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AUTHOR   Upton, James N.; Ponow, Mary Margaret
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ABSTRACT
                This report is based on a case study which examined
the efforts of community organizations in Columbus, Ohio to
strengthen citizen participation (through the use of networking
strategies) in the implementation phase of school desegregation. The
report describes interorganizational networks as a function of
exchange relations. Specialization, scarcity of resources and the
limits of power in individual organizations are cited as the major
reasons for the development of exchange relations. The data from the
study are reported in terms of the relationships between the mean
number of network links established among various organizations, and
the funding status, type of activity, target group, scope of issue
and age of the organizations involved in the network. The following
results are cited: (1) privately funded community organizations have
more network ties than public funded organizations; (2) advocacy
group organizations have the most network ties, followed by service
and public information organizations; (3) single issue and older
organizations have more network ties than multi-issue or younger
organizations; and (4) community organizations which identify the
school as its target have more network ties than groups which target
either the black community or the public at large. (JCD)

PROJECT NETWORKING: CITIZEN PARTICIPATION
IN SCHOOL DESEGREGATION DECISIONMAKING

James N. Upton
The Ohio State University
and
The Institute for Black Community
Research and Development
Columbus, Ohio

Mary Margaret Fonow
Otterbein College

The American Sociological Association
1981 Annual Meeting, August 24-28
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

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Organized citizen participation is not a new phenomenon in the context of American politics. The philosophical debate about the merits of citizen involvement in government is as old as the concept of democracy. However, it is only within the past fifteen years that social scientists have begun to identify the specific mechanisms of participation, the feasibility of citizen participation and the outcomes of citizen participation [(Hutcheson and Shevin, 1976; Sarason et al., 1977; Steinberg, 1977)].

Local politics provides the greatest opportunity for direct citizen participation in governmental decisionmaking. In terms of grassroot organizing, Perlman (1976:6) argues that the future trend is local participation,

> ...the thrust of the seventies is on local
> organizations and on issues which are more
> rooted in people's daily lives, have a long
> term perspective, and raise people's con-
> sciousness through involvement at a concrete
> level in their communities.

By focusing on local issues,

> ...contemporary grassroot groups can take
> advantage of the brakes in the system to win
> victories and demonstrate that authority can
> be challenged and that the people can gener-
> ate power through their numbers (Perlman, 1976:7).

While there are certainly limits to localism, participation at the local level gives people experience in dealing with and under- standing the power structure of that system (Perlman, 1976:20). This experience expands consciousness about the possibility of change and enhances one's actual potential for impacting on policy.

Our case study examines the efforts of community organiza-
tions in Columbus, Ohio to strengthen citizen participation in the
implementation phase of school desegregation. Specifically we
examine the networking strategies employed by 22 local community
organizations in their effort to impact on school policies. Our
sample of community organizations was drawn from the 1980 Directory
of Human Services for Columbus and Franklin County. A mailed
questionnaire was sent to 63 organizations. Forty organizations
responded but only 17 identified specific efforts to effect school
policy during the implementation of school desegregation and were
thus included in the final sample. Five additional organizations
were added to the sample in response to a survey of organizations
attending a series of city-wide forums on the implementation of
school desegregation. Therefore, our study includes comparable
data on a total of 22 community organizations. A profile of the
organizations is provided in Table 1 (see Appendix A).

Networking

Some federal policymakers, frustrated by their efforts to
facilitate citizen participation in a variety of federally funded
programs, have turned to the analysis of networks for insight.
Networking is one strategy that grassroot community organizations
can and in fact do employ to increase their effectiveness in the
public policy arena. Networking is also an adaptive mechanism
which can aid the organization in its growth, adjustment and
interaction within its environment. Technically, an

interorganizational network consists of a number of distinguishable organizations having a significant amount of interaction with each other (Benson, 1975:230). The characteristics of networks vary. Some networks may consist of a series of organizations linked by multiple direct ties to each other while others are characterized by a clustering of linkages around one or a few mediating organizations. The linkages within a network may be direct or indirect, positive or negative, reciprocal or non-reciprocal (Benson, 1975:230).

Central to understanding the character of interorganizational relations in a network is the notion of exchange. "An exchange relation consists of voluntary transactions involving the transfer of resources between two or more actors for mutual benefit" (Cook, 1977:64). The formation of exchange relations occurs among organizations primarily for two interrelated reasons: specialization and scarcity. Since most organizations have become increasingly specialized they must exchange with other organizations in order to obtain necessary resources and to meet their objectives. Furthermore, the "limitations on the availability of resources necessitate organizational interdependence and fosters further specialization" (Cook, 1977:64). Aldrich (1976) argues that the scarcity of resources creates uncertainty within an organization's environment and that the routinization of exchanges reduces this uncertainty. "Organizations will make a commitment to exchange, given that the exchange provides for each actor a reduction in its organizational uncertainty" (Cook, 1977:65).

