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ABSTRACT

This is a follow-up study of an extensive three-year investigation of variables responsible for school district adoption of innovative programs. The follow-up study was designed to provide new data and strategies relating to 1) the extent to which those programs originally adopted have survived, 2) the extent to which state or federal agency support has contributed to this survival, 3) the extent to which the state has translated the successes of one program to others, 4) the impact of the changing economy/shrinking school population on program adoption, and 5) the role of significant early study variables on continued survival of innovative programs. (Author)

INNOVATIONS AND BUREAUCRACIES:

A Reexamination of Diffusion Strategies for State and Local Systems

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by

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Two years ago this author presented to AERA (1975) findings of an extensive three-year study entitled, "What Makes Innovation Work in Massachusetts?"[1]--an examination of some of the complex variables that facilitated or impeded the local adoption of educational innovations funded by ESEA Title III from 1971-1974.

Like many other studies, it looked at the characteristics of the innovations themselves and the kinds of school districts that spawned them (Rogers, 1969, 1971; Havelock, 1969, 1973; Hearn, 1969; Miles, 1965, 1969; Carlson, 1965). Like much of the research, it found certain variables to be important--systematic planning and development of objectives which are visible, tangible, and realistic (Rogers, 1969; Havelock, 1969, 1973; Leithwood, 1974; Lingwood, 1974; Hearn, 1969; Miles, 1965, 1974; Hall, 1974); rigorous evaluation which is an active part of the program (Rogers, 1969, 1971; Miles, 1965; Havelock, 1969); and effective network building and dissemination (Balyeat and Douglas, 1973; Baldridge, 1972; House, 1973; Rogers, 1971; Miles, 1969).

However, unlike most studies of diffusion, this looked also at the atmosphere and relationships that made the innovation work--the political and bureaucratic realities with which any program must contend. It analyzed the role of the state agency in fostering change. And in so doing, it uncovered problems and characteristics--similar to those seen as key by House (1974) and Pincus (1974)--unique to federally-funded innovations.

Contrary to preliminary hypotheses, overall analysis showed a large discrepancy between the federal and state policies on change (as explicated in proposal guidelines and program requirements) and the political and bureaucratic realities of what goes on in school districts. For example, it found that analyzing the political power bases in a district and obtaining early administrative and teacher support for a program were of much greater importance to its continuation than the state- and federally-mandated needs assessments required for funding (as a result of Miller [1968] study). It also found that a professional or open (less bureaucratic) atmosphere of a district was more important than wealth (contrary to Carlson, 1965) in determining a tendency

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[1]Boston: Massachusetts Department of Education, September, 1975. ED 119 358. Long report and summary available. "What Makes Innovation Work in Massachusetts?: Strategies for State and Local Systems," Paper presented to the AERA, Washington, D.C., April 1975. ED 103 960.

to adopt. And most importantly, it revealed that personal/face-to-face contacts between the diffusion leader and school administrators was the single, most significant activity which led to routinization and adoption (House, 1974).

It was the feeling of this author that a tightening economy and a conservative swing in educational philosophy have undoubtedly had an impact on the interaction of these variables upon local adoption. Furthermore, since the data were collected in the final year of Title III funding when local adoption was clear but nonetheless an untested state for the programs, it is not at all certain that the same variables would hold true in a routinization phase without federal or state support even without the other changes that have taken place.

By following up on the programs originally research in 1974, this study would generate data on: (1) the extent to which those originally adopted have survived; (2) the impact of the tightening economy upon program survival; (3) the role of the variables shown in '74 to be significant on continued survival; (4) the extent to which state or federal agency support has contributed to this survival; and (5) the extent to which the state has translated the successes of one program to another.

Methodology and Data Source

It would be difficult to understand the methodology of this study without knowing that of the '74 research. The original procedures involved taking a stratified random sample of 12 programs (31.5%)[2] from a total of 38 ESEA Title III projects funded from 1971-74.[3] Innovations were grouped into three strata representing a range of adoption/local support from 0%--100%:

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[2]The 12 projects covered a total of 87 school districts which make up 22% of all the districts in Massachusetts. Interestingly the 9 adopted (including semi-adopted) cover about 270 districts, representing about 70% of the state total.

[3]This population was chosen because it was the first group of projects to be selected and funded completely by the Massachusetts Department of Education contrary to the prior funding process administered directly from Washington. Hence, the projects repre-

Group I --Non-adopted. Included all programs that had either been entirely discontinued or were continuing with absolutely no local cash support;

Group II --Semi-adopted. Included programs that were continuing on a smaller scale with local funds or at the same rate with supplementary assistance from other state, federal or foundation sources.

Group III--Adopted. Included programs which the local school systems were supporting at the same level or greater than was initially backed by federal funding.

