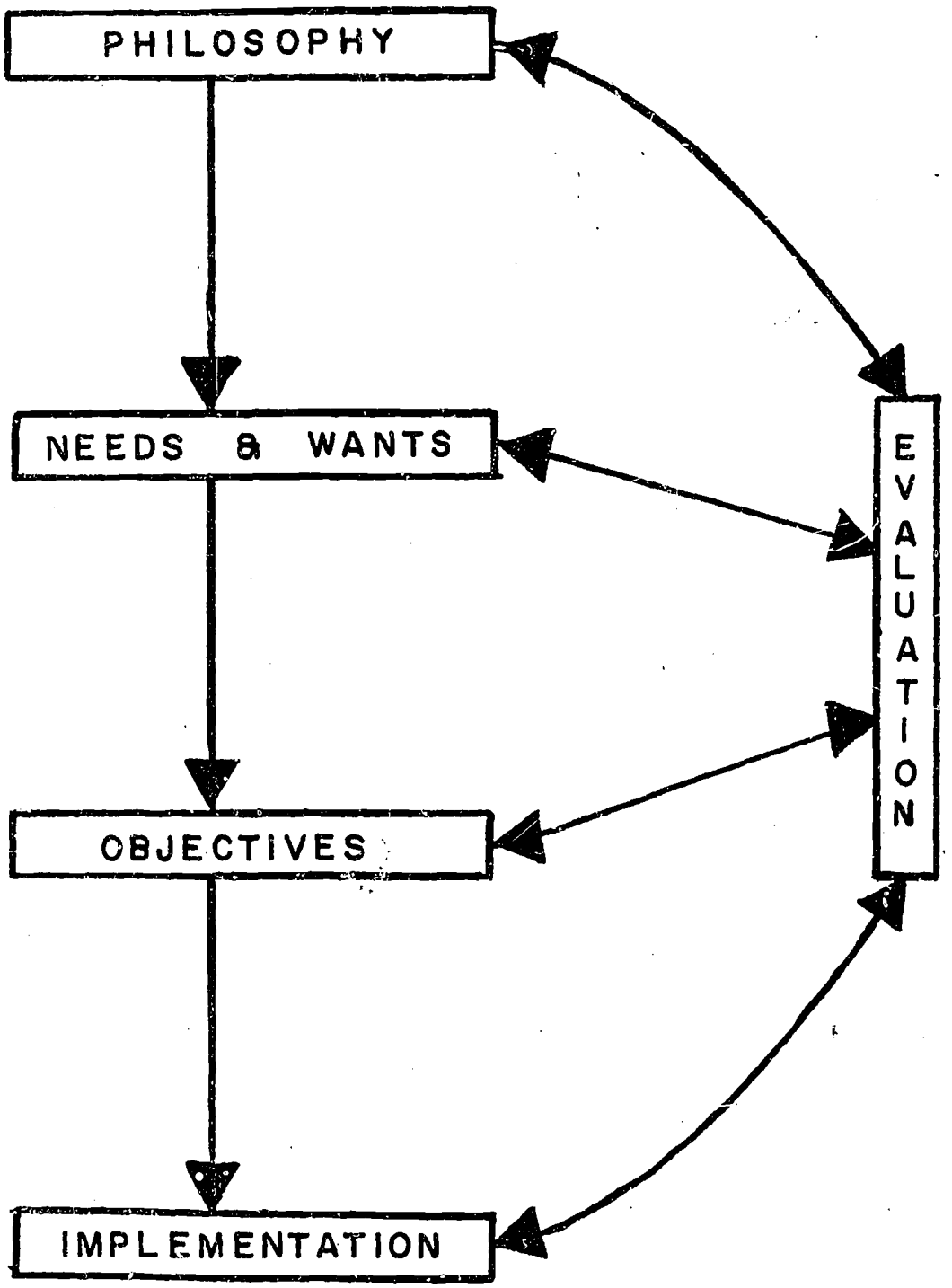

Figure 1. Instructional Model (Community-Wide Program Development Process)

community agency operations that most directly relate to their concern for community improvement and of the life experiences of the individual council members themselves.

Many times, councils, commissions, and planning groups start right off developing programs without giving philosophy a serious thought. They feel that a group philosophy is superficial and unnecessary. Other groups actually possess a written philosophy which is dysfunctional because it is written in lofty platitudes for appearances only and placed in obscure file cabinets to collect dust.

