ADMINISTRATION ACROSS CULTURES

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The provision of effective educational services in cultural minority settings requires attention to functional and structural features of schooling that transcend the classroom and extend far beyond those elements of educational programs that lie within the purview of the typical teacher. Many of the issues that schools in communities with a large cultural minority population must deal with are a product of political, social and economic disparities between the minority community and the school as an institution of the majority society, and thus extend into the realm of the persons responsible for administering the schools. It is important, therefore, that we examine the special problems of the school administrator in a cross-cultural setting and attempt to delineate how persons in that role can assist in making schools more responsive to the needs of minority communities.

The title of "administrator" is used here to refer to any position that has an explicit management responsibility in a school system, including that of principal, superintendent and the various administrative roles in the district central office. While each administrator exercises limited authority at a level appropriate to their position in the system, their combined authority presents a formidable barrier around the inner workings of the system, a barrier which only the most determined outsider can penetrate. The posture of the administrator(s) toward the client community determines to a very large extent how accessible the schools are to outside influences and, therefore, how amenable they are to accommodating minority community concerns. On the other hand, the political climate in which the school operates influences to a significant degree the posture of the administrator(s), so if we are to understand and attempt to influence administrative behavior, we must examine the context in which it occurs. Of greatest significance in this regard is the extent to which the power structure and resource base of the school system is perceived to be relatively stable and secure, or is undergoing change and development.

While change is, in many ways, an inherent ingredient in educational processes, the administrators of most schools do not perceive of their job as one of managing change. By training and general inclination, they are more likely, instead, to see themselves in a position of maintaining a long-established system with a fixed purpose and a pre-established set of roles and relationships. The internal structure of the system and the relationship of the school to the client community are assumed to be in a state of equilibrium. The role of the school administrator, therefore, is that of managing a bureaucracy, with a concomitant emphasis on

control and efficiency of operations. Characteristics of such a role are summarized by Gregorc and Johnson in their analysis of administrative behavior in schools:

> The nature of bureaucracies with respect to social arrangements encourages a likeness view by its concentration upon equal and fair treatment through rules; separation of people through specialization; and impersonalization through rank, stratified privileges, and seniority rights. Information about differences in people and pluralistic values is not needed nor appreciated when the administrator's orientation is toward likenesses (1973).

The effect of such a likeness orientation on administrative behavior was observed by Wolcott (1974) in a study in which he described the "variety-reducing" behavior of elementary school principals as follows: "Their attention was directed at keeping things 'manageable' by drawing upon and reinforcing the existing system rather than by nurturing or even permitting the introduction of variation" (p.403).

If, in fact, the existing system is performing its functions adequately and can be perceived as stable and secure in its present form, then a variety-reducing posture on the part of the administrator is quite reasonable and appropriate. The task of the administrator is to maintain the system by reducing extraneous or complicating variables to a minimum, or redefining them in terms that are manageable, so as to avoid disruption to the equilibrium in the system. In general terms, the function of administration in such a situation can be characterized as "the replication of uniformity" (cf. Wallace, 1970), where the task is to produce a standardized product using uniform procedures and interchangeable parts. The only changes that are tolerated in such a situation are within-system changes (e.g., innovations in curriculum, teaching methods, or training techniques) that do not significantly interfere with established administrative procedures or power alliances. Such an approach to school administration is designed to perpetuate mainstream cultural traditions and has led to the notion of "one best system" for all (cf. Tyack,1974).

If, on the other hand, the existing system is not performing its functions to the satisfaction of its client population, or if the system is being called upon to perform functions and accommodate variables for which it was not originally intended, as is often the case in minority communities, then a variable-reducing approach to administration can have serious negative consequences for the practicing administrator, as well as for the system being administered. A cross-cultural approach to education that more adequately addresses the needs of minority communities clearly calls for an introduction of new variables into the way schools operate, and therefore, its effective implementation necessitates an alternative posture on the part of the administrator. If cultural patterns and processes of community are to be brought into the school, or if schooling processes are to be adopted by the community, administrators will have to relinquish a significant portion of the authority and control (i.e., power) they now command over formal education processes. It is only when minority people are in control of their own destiny that culturally sensitive education takes on any real significance. As such, schooling in minority settings must be viewed fundamentally as an empowering process, for the community as well as for the individual. And it is for this

reason that so many of the issues in minority education are fought out in a political rather than an educational arena.