With school system adoption[4] as the dependent variable, the 23 independent variables were grouped into six investigative areas: (1) the setting -- characteristics of the school district and community; (2) installation -- origin and development of the innovation; (3) the operation period; (4) state agency support; and (5) the leadership style of the diffusion leader.

Data were collected by indepth interviews, checklists, and questionnaires administered to diffusion leaders, staffs, superintendents, users and state liaisons as well as by analyses of project evaluation report, proposals, continuation grants, historical records and census tract data. Frequences were obtained on all interview items. Tests of association (Chi Square) and comparisons between means (t-tests) were performed on appropriate data. The contingency coefficient (C) was used on statistically significant Chi Square data to provide for a measure of the degree of relationship.

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sented the state's first efforts to influence directly the degree of diffusion that would take place at the end of three years. In addition, all 38 projects were in their third year of funding at the time of the study making it possible to calculate '74-'75 adoption levels to some degree of accuracy.

[4]The dependent variable for the study, the level of adoption was chosen for two reasons: (1) from a financial point of view, the 30-60% local support required by state regulations could be easily calculated; and (2) local adoption is the main criterion used by the state and federal education agencies to judge the success of an ESEA Title III project (and still is).

Followup Study -- '76

For the followup study of '76, ten (10) of the original 12 programs were selected for investigation. The reason for this was that two of three of the original non-adopted group had been completely phased out by '74 and the one remaining was enough part of the system routine to be considered semi-adopted (even though in '74 it seemed certain to be completely phased out).

Programs were grouped into three strata similar to those used before but for reasons which emerged in preliminary research, some of the criteria of the original groupings were altered to fit current realities. For example, while in '74 other forms of state and federal support combined with ESEA Title III monies indicated in fact far too limited local support to be considered adoption by the local districts, by '76, if the program was expanding and thriving with local support as well as federal diffusion funds, its practices having been recognized as exemplary, then its level of adoption was seen as full.[5]

The three strata for this study were then as follows:

Group I --Non-adopted. Little or no trace of original program.

Group II --Semi-adopted. Program activities absorbed into the regular routine of the school district(s) but in a more diluted and random way. Little attempt to ensure systematic continuation via budgeting/workshops, etc.

Group III--Adopted. Clearly identified program activities, budget, staff usually including specified director.

With school district adoption as the dependent variable, independent variables were grouped under these hopotheses: (1) that only the most bureaucratically safe programs have survived; (2) that the budgetary pressures in school systems have resulted in a more conservative innovation than originally conceived; (3) that the variables already shown to be significant--systematic planning, implementation and evaluation of objectives, early and widespread netword building for support, and extensive dissemination--have played an important role in continued survival; (4) that the

[5]This condition in fact represents a different definition of institutionalization which the state agency has been holding up to this point.

adopted programs have survived without state/federal agency support; and (5) that the state agency is less interested in the linker role of translating the successes of one program to another than that of administering new, shorter term federal projects.

Data were collected by indepth interviews and questionnaires administered to diffusion leaders, staffs, superintendents and state agency representatives. Frequencies were obtained on all interview items. Tests of association (Chi Square) as well as means of comparisons of frequencies were performed on appropriate data.

Findings

Before presenting the data as they relate to the five hypotheses under investigation, it seems necessary to look at what kinds of programs have survived in the past three years.

What has survived: a profile

An overall look at the surviving programs (see Appendix II) shows that there are few identifiable subject areas that can be associated with adoption in a school district. Almost all of the semi-adopted and adopted programs contain some element of teacher-administrator training. The non-adopted deal as well with individualized instruction as do 33% of the adopted. 66.7% of the semi-adopted also concentrate on specialized curriculum/special interests as do 33.3% of the adopted. Thirty three percent (33.3%) of the adopted focus on alternative/secondary activities.

All of the non- and semi-adopted programs operate in a single district although their activities have spread to other school systems in 66.7% of the cases. In contrast 50% of the adopted manage collaboratives dealing regularly with 25-100+ districts.[6] Both groups II and III claim some form of diffusion over the past three years mostly attributable to the availability of state funds for diffusion in '74-'75. Fifty percent (50%) of the adopted group are partially supported by funds from federal and other sources (not state) whereas none of the semi-adopted are. None have received any funds from the State Department of Education beyond the year '74-'75.

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[6] 70% of all the school districts in Massachusetts.

The adopted programs have maintained the activities of their original programs to a statistically significant extent more than the semi-adopted (and, of course, the non-adopted). Only about half (50%) of the activities of the semi-adopted (and about 0-20% for the non-adopted) group are still in existence in contrast to 80 to 100% of the programs for the adopted. Even those activities that have been continued in the semi-adopted group are universally modified (100%) to a mere maintenance level whereas most of those in the adopted programs bear the same impetus they had in the original projects. All of the semi-adopted suffered the loss of staff and none have what could be identified as a full or even part-time director. The direction in this group is presently diffused among administrators in the systems.