This component of the model calls for a philosophy that is functional and dynamic, and that allows the council members to determine at the outset what their beliefs, values, and attitudes are. With this thought in mind, a community council should be able to develop a philosophy by using the following suggested criteria:

a. Make clear the central aims and purposes of community improvement programs.

b. Reveal individual and community attitudes and values about which community programs should be concerned.

Policy is a complementary subcomponent of philosophy. After establishing values, attitudes and general direction via the philosophy, a council is in a very good position to establish policy for "council operations." Policy allows for a course of conduct for the council based on principle and advisability. As examples of principles on which a council might base a portion of its policy, reference is made to two of Murray Ross' principles relating to organization: (a) "The council must involve leaders (formal and informal) identified with, and accepted by, major subgroups in the community." (b) The council must maintain "active

and effective lines of communication" both within the council and between the council and the community.

The development of such policy statements is invaluable in community-wide program development.

2. Needs and wants. Social psychologists define needs as activating and sustaining forces of behavior which may either be positive or negative. A positive need is a desire or force that causes one to strive for a goal. A positive need could also be defined as a "want." A negative need is a force that drives a person away from certain situations, which is sometimes the condition experienced by individuals relevant to institutional programs.

A community council must identify these needs and wants of the various population groups within their community before considering possible programs. The strategy for determining the needs and wants will vary with individual councils; however, the following general plan is offered as a possibility. It is a survey plan, which in this model, becomes a subcomponent of Needs and Wants.

a. Collect data from government agencies within the community (federal, state, county, local). These would include those agencies which are utilizing data collection processes which would provide significant information for the council.

b. Collect data from the communications media when and where available.

c. Collect data from Chamber of Commerce.

d. Collect data from libraries.

e. Collect data from local education systems (not classified as government agency in this survey plan).

f. Field survey the people of the community.

g. Field survey the power structure of the community.

The rationale for surveying the agencies first is that the rapid collection of large amounts of data concerning the community as a whole is more feasible through these agencies. Not to be slighted (although in reality often slighted) is the "field survey of people." Harold Kaufman speaks to this aspect of community survey by stating:

> It is a truism to state that findings are no better than the original data. Also, the nature of the data needed is a crucial consideration in determining the type of procedures utilized in collection of information. Much ecological data, for example, can be secured from publications and other records, whereas social psychological information, such as much of that required in describing the interactional community, must be collected by direct observation of behavior in the field.

The underlying reason for placing the survey of power structure at the end of the list is that the interviewing of knowledgeables in a community leads to the identification of power actors who make up the real power structure. Consequently, it is felt that valid identification takes place after the other steps of the survey have been completed; and it is also felt that in following this plan, systemic distortion and bias are not imposed on the surveyors by power actors before those surveyors go to the people.

Another subcomponent of Needs and Wants is Kinds of Data collected. The council would want several different kinds of information, some of which are: demographic data; socio-economic status data; census data; race, religion, and national origin data; and attitudinal data. Socio-economic data would include information concerning educational achievement, income and occupational status. And too, information concerning aspirations, interests, and needs would be secured.

Analyses of the data is a third subcomponent of Needs and Wants. After collecting sufficient information about the community and identifying specific needs and wants, analyses of the various findings would be necessary in order to assign priorities to the needs. These analyses would take into consideration both wants and needs and provide information necessary for wise decision-making in the development of a program.

Analyses of needs and wants must be relevant to the different client populations found in a community. This means that a client population of disadvantaged blacks would be analyzed according to their own unique needs, and lower middle class whites would be analyzed according to their own needs and wants. After thorough and careful analyses of the needs and wants of all client populations, the council is then able to look at the overall community with greater insight and perspective.

It is at this stage that the final subcomponent under Needs and Wants is identified--Priorities. Priorities are established as a result of the final analyses of needs and wants and crucial to the optimal development of a community-wide program.

The instructional model thus far described is not intended to be static or unrealistic. It is intended to be dynamic and therefore modifiable. If, for instance, the identification, analysis, and ranking of needs and wants uncovers a flagrant discripancy in the philosophy and/or its subcomponent policy, then the philosophy and/or policy can be modified. On the other hand, if philosophy uncovers glaring errors in the setting of priorities, then those priorities can be reconsidered.