The Politics of Minority Education

The ubiquitous nature of schools and the large proportion of local, state and federal budgets allocated for their operation has long given schools a prominent place in the American political arena, despite their pretense of being a-political. Their political sensitivity and vulnerability is heightened in minority communities, however, because they are often perceived as an alien institution which wields considerable influence over the lives of people in the community, but which is controlled by forces outside the community. The immediacy of schools to peoples lives makes them a ready symbol through which to take up a whole range of grievances that derive from a subordinate socio-economic status vis-a-vis the surrounding society. Challenges to the educational system that derive from such circumstances inevitably include explicit or implicit demands for a transfer of power. Since power is seldom relinquished voluntarily, however, the minority community must turn to political or legal action to achieve its purposes. In such situations, administrators often find themselves in the awkward position of having to align themselves with either the community they are supposed to be serving or the institution through whom they are employed, or trying to strike a middle course which may lead to alienation from both sides. And the choice is made no easier if it is faced by a minority person in the position of administrator.

Administrators who take a variety-reducing approach to administration are likely to take a hard-line bureaucratic response to any threat to their authority or to the stability of the system they have been entrusted to manage, and preserve. Any challenge to the system is interpreted as a challenge to their authority as an administrator, which then leads to a defensive administrative posture and a subsequent polarization between the school and community around the issue. This can be a very risky posture, however, because if the minority community representatives are not intimidated by the bureaucracy, they are likely to escalate the issue until it spills over into the political arena. To maintain control in such a situation, the administrator must either wield enough political power to counteract the actions of the community, or acquiesce to their demands. But this is not without its costs, for regardless of any legal or moral precedent that may be established, the polarization that results from such a stance inevitably erodes the credibility of the school and the administrator in the eyes of the community, and in the long run the administrator will have lost much of the authority s/he was acting to preserve. Administrators cannot ignore or build walls to protect themselves from changing conditions in the society in which they operate. Schools are extensions of society, so they must be understood as derived from and contributory to the social and cultural processes that make up that society, including those that derive from minority elements.

An understanding of the mechanisms that influence school-community relationships is all the more important for administrators in situations where the minority community is able to exercise political control over the schools. In such situations, where communities have

fought and won the battle for local control and the schools are in a position to serve as empowering institutions, administrators need not be ambivalent about their allegiance - after all, it is the community that controls the institution through which they are employed. Yet, it is in just such situations where some of the greatest frustrations regarding unfullfilled expectations have been expressed, by administrators as well as community members. The exercising of "local control" by minority communities does not in itself guarantee a more culturally responsive educational system, as indicated by the following comments of an Inupiat Eskimo community leader two years after taking over control of the local school system:

> Today, we have control over our educational system. We must now begin to assess whether or not our school system is truly becoming an Inupiat school system, reflecting Inupiat educational philosophies, or are we in fact only theoretically exercising "political control" over an educational system that continues to transmit white urban culture? Political control over our schools must include "professional control" as well, if our academic institutions are to become an Inupiat school system able to transmit our traditional Inupiat values and ideals (Hopson, 1977:4)

Hopson's distinction between "political" and "professional" control grew out of the frustrations the community experienced when the operational versions of their attempts at new and innovative programs turned out to be barely distinguishable from the programs they were intended to replace. Responsibility for implementing the new programs was placed in the hands of the school administration who unintentionally subverted their unique qualities and purpose by translating them into a traditional administrative framework. The training and experience they had acquired to qualify for their administrative credentials reflected a variable-reducing approach, so when given the task of implementing a new program, the administrators fell back on the techniques with which they were familiar. The characteristics of the new programs that were unique (i.e., those that were Inupiat in origin) were disregarded, so that by the time the programs became established in the school, they functioned in essentially the same manner and suffered the same inadequacies as the conventional programs. Gaining political control of the school system was in itself not adequate to create an "Inupiat" school system (Barnhardt, 1977).