Bureaucratic Safety

Hypothesis # 1 states that those programs which have survived the three years since federal funding ceased do not challenge the basic structure of the bureaucracies/school institutions in which they operate. This coupled with Hypothesis # 2--that the tightening economy has effected a more conservative thrust to the innovations than they had previously--is borne out by the findings in this study.

These data support the findings of the study of '74 which showed that adopted programs meet the bureaucratic needs of their district(s) to a greater extent than do semi- or non-adopted programs (House, 1974; Miles, 1964). That is, the program is: (1) bureaucratically safe (it doesn't threaten the status quo of the bureaucracy); (2) a response to external pressure (it satisfies one or more of various constituencies); and (3) approved by peer elites (it is approved by key figures in the bureaucracy) (Pincus, 1974, p. 120).

Elaborating upon the first criteria, John Pincus (1974) outlines five categories analyzing the effects of program activities on the level of school operations--from simple additions of supplies to more radical changes in the organizational power structure of a school organization. Appendix III shows this breakdown as it applied in '74 and includes an analysis of the ten programs under investigation in '76. It can be seen that the more radical (those closest to five) had already been discontinued by '74 and on the average, those remaining were at the third stage of intervention--changing the instructional process or methods of the district(s).

That level of change remains true today. The current breakdown shows that while the adopted group is basically the same as before, the semi-adopted have less effect today on the basic organizational structure of the schools. Put another way, the latter maintain activities that offer an interesting option of materials, equipment, or methodology to teachers/administrators as they did in the original ESEA Title III project, but on a more random and ad hoc basis and without prior systematic efforts to recruit and train new participants.[7] This revision is partly attributable to the tightening economy, which according to everyone in this group (100%) has forced them to cut back on all except low level maintenance activities, but the same economic pressures have been on those programs in Group III which have not suffered to the same extent. Two thirds (66.7%) of the changes that have taken place in the adopted programs have had less to do with cutting staffing or activities and more with simple programmatic alterations--usually because they found a better way of doing things. The economic pressures have been very much present and at least 50% of the adopted group said they've had to make some modifications in program because of the economy--e.g., "adjusting to a slower pace of growth," "making adjustments in program operations like field trips, extra workshops," "losing full time staff or directors," "holding back on long range planning." But none are without at least a part-time director (the lack of by their own admission which poses a major problem of motivation for the semi-adopteds) and all seem to be highly valued in their communities.

Economic factors notwithstanding, it was pointed out in '74 that the non- and semi-adopted programs lacked sufficient emotional and financial district commitment to bring about a greater level of adoption. In the non-adopted program, for example, all the original project staff simply went back to their original jobs when the federal funds were withdrawn--no attempt having been made to replace them or create new positions with the program activities when receiving ESEA Title III funds. The priorities in the non- and semi-adopted districts have changed in the past three years in a way that has not included these specific program activities. Whereas in contrast, most adopted programs claimed that their program activities have become the priorities of the districts and furthermore might be combined with another priority for greater effectiveness. Hence, it can

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[7]Similar in some ways to the way audio visual equipment is used in school systems. Without a specific multi-media project, teachers use it or ignore it as it seems convenient.

be seen that the non- and semi-adopted programs fail to meet Pincus' second and third criteria for meeting bureaucratic needs--satisfying one or more constituency and thus being approved by key figures. This latter point will be discussed in greater detail in the next section.

Variables and adoption

The '74 study found that certain variables were clearly identified with program adoption--systematic planning, implementation and evaluation of objectives; early and widespread network building for support;[8] and extensive dissemination, frequently in the form of personal contact (House, 1974). The third hypothesis of this study--that these same variables would prove to be significant in the continuation phase--is only partially borne out by the data.

Like '74 (and in support of the third criteria for meeting bureaucratic needs), statistical significance was found for the extent to which adopted programs had school committee support in comparison to the other two groups. Almost three times as many adopted's as semi-adopted programs said that they found school committee support to be "quite a bit" to "of great importance" in the continuation of their activities. At least half (50%) of the adopted group said that they had a school committee mandate "just expecting everyone to carry on the activities."

However, while both groups found it to be extremely important in the continuation of their programs, there was no statistically significant different between the two groups regarding central administration support (the non-adopted said the lack of support among central administrators was one of the key reasons for discontinuation). It must be pointed out that two-thirds (66.7%) of the semi-adopted respondents were themselves members of the central administration, giving a bias to this response. This factor also negated any differences between the groups in regard to the amount of personal contact necessary to maintain this administrative support. It appears that face-to-face contact is still important but for the purposes of this study, cannot be related to adoption.

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[8] As opposed to the needs assessments and research which are part and parcel of the RD & D--and hence the ESEA Title III--model.