3. Objectives. Objectives, according to Alan Knox, Robert Mager, and Ralph Tyler, should be written in realistic and attainable terms.

Simply stated, the main purpose of establishing objectives is to let everyone concerned know (a) what the program is going to do, (b) how the program will do what it says it's going to do, and (c) the means of determining if the program did what it was supposed to do.

Many educators in the past believed that objectives should be written in lofty, abstract terms. Times are changing. It has been discovered that effective community programs are best achieved when the objectives are clearly and concisely stated in measurable terms. It is felt that objectives at the community-wide level can be written in the terms described above. It is likewise believed that this major component in the instructional model is extremely crucial to success in developing effective programs, and it is one of the most difficult steps to complete.

4. Implementation (operationalization). The operationalization component includes all of the steps of action that must be taken in order to implement the objectives established. These steps of action or decisions will include consideration of several subcomponents, as listed below:

a. Human Resources. This is a major subcomponent that includes utilization of professionals, paraprofessionals, and volunteer laymen as well as the client populations being served.

b. Physical Resources. This is also an important subcomponent of the model because of the tremendous amount of cooperation needed to coordinate all of the diverse physical facilities available in most communities, e.g., churches, schools, private houses, health centers, banks, etc.

c. Financial Resources. This subcomponent can be divided into two concerns: (1) the coordination of existing monies, which is an important factor in community-wide programs, and (2) the improvement of existing budgets by innovative models such as P.P.B.S.

d. Hardware and Software. At the community-wide level of program development, this is not a major concern. However, it is a resource that must be appreciated by the program planners in order to avoid subsequent difficulties for individual agencies that implement certain phases or parts of the community-wide programs.

5. Evaluation. Evaluation occurs in two ways: (a) the evaluation of product, which is the first subcomponent, and (b) evaluation of process, the second subcomponent. Product evaluation indicates whether or not the objectives have been achieved, and process evaluation indicates how the whole program might be improved. Product evaluation will occur at the conclusion of specified programs or units whereas process evaluation is an on-going activity (as indicated in the model diagram in Figure 1).

A concluding thought. The simulation-game, "Microville," provides the vehicle by which participants (council members) can internalize the instructional model described above. In other words, the instructional model is a process; and a process is often best learned via experience. Simulation-gaming provides such experience; hence the purpose of "Microville."

CHAPTER III

SIMULATION-GAME APPROPRIATENESS

The reasoning underlying the selection of the simulation-game device is based upon the following definitions of concepts simulation and gaming:

> Simulation is the development of a model which abstracts from reality those components and relationships which are hypothesized as crucial to what is being modeled.
>
> Gaming involves simulations in which human participants serve as decision-makers within a somewhat competitive situation.

The decision is therefore reached to use the simulation-game which is based upon a physical model. More specifically, the model is a verisimilitude, which is the kind of physical model having many of the appearances and characteristics of reality.

The simulation-game has the following advantages over traditional forms of instruction in adult education program development. Those advantages as identified by Guetzkow and others are as follows:

1. Simulation-gaming is based on objectives which emphasize attitudinal outcomes.
2. Simulation-gaming integrates affective and cognitive behavior.
3. Simulation-gaming initiates sustained learner activity and motivation.
4. Simulation-gaming is useful when emphasis is upon incorporation of the behavior desired within the personal domain of the learner.
5. Simulation-gaming provides an interest-sustaining mode that is particularly useful for exercising behavior, especially under a variety of contexts.
6. Simulation-gaming is a powerful means of placing a learner into a "desired set" or "perceptual frame" to sensitize and direct him.

CHAPTER IV

SIMULATION-GAME SPECIFICATIONS

The simulation-game is designed as a verisimilar model representing the relevant aspects of a community in which council leaders would develop optimal programs. The device itself is constructed of three 24" x 30" plywood shells which are hinged together so that they open and close in much the same manner as does a suitcase. The purpose of such a specification is that the device can be easily moved from location to location. When in actual use, the device can be opened and placed in an upright position. (See Figure 2). [Not included, won't reproduced clearly-OE Ed.]