What then does Hopson mean by "professional control"? In its simplest terms, he means replacing White administrators with Inupiat administrators. While such a move can help bring an Inupiat perspective into the system, it does not necessarily mean that the functioning of the system will change in ways that are identifiably Inupiat. If the minority administrator is grounded in traditional administrative practice and takes a conventional variable-reducing approach to the role, little substantive change will occur, except to the extent that the overall system may acquire greater credibility in the eyes of the community, which may or may not be a significant improvement, depending on the effectiveness of the existing programs.

In a more comprehensive sense, however, what Hopson is seeking is an opportunity to influence the inner workings of the school system in such a way that the community can not

only shape general policies at the level of the school board, but can also have an impact on the way those policies are implemented. Whether the administrator is from the minority community or not, responding to such circumstances calls for an approach other than a variable-reducing response. It calls instead for an opening up of the system to accommodate new variables, and creating a climate that will nurture innovative program ideas. It requires an administrative and organizational approach that is able to adapt to diverse forms of cultural expression, including varied participatory structures and communication patterns. But this runs contrary to most tenets of conventional administrative practice, so where can an administrator turn for help in such a situation? In attempting to respond to that question, it may help to step back a bit from schools and take a look at some other situations where varied cultural circumstances have required adaptations in administrative practice.

Models of Cultural Adaptation for Administrators

The field in which the most attention has been given to cultural influences on administrative/management practices has been international business. Numerous studies have attempted to identify which corporate management practices are universal and which are culture-bound (cf. Weinshall, 1977). While many corporation executives still tend to see their management style as transferable to any management situation, a study of management practices in fifty countries throughout the world concluded that management and organizational behavior are highly culturally dependent because:

> ..... managing and organizing do not consist of making or moving tangible objects, but of manipulating symbols which have meaning to the people who are managed or organized. Because the meaning which we associate with symbols is heavily affected by what we have learned in our family, in our school, in our work environment, and in our society, management and organization are penetrated with culture from the beginning to the end. (Hofstede, 1983:88)

Interest in cultural variations in management practices is not limited to multi-national corporations, however, as domestic businesses also look to other countries for techniques to improve management effectiveness and adapt to changing social and economic conditions. The country that has received the most attention in this regard has been Japan, because of its apparent success in adapting and blending Western and traditional Japanese management techniques into a management system that is highly competitive in the world marketplace, yet still retains an essentially Japanese character. Japan provides a useful contrasting environment, therefore, against which to examine our own management practices to see how they to might be adapted to meet new cultural imperatives.

A Japanese management perspective: In a comparative study of Japanese and American management styles, Pascale and Athos (1981) identified five cultural characteristics that distinguished the dominant management perspectives in the two countries. The first of these has to do with the nature of significant meanings and beliefs, or "superordinate goals", that guide behavior in organizations. Whereas American managers tend to be preoccupied with

explicit "bottom-line" measures of organizational effectiveness, Japanese managers tend to view their organizational responsibilities in a more wholistic perspective, both within the organization and outside. Employees in many Japanese businesses are intentionally socialized into a fully functional social system to which there is a mutual lifelong commitment and a well-defined set of reciprocal obligations (cf. Rohlen, 1979). The organization is viewed as a human resource system, with careful consideration given to employee growth and development, opportunity and rewards, individual attention and exceptions, along with the usual concerns for productivity and efficiency.

In addition, the Japanese manager is highly conscious of the relationship of the organization to the surrounding society and culture. Organizational values are clearly articulated and linked to national as well as general human values. For example, the "spiritual values" of a major Japanese electronics firm are listed as: national service through industry, fairness, harmony and cooperation, struggle for betterment, courtesy and humility, adjustment and assimilation, and gratitude. The "basic business principles" of the same firm are summarized as follows: "To recognize our responsibilities as industrialists, to foster progress, to promote the general welfare of society, and to devote ourselves to the further development of world culture" (p. 51). These principles are reflected not only in the platitudes of a statement of philosophy, but in the day-to-day organizational behavior of the firm as well.

A second characteristic that distinguishes American managers from their counterparts in Japan is their perception of the relationship between the individual and the organization. Whereas American managers strive to display independence of action and tend to pursue individual career goals at the expense of the goals of the organization, Japanese managers are more likely to emphasize the interdependency of all participants and components in the organization. While the American posture tends to foster individual initiative and is effective in achieving short-term goals of the organization, the Japanese approach stimulates collective initiative and cooperation, leading to a stronger and more resilient organization in the long run.