However, there were many indications that the adopted programs had more support on all levels than did the semi-adopted's. When discussing why program activities were discontinued, 67.7% of the semi-adopted group said that they "lacked strong advocacy in the district" while none of the adopted respondents indicated this to be the case. In contrast, 33.3% of the adopted group found the "continued support of all schools, individuals involved" to be one of the easiest things about continuing their programs. And when asked if there had been much opposition to the program since '74, nearly all (82.3%) of the adopted programs said "no" while only 33.3% of the semi-adopted could say the same. Any opposition that seemed to come was met in the adopted group by "working hard to keep information about the project in front of the community via a parent involvement/information program and ongoing teacher orientations backed by charges from the school committee to continue the activities. In contrast, semi-adopted programs respondents sometimes met opposition by turning the other way--"stopping talking about it" or simply "weathering the storm." So it appears that network building--a key variable in the '74 study--is still of vital importance to the continuation of innovations.

Statistical significance then was found for the extent to which this kind of dissemination information giving has been helpful in continuation. Fifty (50%) percent of the adopted programs found this to be "of great importance" while none of the semi-adopted group could say this. This finding is interesting in light of another question in which all (100%) of the semi-adopted group said they had to consult "groups" (one said "endless numbers") when making a decision about program activities and 66.7% of the adopted respondents only had to consult one or two people. There seems to be no relationship between informing large groups of people about activities and publicizing same. Again, like '74, dissemination has been a key variable for the adopted programs.

What appears no longer to be key, however, in '77 is evaluation or systematic long and short range planning. Significant in '74, as many as 67.7% of the adopted programs found evaluation to be from "none" to "some" importance in continuation. In contrast, all (100%) of the semi-adopted group found it to be from "quite a bit" to "of great importance." It is not clear, however, what kind of evaluation has taken place in the semi-adopted group in the past three years given their limited funds. It is clear that the adopted group choose to

win their support through dissemination and network building. Systematic long and short range planning, while not found to be significant in continuation, was thought to be from "quite a bit" to "of great importance" for both groups.

Yet despite opposition, despite financial cutbacks, despite changing needs of the school system, two thirds (66.7%) of both groups said that they thought their district was more open to change in '76 than in '74--although with the qualification of one "less open to flake-o propositions" and somewhat less "optimistic." Almost all of the adopted programs said that "because of the success of ESEA Title III other programs have been initiated in the district" like seed monies for innovations, sabbatical monies, etc., and one respondent in this group said that the project's priorities "became top in the community." All felt they could do more with this atmosphere if there could be some state or federal funding to support the experimentation.

State/federal agency support

The '74 study found that there was no statistically significant relationship between the kind of state support offered and those areas of program development which emerged as key to adoption--widespread dissemination, individualized evaluation, winning support, and becoming institutionalized in the school system. Some projects found help from the state in these areas invaluable to their progress. Some found help in other areas besides these. Others found the state to be an immense hindrance in an already difficult situation. There was a great deal of ambivalence.

Interestingly, the earlier study found that the state and federal needs assessments--mandated in proposals for years because of the assumptions of the RD & D model (Clark and Guba, 1965; Miller, 1967) formed the basis of ESEA Title III--totally unrelated to program adoption. Furthermore, the kinds of political diagnoses and network building that proved to be realistic for the successful operation of an innovation in a district were ignored as necessary ingredients for the effective foundation of a program.

This study examined two hypotheses about the state agency role--that the adopted programs have survived without state agency support and that the state agency is less interested in the linker role of translating the successes of one program to

another than that of administering new, shorter term federal projects. Data supported these hypotheses. Data did not support the part of hypothesis # 4 dealing with the federal role.

Once the ESEA Title III funds ran out in '74, it was fully the state's position that the projects should survive on their own merits. However, partly for reasons of funding uncertainty and partly because of pressure to experiment, the state decided to provide a few funds for some of the '71-'74 programs to diffuse their efforts in '74-'75. This effort was not continued in the following year but instead the state resumed funding one- and later three-year projects.

With the exception of these funds (of which 60% of the '77 programs were recipients), all (100%) of the semi-adopted and 66.7% of the adopted programs said that the state played no role at all in the actual continuation of their program since '74. The diffusion monies were seen as "helpful" but too short-lived and inadequate for real followup. Even though the state explicitly expressed its intention to withdraw financial support, from 50% to 66.7% of the surviving programs indicated that they expected the opposite--a larger role than mere verbal support and some modest dissemination efforts as well.[9] All said that they would have liked more money to diffuse/disseminate the identifiable successes of their programs via small grants, policy papers, callying upon project staff expertise etc. The tenor of the responses indicated that the state did not ultimately place much worth on the proven value of innovations which they had worked to develop for three years. One director of an adopted program put it this way:

> Since my program was an excellent one, I think the state missed the boat by not doing an expansive dissemination program concerning it. I did what I could in the time I had, but feel the program could have been extremely valuable to hundreds of school systems.