A number of resources have been identified as crucial to the survival of organizations and therefore highly valued in the exchange process. Resource acquisition activities often determine the character of interaction between organizations in a network. Among the resources most highly valued are "acquisition and control of funding, personnel, information, products and services, and above all, authority" (Aldrich, 1976:419). According to Benson (1975:232), the most fundamental resources are money and authority. "Given money and authority other needed commodities may be acquired, while the reverse is probably not possible."

The final element in the exchange equation is power. Some organizations within a network will have more power than others and hence the potential to dominate the entire network. The more powerful organizations will influence the nature of exchanges between organizations within a given network (Benson, 1975:233). Emerson (1962) and Aldrich (1976) link power to resource dependency. Organizations with alternative ways of acquiring the resources necessary to meet organizational objectives are in a better bargaining position within the network than organizations that rely upon a single source for resources. Thus the power of an organization in an exchange relation is increased as the scope of the resources increases (Cook, 1977:66).

The success of organized efforts to affect policy depend on a number of factors. An organization's sensitivity to the interorganizational environment and the degree to which that environment provides resources for the organization are important.

.It is the organizational environment that provides both the con-
straints and opportunities for community organizations to influ-
ence school policy (Gittell, 1979). Particularly significant
is an organization's ability to build upon the political interest
structure already in existence in the local community (Upton, et
al., forthcoming).

Our study examines the interorganizational environment of
community organizations concerned with school policy. Is there
a network? Is it an effective route to increase citizen partici-
pation? What types of organizations are likely to be a part of
a network? Are organizations aware of each others' activities?
Are they willing to exchange resources in order to achieve mutual
goals? What types of exchanges have taken place in the past
and what future exchanges would organizations propose?

Research suggests that different groups in the local commun-
ity utilize different means to affect policy. Middle class
citizens are more likely to rely on formal associations such as
trade unions, political parties, church groups and voluntary
associations to articulate their concerns. Low income groups
are more likely to rely on informal forms of association such
as primary groups, informal networks and nationality groups
(Steinberg, 1977:2). Financial stability is a critical environ-
mental resource and again differences emerge between middle and
low income groups. Low income organizations rely much more
heavily on external funding sources and this fact reduces signi-
ficantly their level of autonomy and impact on policy (McDonnell
and Zellman, 1978; Gittell, et al., 1979).

Internal structure and organizational activities also influence effectiveness. Middle class groups tend to be advocacy organizations and rely on rotating leadership, voluntary membership and internal democratic way of operating. Low income groups are more likely to engage in service delivery activities and hence rely more on a paid professional staff. Those low income groups that do engage in advocacy are frequently inspired by charismatic leaders who supply non-material resources to the groups by virtue of their reputation and exerience (Huguenin, et al., 1979:62).

Several specific types of activities have been identified with increased policy impact. In the long run, advocacy activities have a bigger pay off and activity that centers on expanding the base of participation is more effective than activities directed toward substantive issues (Huguenin, et al., 1978:68). Community organizations are more effective when they engage in parallel activities rather than duplicative activities to the school system. Activities that involve the processing of grievances also influence the effectiveness of community organizations.

> The capacity to redress grievances allows an
> organization to provide a service that both
> builds a constituency and has the potential
> to improve school/community relations
> (Huguenin, et al., 1978:68).

Organizational effectiveness is associated with the extent of networking or sharing of information or resources among groups. Since networking works best as an exchange relationship, it works best for middle class groups which have the most resources to exchange. This places low income groups with fewer resources to

exchange at a disadvantage since they lack the resources which make interorganizational linkages useful (Gittell, 1979). Research also suggests that organizations with the strongest network have the greatest impact on school policy. Privately funded organizations with volunteer staff engaging in advocacy activity tend to be more effective (Huguenin, et al.; 1979).

We examine the relationship between age, organizational activities, target group, funding source and range of issues and an organization's ability to engage in networking activity.

Findings

The following tables (Tables 2-6) reflect the relationship between a variety of organizational types and the mean number of direct network links those organizations established with other organizations in their environment. The first relationship is between funding status and mean number of network links.

TABLE 2: Mean Number of Network Links by Funding Status

	Funding Status		
	Private	Public	Mix
Mean No. of links	4.1	2.8	3.6

Community organizations that rely on private funds have the most direct links with other organizations. Private money raised through membership dues, investments or private foundations has fewer strings attached and allows an organization greater freedom

to exchange resources with other community organizations.
Internal funding sources lend greater stability to an organiza-
tion and perhaps anchor the organization more securely within
the organizational environment. Public money is unpredictable
and an overreliance on external sources of income reduces an
organizations desirability as an exchange partner. It also
makes an organization more resource dependent and less powerful.

TABLE 3: Mean Number of Direct Network Links by Type of Activity

	Activity		
	Advocacy	Service	Public Info.
Mean No. of Links	4.7	3.5	2.3

Community organizations were subgrouped by the type of activity
they listed as primary in their day to day operations. Advocacy
groups are organizations that lobby the school organization on
behalf of an interest group or issue. These organizations seek
support for their constituency and engage in a wide range of
activities. Monitoring, lobbying, testifying are some examples
of advocacy activity. Service groups are community organizations
that seek to provide a service to the school system. Counseling,
tutoring, in-service training are examples of this type of activ-
ity. Public information groups seek; usually, through research
and fact finding, to inform the public about school policy or
programs. These organizations do not attempt to organize any
particular segment of the community. Usually they go to great
pains to announce their impartiality.