A third characteristic that Pascale and Athos identified has to do with the managers perception of persons as subjects vs. objects. In the American management perspective, people tend to be viewed as objects to be used to achieve the goals of the organization. If they do not perform adequately, they are fired and replaced, with little concern for the effects of the action on the persons involved. The Japanese managers, on the other hand, tend to regard employees as subjects, to be supported in achieving personal as well as organizational goals. An employee performing below expected levels is more likely to be reassigned or retrained than to be fired. Organizational responsibility is extended to the welfare of the individuals that make up the organization, as well as to the society within which the organization operates.

Japanese and American managers differ also in their perception of the need for orderliness and predictability, particularly with regard to conditions of "ambiguity (in what someone or something means), uncertainty (in the outcomes of possible actions), and imperfection (in ourselves, other human beings, and the processes and theories available for use)" (p.90).

American managers tend to view such conditions as undesirable and strive to eliminate them as much as possible, preferring instead qualities of explicitness, decisiveness, and firmness. For the Japanese, ambiguity, uncertainty, and imperfection are accepted as "existential givens", so managers, while still seeking to minimize risk, are quite comfortable in situations where they have to "go with the flow", relying on their intuition and instincts to guide them. This characteristic of Japanese management allows their organizations to respond and adapt to new or changing circumstances more readily than their American counterparts.

The fifth characteristic that Pascale and Athos found to distinguish Japanese and American management styles is in the exercise of leadership. American managers tend to rely heavily on the use of "power" and "control" as the means for exercising leadership, with "authority" being vested in the position rather than the person. Japanese managers, on the other hand, prefer to command personal authority and lead by example and inspiration, interpreting "power" as the ability to get things done, to mobilize resources, and to draw on what is necessary to accomplish goals. Where the Japanese manager is more likely to patiently "massage the system" to get things done, the American manager is more likely to use brute force, seeking the quickest and most efficient route available. When the social and economic climate in which the organization operates is stable and predictable, the latter approach can provide a competitive edge. When conditions in the surrounding environment are changing, however, the Japanese tend to be more successful at attuning themselves and responding to new trends over the long term.

Pascale and Athos argue that the Japanese approach to management has much to offer American managers, and that indeed, many of the most successful American businesses reflect some of the same basic management practices as those observed in the Japanese system, e.g., strong employee support programs, participative planning and control, and open communication channels. We should not assume, however, that we can simply transfer the Japanese model intact to an American setting and expect immediate success, for its overall effectiveness as a management system is closely linked to the particular cultural values and norms reflected in Japanese society. What we can learn from the Japanese is "the potential value of developing a management system that is internally consistent, that fits societal norms and expectations, and that obtains support from the major institutional actors in the world of work" (England, 1983:140).

The main purpose for reviewing Japanese management practices here has been to help remove some of the cultural blinders we wear when we look at our own management practices, so that we can recognize that it is possible to use alternative approaches to achieve the same organizational ends. Only with such a recognition can we expect to devise administrative practices in schools that can accommodate institutional change and cultural diversity. As Pascale and Athos have put it:

> A developing society requires departure, change and novelty in language, in concepts, and in ways of doing things. There has to be creative movement, at least at fairly frequent intervals. A society in a changing environment is doomed if it does not produce "managerial" innovations which break inherited molds of

> perception, old patterns of behavior, and prior expressions of beliefs and values (p. 25).

It is the production of just such managerial innovations that are needed if we are to achieve a more culturally sensitive approach to education.

Administration in developing countries: A second area in which there has been an attempt to adapt administrative practices to particular cultural circumstances is in the public administration systems of developing countries. The task facing these countries is outlined by Harbison (1973) in his analysis of various approaches to national development:

> .....organization-building is the most critical of all tasks for national development. Good organization makes it possible to maximize employment and learning opportunities; poor organization can perpetuate the underdevelopment and underutilization of the capacities of man. Unfortunately, there is no ready-made formula for producing organization-builders; the organizational architecture of advanced countries may be quite unsuitable for the developing nations. The developing countries, for the most part, will have to design and develop their own. The hope is that the provision of learning opportunities and the emphasis on the human element in development processes will bring forth a growing number of persons with entrepreneurial, managerial, and organization-building skills (p. 133).