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[9]It should be pointed out that the state is presently making plans for diffusion efforts for next year ('77-'78) although the scope and objectives weren't yet certain at the time of this paper. Also, the state has made some modifications in its requirements for proposal writers based on the findings of the '74 study, and it seems, is offering some technical assistance in adoption techniques.

Contrary to the assumption of the hypothesis, however, the federal government (notably NIE) has played an important role in the continuation of the adopted projects. Fifty (50%) percent of the adopted projects are continuing because of the diffusion and other monies provided by continued federal funds.[10]

Data Analysis and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to follow up on innovative programs originally investigated three years ago to examine whether the variables found to be significant for local district adoption then are still relevant for '77. What follows is an analysis of those findings and a comprehensive paradigm covering the growth of an innovation to its routinization phase, describing successful district strategies from both studies and projecting their applicability for state/federal agencies concerned about change.

Similarities between '74 and '77

Like '74, the wealth or social status of the community has not been a factor in determining whether or not a school district adopted a Title III project (agreement with Carlson, 1965; contrary to Rogers, 1971; Mort, 1964). There is still no difference in median income or professional bent of the community, urban or suburban location or proximity to a metropolitan area such as Boston, and the amount of the school budget spent per pupil or on teacher training (Rogers, 1971; Hearn, 1969; Sullivan, 1973).

Instead, like '74, adopting school districts tend to be more open and flexible in their attitudes towards their personnel despite the economic pressures of recent years (Miles, 1965; Pincus, 1974; House, 1974). The are still, as House (1974) describes, less rigid in their bureaucratic structure[11]; "healthier"

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[10] One project pointed out that their application for these funds ran counter to the advice of the state agency in '74-'75.

[11] House talks about the stultifying atmosphere of most school settings in terms of encouraging innovative ideas to flourish. "The conditions necessary for invention are far from those that obtain in public schools. Few operations could be more programmed than having to prepare for and meet thirty stu-

as Miles (1965) might call them.[12] They are still allowing their teachers more room for professional growth--via more inservice and professional days, more opportunities to attend conferences and try new ideas than non-adopting districts. In short, there is more communication, more opportunity for teachers to come in contact with new ideas, a better feeling about encouraging changes in the system in the adopted districts, albeit with a skeptical eye to "half-baked ideas," as one respondent put it. In fact, since all the adopting districts indicated that their districts have grown more open (if not more wealthy) because the positive experience of the innovation, it appears that the ESEA Title III programs were able to bring about the best inclinations in their districts.

Like '74, there is a statistically significant difference between the use of systematic dissemination and involvement of decision makers and opinion leaders by the adopting districts as compared with the semi- and non-adopting districts (Rogers, 1971; Miles, 1964; 1969; Lippitt, 1958; Leithwood, 1974; Havelock, 1974). Again dissemination involves much more than simply informing people of current activities. Rather it involves a complex process of analyzing that community/ies "style" of operating. One respondent described such a process in her/his district: "I've learned that my district avoids open battles in the local newspapers. Better to call in a critic and deal with her/him privately."

The adopting districts still operate on the assumption that support among high levels of the school bureaucracy--in particular, the school committee--is essential for survival. The semi-adopted group frequently had to cut back because of opposition and the non-adopted project attributed its demise to the lack of support among the central administration.

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dents six hours a day, five days a week. The number of contact hours minimizes any 'slack' time the teacher may have. Nor does the school system as a whole value intervention (House, 1974, p. 173). Along these lines it is interesting to include the respondent who said that s/he had to consult "endless numbers of people" before making a decision.

[12]Matthew Miles suggests that looking at the organizational health of a school system will tell us more about the likelihood of an innovation's being diffused than anything else. Some of these characteristics are elements like "communication adequacy," "cohesiveness," "morale," "innovativeness," and "autonomy."

Just as the '74 study found support of opinion leaders/ decision makers more important than the research/needs assessment aspects of proposal development, so this study found that strategies such as the political analysis of supportive and opposing forces within the district more vital than evaluation in persuading decision makers to maintain the program (House, 1974; Miles, 1965). Other strategies found to be important were not mandating compulsory participation in activities "to fit some federal/state model," planning ahead and anticipating the problems change is going to cause, and maintaining an adequate financial base via district or other funding. This supports Pincus' (1974) point:

> Research and development agencies follow an R&D change model that views the schools as passive adopters of new products, but the schools themselves decide to adopt and implement innovations in light of a host of organizational considerations which are not incorporated in the R&D model of change (p. 132).

Like '74, programs in adopting districts were more institutionalized than those in the semi- or non-adopting. By that is meant their continuation appeared more assured, i.e., having directors who could spend more than a fraction of their time on the program, providing adequate financial support for the continuation of more than a minimum of its activities, encouraging the participation and the adequate training of new school personnel as well as the experienced. Respondents feared that in the semi-adopting districts with their "bare bones" approach (cutting back and letting the materials and original momentum carry it ahead), the program would eventually just "get lost in the shuffle."