Inside the simulation-game, the scenario of an average community is painted on the surfaces of the three shells to the extent that the low, low middle, middle, and upper class residential areas are represented, as well as the main institutions and agencies related (directly or indirectly) to the broad area of community improvement. Institutions and agencies included are:

1. Public Health Center
2. Civil Defense
3. Military Base
4. Employment Office
5. Business
6. Bank
7. Museum
8. Jr. High School
9. Protestant Church
10. Chamber of Commerce
11. USO
12. TV and Radio
13. Factory
14. Labor Union
15. Elementary School
16. Catholic Church
17. Synagogue
18. High School and Voc.-Tech. School
19. Field House
20. Library
21. YMCA
22. Women's Civic Center
23. Professional Building
24. Board of Education
25. Community College
26. Medical Center
27. University Extension

At each residential area and at each agency or institution, data

cards will be stored with the following kinds of information contained on them:

A. Residential Areas:

1. Name
2. Age
3. Occupation
4. Formal Education
5. Hobbies and Group Memberships
6. Felt Needs and Interests

B. Institutions and/or Agencies:

1. Personnel
2. Physical Facilities
3. Policies and Philosophies
4. Past Practices and Beliefs
5. Financial, Physical, Hardware, Software Resources
6. Data Concerning Client Population Served.

In the northeast corner of the case, one small compartment is located. The compartment houses a series of "Position" cards which are used to assign individual players occupational positions to be performed as the various activities take place during the operation of the simulation-game.

A standard pair of dice is used for determining the number of data cards that each player is eligible to select at designated time periods.

A community newspaper, "Microville Post Times," has been published which will contain general community data such as population characteristics, cultural levels, etc.

Evaluation guidelines and evaluation forms have been developed for each cycle or laboratory learning session of the operation. The game administrator will thereby have objective criteria for determining if the decisions made by the council members are effective and efficient, and the game administrator (Mayor) will also have a predetermined method for scoring members of each council.

Strategy cards will be developed to employ specified operations at each "council meeting." The cards will be written in a manner and style that will make the strategy of the simulation-game as fast moving as reasonably possible. The cards will be based upon "Cycles."

The data cards are programmed to make available to the participants (predetermined) needs and interests of the community. It will be the council members' task to seek out and identify those predetermined wants and needs.

CHAPTER V

SIMULATION-GAME STRATEGY

The game will be divided into a series of "cycles" which correspond to the key components and subcomponents of the instructional model. Each "cycle" will be delineated on a strategy card via cycle objectives, directions, guidelines, evaluation criteria, and content references. Strategy cards for each cycle will be duplicated in sufficient quantities in order to allow each participant an individual card.

Because of the division by cycles, the simulation-game becomes very flexible and can be used in various laboratory learning situations.

Cycles for the game are utilized in the following manner:

Cycle I. The entire group of participants is orientated to simulation-gaming in general. They are then given the diagram of the instructional model for this specific game (Microville) with explanation of aims and purposes. Also in Cycle I, discussion of the social processes conveyed through simulation-gaming is generated. Discussion might focus on such concepts as (a) relative impacts that result from effective, efficient decision-making processes, (b) the facilitation of intense involvement and active participation with leaders of diverse agencies, and (c) the impact of working effectively or ineffectively with other people.

Participants are then shown "Microville" for the first time. Explanation is given of the agencies, neighborhoods, business centers, etc.

Participants are randomly grouped into "councils" of five to eight members. Their purpose is to develop optimal community-wide programs. Participants become acquainted with each other by discussing real-life

experiences related to educational endeavors, community councils, program development, etc. Then each council member selects his "assumed position" as a member of "Microville's" Community Improvement Council. After all selections, each council moves to a separate location where each participant's position is analyzed and discussed by the entire council. Cycle I involves a time duration of "X" hours (announced by the Mayor).

Cycle II. Each council develops its own philosophy with accompanying policy statements. This philosophy will be based on criteria suggested on the strategy card plus criteria established by members of the council. A copy of the philosophy is turned in to the game administrator for scoring at the end of "X" hours (announced by the Mayor).

Cycle III. Each council begins to analyze Microville in terms of community needs and wants. Considerable attention is given to the planning of a strategy for surveying Microville. Sources of information which are available to the councils to be used at their discretion are: (a) data cards of agencies, business, and residential areas, (b) radio broadcasts, (c) newspapers, and interviews with "Microville" citizens (role playing).

Cycle III involves "X" hours of interaction among council members, between councils and the game board, and between members of opposite councils. It is a highly significant cycle that allows councils (teams) the opportunity of evaluating the objectives and values inherent in their decisions, which is a crucial social process in program development.