As countries formerly under colonial rule have gained independence and the new governments have established their own administrative bureaucracies, they have exhibited variations in approaches that are, to varying degrees, reflections of the cultural milieu from which they have emerged, and of the developmental processes in which they are engaged. In a review of the research literature on administrative theory and practice in developing countries, Kiggundu, *et al* (1983) found that conventional Western-based concepts were inadequate in explaining administrative behavior in such settings, because they are predicated on conditions of stability, large size, specialization, and competition, conditions which generally do not exist in developing countries. While administrators in developing countries were able to successfully integrate certain technical features of Western administrative practice into their systems (e.g., training techniques or computer applications), they ran into serious difficulty and had to make major adjustments in any area that brought them in contact with the surrounding cultural environment.

Kiggundu, *et al* identified some of the cultural features often found to be present in developing countries that tend to interfere with the implementation of Western administrative practices. These include characteristics of traditional cultures such as differing concepts of time, traditions of informality, extended family kinship relations, authority of the elder, and collective decision-making. The presence of such non-Western cultural characteristics, along with the conditions of rapid change in which developing countries are engaged, calls for administrative approaches which emphasize "more participation, creativity, adaptation, and

looseness of definition and structure" than is permitted by the rigid bureaucratic models developed in the West (p. 79). They summarize their analysis as follows:

> In general, each time the environment is involved, the theory developed for Western settings does not apply, because it assumes contingencies that may not be valid for developing countries. In these situations, utilization must be preceded by a situational analysis to identify the relevant contingencies and their interrelationships. To the extent that contingencies for the utilization of administrative science in developing countries differ from those of industrialized countries, the transfer of management knowledge and technology (e.g., management development, curriculum development, technical assistance) should emphasize process rather than content theories and methods (p. 81).

In an attempt to formulate a more global model of administrative behavior that could take into account the contingencies of administration in developing countries, Riggs (1964) conducted a comparative study of administrative practices in societies ranging from "traditional" to "modern". He characterized the components of administrative structures in traditional agrarian societies as "fused", or unspecified and particularistic in nature, and those of modern industrial societies as "diffracted", or differentiated and specialized in nature. He then argued, however, that neither of these two extremes adequately explains the administrative systems and practices that exist in developing countries. Consequently, the theories and models of administrative behavior derived from an analysis of "fused" and "diffracted" structures are of limited use to administrators in such settings.

Riggs then went on to characterize the administrative systems in developing countries as "transitional", or in a process of evolution, with elements of fused and diffracted structures intermingled within the same system. The administrator in such a system must be "bifocal", and maintain a dual orientation to both the past and the future, that is to the traditions of the community as well as to the imperatives of the emerging institution. Faced with such a reality, the administrator must maintain an "eclectic" outlook and be highly resourceful with regard to the range of administrative options that can be brought to bear in a given situation. The question then becomes, by what criteria are particular options to be chosen?

In Riggs analysis, the administrator in an institution-building role such as that which occurs in developing countries, must be particularly attentive to the relationship between the institution and the cultural, political and economic environment within which it operates. To address such considerations, he proposes the development of an "ecology of administration", in which attention is given to "the identification of sensitive variables in the environment - whether they form a part of the culture or not - and the demonstration of at least plausible patterns of correlation between these variables and the administrative items which are the focus of analysis" (p. 428).

The purpose of Riggs' ecological approach, however, is not to determine which administrative choices should be made, but to establish the boundaries within which choices are available. By understanding the interplay between institutional forces and those in the

surrounding environment, the administrator is better equipped to formulate and assess new administrative options in terms of there functional value to the community. If the function of the institution is to provide services to a non-Western cultural clientle, and if the structure available for providing those services is not yet wholly adequate or fully developed, an essential characteristic of effective administration is the ability of the administrator to accurately interpret diverse environmental variables and to formulate new organizational and administrative strategies as a guide to action. As such, administration in developing countries can be seen as a necessary process of continual and deliberate adaptation, in response to external as well as internal contingencies.

We see then that successful administrators in the bureaucracies of developing countries, as with the managers in Japanese industry, have had to develop models of administrative behavior that are sensitive to the cultural environment in which they operate. They have learned how to anticipate and accommodate new variables through flexible and adaptive organizational structures, and they have overcome the constraints of conventional variable-reducing administrative practices. The task now is to apply what we have learned from these two situations to outline the characteristics of an alternative organizational and administrative approach that has the potential to address the educational needs of minority communities.