Finally, like '74, none of the surviving programs threaten the basic power structure of the bureaucracy, by proposing changes that are radical or unresponsive to the political needs of the district(s). Pincus argues persuasively that the bureaucratic variables are of much greater importance than a system's ability to pay for an innovation.

> Schools are more likely to adopt innovations that respond to system demands for more resources, for evidence of progressive management, or for evidence of system responsiveness to client problems...more likely to adopt innovations that do not require complex changes in management structure or organizational relations...that are not radical (p. 138).

That shouldn't be surprising considering the fact that federal funds are viewed with such suspicion by local schools (House, 1974). Ever-changing state and federal policies, over-regulation of federal programs, a demand for paperwork, a lack of technical assistance in key areas, and an economic squeeze and demand for accountability by constituencies, have made the school districts (albeit even the more open) more cautious than before. Pincus (1974) points out the basic dilemma districts face with federal funds.

> Why should the public endorse or the schools adopt, at considerable travail, new methods that will creat political and institutional problems, when the resulting prospects for school improvements are so uncertain? (p. 138)

In sum, this study verified that innovations which meet the bureaucratic needs of a particular district are most apt to be adopted. That is the program is bureaucratically safe, a response to external pressure and approved by peer elites. That is not to say that the program should not be carefully planned, implemented, and disseminated; realistic in light of time and numbers served; tangible in being easy to explain and understand; and visible in that the changes can be seen as well as described (variables found to be significant in '74). There is even less patience to tolerate floundering programs that cannot clarify their goals and directions in a relatively short period of time.

But what is important is

> that the school not be seen as a collection of individuals passively waiting for and weighing the merits of innovations that diffuse through. The school is, rather, a collection of cohesive active groups, coalitions that sometimes cooperate and sometimes compete with one another. Most groups actively search for new means of advancing their own interests and new ways of defending what they have. They may actively seize upon new innovations in order to advance. Outside consultants or outside monies serve as information sources and as legitimation for the new program, but at most, they act only as a 'trigger.' The real energy must be released from within the organization. (House, 1974, p. 52)

Dissimilarities between '74 and '77

House's comment is relevant to one of the key differences in findings between '74 and '77--that evaluation has not played a major role in the continuation of the adopted programs. Miles has pointed out (1964) that "educational innovations are almost never installed on their merits." Supporting this view that the "schools not be seen as a collection of individuals passively waiting for and weighing the merits of innovations that diffuse through," House (1974) has also stated:

> It is commonplace in education to assume that the school is a coordinated, integrated, problem-solving mechanism that, confronted with an innovation, assesses its merits, and if it proves worthwhile, incorporates it. Such is not the case. The organization is, in fact, a combination of various departments and interests groups, all competing for scarce resources. (J. G. March, 1966) Organizational decisions are based on which coalitions of groups are in ascendancy at the moment--a political process (p. 40).

Pretending that school personnel will be logically persuaded by the "right evidence towards a program to which they are not already predisposed" as contributed to the burgeoning evaluation establishment, one which has been accused of being "very much in the service of the federal and state governments and one attuned to the particular demands of the RD & D paradigm (House, 1974, p. 224)."[13]

Following this model, the state agency has played virtually no role in the continuation of the programs since '74. But although the state had no intention of continuing a relationship with these programs--either financially beyond the first year of diffusion funds or any other way--projects felt otherwise. Most felt that the state should be providing more than verbal support (where that was relevant) and was overall "missing the boat" by not disseminating/diffusing the successful practices that have emerged in the program, or drawing on the expertise of project

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[13]which has been the change model for ESEA Title III programs for over ten years. The ease with which the districts have discontinued evaluation speaks to the other points of this paper--that evaluation does not play a major role in persuading decision makers to adopt a program.

staff. The finding of three years ago held true at the time of this study--that lacking a state direction for innovative programs,[14] a legislative commitment to innovation, the help from the state is individualistic and inconsistent. The agency is still not doing what it expects from local school districts--disseminating the value of its programs and obtaining some financial commitments to assist in their diffusion.

A further argument for the state agency standing behind its proven successful programs centers around another difference between '74 and '77. While the changing economic scene has not made districts less open to change according to this study, it has made them more cautious, less willing to take up "will o' the wisp" ideas, "less optimistic" about trying anything new for its own sake," as one respondent put it. Since so many of the teacher/administrator programs are adaptable to different educational needs, it seems more logical somehow to put funds behind some tried and proven practices in districts that have become more open and flexible as well as maintaining some incentives for new ideas. There would be less waste of money and energy and, more important, might provide some direction and strength where it is lacking.