Advocacy groups have the greatest number of direct links to other community organizations. This finding is consistent with a recent Rand Report that found that citizen advocacy activities have a greater impact in facilitating school desegregation than do citizen groups engaged - in service activities (McDonnell and Zellman, 1978). Our finding seems to suggest that advocacy organizations are more successful in networking than other types of organizations and thus increase their chances of having an impact on school policy.

TABLE 4: Mean Number of Direct Network Links by Target Group

	Target Group		
	Black	Public	School
Mean No. of Links	3.5	3.7	4.3

Citizen organizations that list as their target group some component of the school system (teachers, students, school board, administration) have the most direct links with other organizations in their environment. Groups that want to increase public awareness or provide an educational service to the general public have fewer ties, and organizations that specifically targeted blacks as their constituency have the fewest links. This latter group seeks to raise the consciousness of the black community about a school issue or provide some type of educational service to the black community. Some of these organizations are associations of black professionals that proposed a

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desegregation related program or activity. For example, the
local branch of the National Conference of Black Lawyers co-
sponsored a forum to inform black parents and students of their
legal rights in school discipline cases. Black psychologists,
social workers and educators have formed similar associations.
These organizations have a dual purpose. One purpose is to lobby
for the interest of the black professional within the professions.
The second purpose is to provide some type of professional ex-
pertise in the area of black community development.

TABLE 5: Mean Number of Network Links by Scope of Issue

	Scope of Issue	
	Multi-Issue	Single-Issue
Mean No. of Links	3.5	4.1

Single-issue organizations are community groups that list
education as their sole interest. Multi-issue groups include
education along with other concerns such as housing, employment
or neighborhood development. Half the organizations in our sample
are multi-issue and half are single-issue. However, single-
issue organizations have more direct links with other organiza-
tions within the organizational environment.

TABLE 6: Mean Number of Direct Network Links by Age of Organization

	Age of Organization		
	0-5 years	6-25 years	26+ years
Mean No. of Links	2.8	3.0	5.4

Older community organizations (26+ years) have the greatest number of direct links. Organizational maturity gives an organization greater legitimacy and authority, both valuable commodities on the exchange market between organizations within a network. The age structure of community organizations in Columbus was very unusual. Nine organizations were under five years old and eight organizations were over 25 years old. Age appears to be an important factor in establishing interorganizational linkages. The potential for networking between older and younger organizations appears promising.

Conclusion

Community organizations with a private funding source have more network ties than public funded organizations. Organizations engaging in advocacy activities have the most network ties, followed by service and then public information organizations. Single-issue and older organizations have more network ties than multi-issue or younger organizations. Finally, community organizations which identify the school as its target have more network ties than groups that target either the black community or the public at large.

There does appear to be some degree of networking taking place among community organizations in Columbus. But the networking does not seem to be as extensive as in cities where the desegregation order mandates citizen participation. The most sought after resources in a potential exchange were funds and people while the resources most often offered were information and contacts. Perhaps competition between groups prevents actual exchange from taking place. We will examine the role of conflict and competition in future research.

Given the current political climate, desegregation efforts will receive little federal support. Already federal funding to school districts and community organizations under the Emergency School Aid Act for desegregation implementation has been drastically reduced. Support for desegregation will have to come from the grassroots through citizen participation. Hopefully, efforts to strengthen citizen organizations through networking will result in a more responsive educational system. Increased citizen efficacy is healthy for the individual and healthy for a democratic society.

APPENDIX A

TABLE 1: Profile of Community Organizations Involved in
Desegregation Implementation in Columbus, Ohio

Group	Age	Funding	Scope	Activity	Target	No. of Direct Network Links
1	1978	Public	Single	Service	Schools	
2	1980	Public	Single	Public Info	Schools	0
3	1920	Private	Multi	Advocacy	Public	10
4	1918	Mix	Multi	Advocacy	Black	6
5	1972	Mix	Single	Service	Public	1
6	1954	Private	Single	Service	Schools	6
7	1920	Private	Single	Advocacy	Schools	7
8	1938	Private	Single	Public Info	Schools	3
9	1978	Private	Single	Advocacy	Schools	8
10	1980	Private	Single	Service	Black	2
11	1960	Public	Multi	Service	Public	2
12	1972	Public	Single	Service	Black	6
13	1980	Public	Single	Service	Black	4
14	1978	Private	Single	Advocacy	Black	6
15	1980	Private	Multi	Advocacy	Public	2
16	1950	Private	Multi	Advocacy	Public	1
17	1930	Private	Multi	Advocacy	Public	16
18	1968	Private	Multi	Public Info	Black	2
19	1960	Private	Multi	Public Info	Black	4
20	1980	Private	Multi	Advocacy	Black	0
21	1978	Private	Multi	Advocacy	Black	1
22	1909	Mix	Multi	Service	Black	4

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