Organization for Diversity

Along with all the usual technical details of budget, personnel, curriculum, etc, administrators of schools with significant cultural minority populations must also be prepared to deal with the institutional consequences of diversity and change. These conditions, more than any others, distinguish the administrative landscape of minority institutions from their mainstream counterparts. So it is this inherent variability in the environment, reflected in the diversity of cultural traditions to be served and the continual change brought about by the convergence of variant traditions, that must be addressed if we are to develop an alternative organizational and administrative approach. We are not, however, pursuing the development of multiple models of administrative practice, each one specially tailored to the unique circumstances of a particular cultural group. We are, rather, seeking to identify some of the characteristics of a more generalizable, processual approach to the organization and administration of schools, that can then be adapted to accommodate diversity and change in any situation.

One of the few attempts to systematically examine the mechanisms by which we organize diversity in our daily lives is that by Wallace (1970, 1971). Building on his notions of cognitive mazeways and equivalence structures, he has identified four basic "principles" that describe the way members of a society "articulate to form the equivalence structures that are the substance of social life" (1970:110). These are:

> Ad hoc communication - Most human activity requires a constant flow of communication that, among other things, enables the participants continuously to

> readjust and expand their own cognitions, including their knowledge of the communication system itself (p. 111).
>
> Inclusion - Cooperating members of highly differentiated work teams involving dominant/subordinate relationships, (e.g., specialist and client) must have some elements of their individual plans in common in order for their interaction to proceed toward mutually satisfactory goals (p. 114).
>
> End linkage - Differentiated work teams that do not have authority relationships with one another (e.g., small teams of highly trained co-workers) achieve articulation of efforts by a precise complementarity of subplans that sum to a complete plan (p. 115).
>
> Administration - The larger the number of cooperating individuals, and the more complex the individual component plans, the more need their is for a regulation of communication, inclusion, and end linkage relations by administration. Administration provides for the design and continuous adjustment of diverse component plans in a group of cooperating individuals. It requires a hierarchy of authority relations, with an individual or executive group "at the top" whose plan in principle includes at least the abstract framework of all the subplans of the group and who have a recognized right, and duty, to ensure that the several relationships of inclusion and end linkage are mutually consistent, adequately tight, and sum to a productive total plan, and that ad hoc communication is always effective enough to ensure the correction of errors (p. 117).

While the mechanisms of ad hoc communication, inclusion, and end linkage contribute to the regulation of interaction amongst members of all social groups, Wallace is particularly concerned about the role of administration as a mechanism for organizing diversity in contemporary industrial society, and the problems inherent in the bureaucratic structures that have been spawned to facilitate administrative processes in such a society.

> Since the task of any culture, and particularly the cultures of large industrial societies, is to organize diversity rather than to destroy it, and since large industrial societies are increasingly dependent upon bureaucratic systems of management, a major task of cultural reform for continued human progress must be to design bureaucracies that are resistant to exploitation and are adequately sensitive to their clienteles (p. 120).

The task of the administrator in a culturally diverse setting then, is to create and maintain an organizational environment that will facilitate maximum ad hoc communication, that will insure the inclusion of minority community perspectives in the work plans of all school staff, and that will foster complementarity in the linkages of all components of the system. The accommodation of diversity by a school system requires, therefore, an extensive framework for participatory decision-making to allow complementarity to emerge from the diverse points of view (cf. Conway, 1984). Through active curriculum committees, planning

councils, community/school associations, etc., all participants can contribute to the jointly established goals of the system in mutually beneficial and cumulative ways, without having to surrender their uniqueness to do so.

One of the essential characteristics of such a system is that it be decentralized as much as possible, so that the scale of the functional work units is small enough to permit effective interaction and communication, and so that maximum accommodation can be made to the local cultural and physical environment. The larger the system and the more distant the decision-making is from the clientele, the more difficult it will be to effectively accommodate diversity. Conversely, the closer the system is to the people being served, the fewer the bureaucratic constraints that tend to interfere with the relationships between the various participants in the system, and the greater the opportunity for complementarity rather than conformity. Decentralization and distributed decision-making must be implicit in the system if there is to be any real exercise of local community control.