Finally, looking at innovations that have "become routinized" in 1977 is in some ways a far different thing than viewing them in '74 when they were still, in essence, "federal programs." It raises a whole new set of troubling questions for further research. What has "institutionalization" meant to the programs themselves? Has it been an advantage or disadvantage?

In the '74 study there was easy discussion of moving from temporary to permanent systems (Miles, 1965), from obtaining simple statements of support to actually affecting the learning activities of the students in the school system (Charters and Jones, 1973). Indeed it has been the goal of ESEA Title III (and IV) to move the innovation toward becoming

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[14] A recent Rand study (Prusoff and Sumner, 1974) pointed out that in those states where there was no established ESEA Title III program goals, where the state role was primarily administrative, there was no concomitant state legislative commitment to innovation. It might be argued that the state should do what it expects the programs to do--disseminate the value of its program and obtain some financial commitments.

> ...a routine part of everyday life for the client...embedded in its everyday behavior. For this to happen, the innovation must also be integrated within the existing structure; there must be time to use it. The willingness of the leaders to make room for an innovation is probably the best index to their real attitudes toward it regardless of the lip service that is paid toward accepting it (Havelock, 1973, p. 148).

There is no question that the adopted programs have made the greatest strides toward bringing this about.

However, there are real problems inherent in bureaucracies' absorbing innovations, some of which have become all too apparent in this study, and there is no reason why they will not become more plaguing to the programs as time goes on.

First of all, it can be said that the semi-adopted innovations were institutionalized but to a lesser extent than the adopted group. They were part of the system routine; sufficient numbers of teachers/administrators had become familiar enough with the training etc. to carry out the activities fairly regularly and they provide another option to the educators in that/those district(s).

Yet many of the programs are not as effective in '77 because they are less like clearly identified entities or projects and more like simply another educational resource which can or cannot be used as a teacher/administrator sees fit. The '77 innovations frequently lack directors, specific ongoing training, funds, and, in some real sense, the original enthusiasm or vitality when funded by Title III. Cutting back has made the programs less exciting and, in all probably, the majority of the activities in this group will indeed "get lost in the shuffle," as one respondent feared, in the very near future.

In all likelihood the dilemmas of the semi-adopted are merely the preview of what will happen to many in the adopted programs as well (particularly if the federal funds are withdrawn). Some in this group admitted that it was hard to maintain the enthusaism of the staffs in the face of competing district interests and needs. Even in the best of times bureaucracies are known for their ability to swallow up the most exciting of programs/individuals. In times of economic struggle, when

there is even greater competition for fewer funds, it is all the more inevitable.

It appears, then, that the philosophy of this change model upon which ESEA Title IV (and others) is based, is quite unrealistic in terms of what really goes on in school districts. Funding an innovation one, two, or three years and then cutting it adrift to let it sink on its own merits in search of other short-term investments seems both naive and wasteful. It is simply too short a time for a fragile program to withstand the force of the institution. Why don't the state and federal agencies (following the leadership of NIE) identify the most successful programs and continue to support, disseminate, evaluate, and diffuse their activities throughout the state/nation as foundations for future innovations? Rather than the constantly changing policies, priorities, programs, and principals that beleaguer the state and federal agencies, education desperately needs the kind of stability and leadership that this kind of long-term support and commitment would bring.

THE REVISED MASSACHUSETTS CHANGE MODEL, '77:

THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW PROGRAM

Local Educational Agency	State/Federal Educational Agency
PHASE I: INSTALLATION, ORIGIN AND PLANNING PERIOD OF A NEW PROGRAM	
1. Diagnostic Inventory Assess climate for change and decide on overall goals.	1. Diagnostic Inventory Assess climate for change and decide on overall goals.
2. Systems Analysis Formulate program objectives.	2. Systems Analysis Formulate program objectives/ state priorities for change.
3. Diagnostic Inventory Test reactions to programs in school community.	3. Diagnostic Inventory Assess climate for change in school districts--degree of openness and professionalism.
4. Dissemination Spread idea to key decision makers/opinion leaders.	4. Dissemination Establish and maintain contact with opinion leaders/decision makers.
5. Network Building Procure needed support from school system decision maker. Early diffusion.	5. Network Building Obtain needed support from state/ federal decision makers/opinion leaders.
6. Staffing Select diffusion leader/ staff.	6. Staffing Identify key staff and provide inservice training in areas of proven importance in the area program development/adoption.
7. Diagnostic Inventory Obtain needed state/federal financial support.	7. Diagnostic Inventory Begin obtaining/determining state/ federal support for districts. Provide technical/financial assistance to school districts.

PHASE II: TRIAL PERIOD; THE OPERATION OF THE NEW PROGRAM

8. Temporary System
Pilot/experiment with activities.

8. Temporary System
Assist school districts with technical/financial.

9. Dissemination--Network Building
Involve key decision makers/ opinion leaders/users/non-users

9. Dissemination--Network Building
Assist districts with this phase. Continue state/federal network building for support.