The council plan or strategy then will be developed entirely by the group with very few guidelines set down in the Cycle III strategy card. The simulation-game will provide the data; however, the councils will need to discover the most effective, efficient strategy for securing those data.

A listing of these identified needs and wants, with reasoning for their existence and with reasoning for priorities set, will be submitted to the game administrator for scoring (time limits announced by the Mayor).

Cycle IV. Each council writes the objectives for its community-wide program by taking into consideration its philosophy and policy and the needs and wants identified according to priorities. Each council will submit a copy of these objectives to the game administrator (Mayor) for scoring. The cycle involves "X" hours' work (announced by the Mayor).

Cycle V. Each council develops its community-wide program for implementation. At this point the council members may collect more data from the board. Human, physical, financial, and material (hardware, software) resources will be taken into consideration. The game administrator will also score this cycle of the game. Time: "X" hours (announced by the Mayor).

Cycle VI. Each council develops evaluative criteria that will serve as a measurement for the adequate achievement of program objectives. Hopefully, the evaluations by each council will not only measure product but also will provide information concerning the process which involves all phases of development. The councils then submit their evaluation instruments to the game administrator for scoring. Time required for Cycle VI: "X" hours (announced by the Mayor).

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

It is hoped that "Microville" will add to the body of knowledge in community improvement, not only in the area of program development processes but also in the area of instructional devices that can be utilized to facilitate greater learning.

The desire of the designers of "Microville" is that it provide opportunities for developing imaginative "plans of action" which would maximize the effective use of resources in community-wide programming. Hopefully, this desire will be realized.

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APPENDIX

SELF-EVALUATION OF EACH GAME CYCLE BY INDIVIDUAL COUNCILS

APPENDIX

ASSESSMENT OF PHILOSOPHY DEVELOPMENT

(5 points each)

_____1. Was each philosophical consideration identified by the council members in fact discussed?

_____2. Were efforts made to elicit opinions of each council member when trying to decide which of the philosophical considerations and other possible "inputs" should be adopted, adapted, or rejected?

_____3. Were opposing points of view negotiated--was there evidence of reconciliation of such differences through the adoption, compromise, or eclectic positions?

_____4. Were there other group process factors that did or did not contribute to development of the council philosophy?

APPENDIX

ASSESSMENT OF IDENTIFICATION OF NEEDS AND WANTS

(5 points each)

_____1. Is the Strategy for identifying Needs and Wants in harmony with the Philosophy of the council?

_____2. Is the Strategy comprehensive and representative enough to identify the Needs and Wants of the total community?

_____3. Do the Needs and Wants identified reflect the Needs and Wants of the total community?

_____4. Are the priorities assigned to the Needs and Wants justified by adequate empirical data and appropriate statements of rationale (Philosophy, etc.)?

APPENDIX

ASSESSMENT OF OBJECTIVES

(5 points each)

_____1. Do the Objectives indicate the following:

a. What the outcomes are to be?

b. How the outcomes will be attained?

c. How everyone concerned will know when the outcomes have been attained?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____2. Are the Objectives comprehensive and representative enough for the outcomes wanted and/or needed in the community?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____3. Do the Objectives clearly communicate their intents? Is the language understandable?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____4. Are the Objectives in harmony with the Philosophy of the council?

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX

ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF A COMMUNITY-WIDE PROGRAM

(5 points each)

_____1. Is the community-wide program in harmony with the council Philosophy?

_____2. Is the program comprehensive and representative enough to meet the Wants and Needs of the <u>total</u> community?

_____3. Is the program based on the stated Objectives?

_____4. Is the program based on the allocation of justifiable and coordinated resources?

a. Human Resources

b. Physical Resources

c. Hardware-Software Resources

d. Financial Resources

APPENDIX

ASSESSMENT OF EVALUATION

(5 points each)

_____1. Has the council engaged in process evaluation (formative evaluation) throughout the community-wide program development experience?

a. Group Process

b. Integration of Cycles

c. Program Decisions

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____2. Has the council developed evaluative instruments (summative evaluation) which are based on the criteria delineated in the stated Objectives?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____3. Has the council analyzed the role of evaluation (formative and summative) in the community-wide program development process?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____4. Has each individual council member engaged in self-evaluation in terms of his own participation?

a. Group Process

b. Integration of Cycles

c. Program Decisions

_____

_____

_____