Another characteristic necessary for school systems to respond favorably to cultural diversity is that the various components of the system be loosely coupled, so that the system can have enough organizational slack to maintain a flexible, adaptive and open-ended posture in response to new contingencies. "Loosely coupled systems preserve more diversity in responding than do tightly coupled systems, and therefore can adapt to a considerably wider range of changes in the environment" (Weick, 1976:7). Through the use of "end linkage" mechanisms, for example, a system can be made up of semi-autonomous units such that each unit can make appropriate accommodations without posing a threat to other units. A rigidly structured, closed system will have considerable difficulty responding to the variations in personnel requirements and procedural tasks (i.e., staffing and scheduling) that a culturally sensitive approach to schooling require. Attention must be given, therefore, to the devolution of administrative control, so that organizational authority is in the hands of those closest to the locus of activity.

To maintain order and complementarity in a loosely coupled system, the administrator must strive to achieve a unity of purpose among participants, so that everyone is working toward the same end. Once a collective consensus has been established on the overall goals and direction of the system, only the most general framework for managing the flow of organizational activity is necessary to guide participants in their semi-autonomous roles, while at the same time allowing for enough "organizational turbulence" to stimulate creativity and enthusiasm. In this way, greater latitude can be provided to allow work units to adapt to new variables that they encounter as they go about their tasks, on the assumption that such adaptations will be made in a manner consistent with general organizational policy and procedure.

If such a loosely structured approach to school organization is to succeed, careful attention must also be given to the socialization processes necessary to draw participants together into a social system that is sufficiently integrated to insure complementarity of the component parts. This can be accomplished through the provision of appropriate training programs and information distribution systems that contribute to the development of support networks

across interdependent components within the system. Formal and informal communication channels should be established that provide for the free flow of information amongst all the participants within the system, as well as to and from the community being served.

Community participation must be built into the system in explicit and meaningful ways, so that the community can make substantive contributions and develop a sense of ownership, rather than simply serve as passive recipients of the systems services. If the history of community participation in a particular school setting has been weak, this may require a prolonged and active process of solicitation, encouragement and support to draw community members into the system sufficiently that they become a significant force in shaping educational programs and policies. Only with active community participation at all levels of the system can the kind of "professional control" refered to earlier become a reality.

Organization for diversity is not an easy task to achieve, but it is a necessary task to pursue if we are to begin to move toward a more culturally sensitive approach to schooling in our society. We must devise systems that can encompass cultural variables beyond those reflected in our present monocultural institutions. The skills required of the school administrator in pursuing such a goal, however, extend beyond those required of the conventional variable-reducing administrator. A different form of administrative behavior is called for, where the requisite skills are more akin to those described by Gregorc and Johnson (1973) in their assessment of an alternative approach to school administration:

> An emerging view of a new breed administrator is becoming evident. He is seen as an implementer, facilitator, and evaluator of education programs. He is seen as a synergist, teacher of teachers, an organizational designer, a political statesman, and an accountability monitor. He must be aware of interpretations of equal opportunity, program design, trends in curricular and personnel administration, and of local community mores. In this view, the school administrator is less a bureaucrat and more of a leader and facilitator. He is expected to understand individuals and groups and to utilize their individual talents rather than just manage an organization with fixed positions to be filled by replaceable, standardized parts. This type of administrator needs more than training in scheduling classes, disciplining students, increasing efficiency and managing an organization. He needs professional assistance in identifying and interpreting differences and likenesses among individuals and groups. Further, he needs guidance in how to organize collective efforts toward positive ends.

With such considerations in mind, we will turn now from organizational considerations to a delineation of some aspects of administrative behavior that are particularly well suited to situations of cultural diversity and change.

Administration for Change

If we are to make a successful transition from a variable-reducing approach to administration to an approach that is capable of sustaining the organization of diversity, the new approach must be consistent with and reinforce the essential features of the organizational strategy outlined above. The qualities of leadership called for in such a situation are not unlike those exhibited by Japanese managers and successful administrators in developing countries. School administrators in cultural minority settings must be flexible and adaptive in temperament, far-sighted and wholistic in outlook, and process- and people-oriented in style. The administration of a decentralized, loosely-coupled system with strong participatory decision-making requires a well-developed sensitivity to variations in individual and group communication and interaction patterns, and a repertoire of skills for organizing peoples diverse interests and efforts so that they fuse into a coherent collective endeavor. The administrator in such a situation functions less as an authority figure and more as a facilitator, coordinator and mediator, leading by example and consensus rather than by decree. Whenever possible, interaction with others is informal and personalized, with communication readily flowing both ways.