10. Evaluation
Evaluate strengths and weakness of program. Revise staff activities/objectives to conform to greater effectiveness model of performance.

10. Evaluation
Evaluate district innovation and suggest revisions. Evaluate state/federal process and revise/ adapt. Assist districts with internal evaluation.

11. Routinization/Institutionalization
Analyze needs of district. Begin adapting program objectives/activities/staffing to meet those needs. Plan for budgeting needs and begin obtaining local/state/federal help where necessary.

11. Routinization
--Assist districts with this phase.
--Provide guidance in national/state priorities and funding sources.
--Analyze needs of nation/state and begin identifying successful program practices which appear to meet those needs.
--Provide funds for the diffusion of these practices.

PHASE III: ADOPTION PERIOD

12. Routinization/Institutionalization
Continue activities of: network building with decision makers/ opinion leaders; dissemination of program achievements to district, including appropriate analysis of political/constituent needs of district; adaptation of program goals to suit district financial, political, educational needs.
--obtain financial support.
diffuse successes where possible.
--look to adapt/adopt other district successes where relevant and applicable.

12. Routinization/Institutionalization
--Provide assistance/support to districts with network building dissemination, adaptation of program to fit district needs.
--Continue network building on a state/federal level to insure continued support.
--Provide funds t o successful programs/components.
--Disseminate/diffuse successes to other programs.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

COMPARISON OF STUDY SAMPLE '76 WITH ORIGINAL 38 ESEA TITLE III PROJECT '71-'74 AND STUDY SAMPLE '74

	I Non-Adopted	II Semi-Adopted	III Adopted	
Original 38 Projects '71-'74	18%	26%	56%	N=38
Sample 12 Projects '74 study	25%	25%	50%	N=12
Sample 10 Projects[a] '76 study	10%	30%	60%	N=10

[a]One of the original sample's Non-Adopted group was included in this study because at the time of the '74 study, it indicated that it would not be continuing. In contrast the other two in the Non-Adopted group had clearly been discontinued after the first and second years of their federal funding respectively. Interestingly, it is now continuing on a very modified level.

APPENDIX II

PROGRAM PROFILE '76

	I Non-adopted	II Semi-adopted	III Adopted
Thrust of Program			
Inservice teacher/administrator training	100%	66.7%	66.7%
Curriculum development		33.3%	16.7 %
Individualized instruction			
Special education	100%		33.3%
Early childhood/parent involvement			
Alternative/secondary			33.3%
Environmental education			16.7%
Specialized curriculum/ special interests		100%	33.3%
Single District	100%	100%	50%
Collaborative			50%
Local Agency Support '76	0%	100%	100%
State Agency Support '76	0%	0%	0%
Federal Agency Support '76	0%	50%	50%
Direction specified in one	--	33.3%	100%
Direction diffused among many	--	67.7%	0%
Variables Important for Continuation[b]			
Dissemination*	0%	0%	50%
Personal contact with key administrators	0%	66.7%	66.7%
Central administration support	0%	66.7%	82.3%
School Committee support*	0%	33.3%	50%
Systematic Long and Short Range Planning	0%	66.7%	66.7%
Evaluation	0%	66.7%	33.3%
State Agency support	0%	0%	0%
Federal Agency support	0%	0%	33.3%

[a]Categories used by NIE for national diffusion effort. Programs identified by two categories.

[b]By this is meant that the variables were seen as "of great importance" in continuation of program.

*Indicates significance.

APPENDIX III

A. THE EFFECT OF STUDY INNOVATIONS ON SCHOOL OPERATIONS[a] --'74 STUDY

Categories	I Non-Adopted	II Semi-Adopted	III Adopted
1. Increasing level of resources			
2. Changing resource mix		33%	
3. Changing instructional process or method	33%	33%	83%
4. Affecting administration management (nor power structures)		33%	17%
5. Changing either organization of schools or relate to external authority	67%		

B. THE EFFECT OF STUDY INNOVATIONS ON SCHOOL OPERATIONS --'76 STUDY

Categories	I Non-Adopted	II Semi-Adopted	III Adopted
1. Increasing level of resources			
2. Changing resource mix		67%	
3. Changing instructional processes or method	100%	33%	83%
4. Affecting administration management (or power structures)			17%
5. Changing either organization structure of schools or relate to external authority			

[a]This breakdown of innovation level was used by John Pincus (1974). Note that 67% of the non-adopted projects tried the most radical changes and mainly in single school systems. There are other breakdowns of the level of innovations. See Charters, W.W. and Jones, J.E., "On the Risk of Appraising Non-Events in Program Evaluation," or Chin, Robert, "Models of and Ideas about Changing" (Bibliography).

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