Educational problems in minority communities are oftentimes only vaguely defined with multiple variables responding to erratic forces in a generally unpredictable manner, so that proposed solutions to the problems are often elusive and at best tentative. The administrator grappling with such problems must be able to tolerate the high degree of ambiguity and uncertainty inherent in the situation, and must approach solutions with a long-term evolutionary perspective, recognizing that today's solution may become tomorrows problem.

It is in this context that administrators with a background in the minority community can have a distinct advantage over those who come from outside the community, for they bring with them a cumulative history of the solutions that have been tried in the past and can build on that experience as they pursue a new generation of experimentation. Administrators from outside the community, with their own pet programs, career aspirations, and good intentions, will often impatiently implement a new program without recognizing that the community has seen it all before and is simply being subjected to another round of unfulfilled expectations. Minority administrators in a school system can, therefore, be important contributors to the effective restructuring of educational programs, while at the same time providing an essential link with the community. The greatest benefit is derived by the community and the school system when there is a mixture of minority and majority administrators in the system, so that both perspectives can be brought to bear as issues arise.

Recognizing that a fundamental function of minority education is the empowerment of minority people, school administrators must understand the relationship between individual behavior and the social organization in which it occurs, the relationship between institutions and the clientele they serve, and the nature of cultural and institutional change processes. Rather than reducing variables in the systems they manage, administrators of change must be able to move beyond even the maintenance of existing variables, to nurture and stimulate the development of new variables that take into account unanticipated and constantly changing circumstances. Only with such a variable-generating administrative posture can the kind of unintentional subversion of innovative new ideas that occurred with the Inupiat Eskimos be

avoided. Instead, innovation is welcomed by the astute administrator and can be used to overcome conditions of institutional inertia, apathy and routinization. The enthusiasm generated by the successful implementation of new ideas, encouraged by a responsive and supportive administrator, can serve to redirect and revitalize an otherwise dormant institution.

Success of a variable-generating approach to administration requires, however, an ability to anticipate the consequences of change, for the educational well-being of the students as well as for the social and cultural well-being of the community. It also requires the ability to recognize and remove institutional obstacles to change when change is necessary, to resist change when it is unproductive, and the ability to distinguish between the two. The role of the variable-generating administrator in minority education is similar to that of the organization- building administrator in a developing country:

> Ministries of education, as well as schools, universities, and other educational institutions are strategic "organizational personalities" in their societies. Some are live and dynamic, responsive to new ideas and vigorous. Others are tradition bound, resistant to change, and lethargic. Some develop the talents of key personnel in the hierarchy; others stifle initiative and deplete precious human capital. And in all cases, much depends upon the men at the top - the organization builders - and their capacity to perceive both the goals of society as well as the artful science of building a team (Harbison, 1973:75).

Although school administrators are not the only ones responsible for the success or failure of educational programs in minority communities, they have an enormous influence in shaping how the programs are to be implemented. The organizational perspective and administrative style they bring to their role establishes the parameters within which people and programs must operate. It is critical, therefore, that they approach their task with as wide a range of skills and techniques as possible, so that they can accommodate cultural diversity and change with minimal imposition of inappropriate monocultural administrative and organizational biases.

Since the administrative and organizational approach outlined here is intended to be adaptable to any cultural circumstance, it obviously is not limited in its applicability to cultural minority situations. By adding a consideration of cultural variables to the mix of conventional institutional variables addressed by all administrators, we have simply brought into clearer focus those administrative practices that are likely to enhance the organizational effectiveness of any institution, majority of minority. The purpose, however, has been to shed light on some of the particular problems of schools in minority situations, and how administrative practices can serve to exacerbate or alleviate those problems. With a bit of ingenuity, flexibility and tolerance, maybe we can begin to develop educational programs and practices that are sensitive and adaptive enough to be truly applicable across cultures.

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