

feeling of belongingness was not an isolated factor but that it varied in different situations. Immediately teachers saw ways of helping some children achieve belongingness and, thereby, improve their follow-through on plans.

There is stimulation for teachers in research in which application of results is not suspended to sometime in the remote future. At the conclusion of a study it is not necessary to hunt for possible uses for the findings. Because each teacher participates at every step in planning a study which is related to her own situation, implications for changes in her ways of working are immediately apparent at any intermediate step or at the conclusion of the study.

Research in which teachers are invited to share in projects planned and directed by someone else—with the teacher's function that of supplying data to be interpreted by someone else—is challenging mainly to those few teachers who have an academic inter-

est in research. Obviously, in the research undertaken in Springfield, the challenge and the interest lie in the fact that the teacher's relation to the project is such that she is constantly participating in interpretation of findings that makes immediate application possible in ways that are unique to each teacher.

A Three-Point Challenge

The elements in the Springfield research program that challenge teachers are:

- ✦ group action
- ✦ embedding of the research in the on-going program of the school
- ✦ the immediate application of results.

Experience with this type of research leads to the conclusion that it is possible to carry on curriculum research that both challenges classroom teachers and provides a setting for good working relationships in an in-service program of teacher education.

FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF CONSULTANT AND PRINCIPAL

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A COOPERATIVE research project involving teachers in the schools of Springfield, Missouri, and members of the staff of the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation has been under way long enough to make it possible to look at the problems of cooperation which have developed as the project moved forward.

Finding a Place to Start

The Springfield project began because of widespread concern of teachers and administrators that the intangible outcomes of their school program could not be discussed, measured, or reported in a satisfactory way. Knowing this, the central administration proposed to the Horace Mann-Lincoln

Institute that we look together at the matter of measuring intangibles. The Institute, which is interested in research on curriculum problems, might have suggested technical modifications of this statement of the problem, and proceeded from there. To have done so, however, would have caused the relationship to be on less than a completely cooperative basis.

The Institute members thought that the word "intangibles" required more precise definition. The meaning attached to the terms of a definition imply the action required by it. What was required here was unified action and, therefore, unified definition of purpose. In the discussion that took place it was necessary to pass through a stage in which research purposes and service purposes were seen as divergent—that is, the Institute might get a measuring instrument out of the project, and that would be the Institute's purpose; the school system might improve their report to parents, and that would be its purpose. It was clear, however, that if we worked on this basis, each participant would find himself spending time working on purposes which were not his own. We therefore sought a purpose which was clearly mutual.

A Unified Purpose

At this point the principals of the entire school system were consulted by the central administrative group which had been carrying on the discussions up to this point. At a meeting they were asked to consider the problem as a whole, to discuss what the subject matter of the project would probably be, and to consult with their school

staffs concerning possible participation in the project. One significant result of this meeting was the establishment of a unified purpose for the project, one which resolved the divergence discussed above. When the principals attempted to name the intangibles, they used such words as cooperativeness, consideration, sharing, responsibility, and consistency. One principal expressed the feeling of the group when she said that what it all came down to was the development of behavior consistent with democratic values. This statement suggested to the Institute member a purpose he could share; it put the definition in a theoretical framework within which he could operate. Defining the problem as a study of value formation brought us together.

But the preliminary defining of the problem was not yet over. When the whole matter was discussed with groups of teachers, it became clear that they couldn't find their purposes in this definition. Unless a research project would have consequences for the children they taught, it could not be of more than academic interest to them. A third stage of definition was necessary in order to maintain mutuality of purpose. It was achieved when the definition became, "What can teachers do that will make a difference in the attitudes and values that children hold?"

The fact that the proposal was brought to the teachers while the problem was being defined was of fundamental importance. In the staff discussions that took place when the principals presented the idea, the teachers decided what the idea involved as applied to them, and they decided, freely, whether or not they

should participate in the project. The importance of the teachers' freedom to make this decision can scarcely be over-emphasized; those who finally affiliated themselves had seen an identity of purpose from the beginning. They were in a position to work with enthusiasm.

Organizing for Action

We were now ready to go to work. In meetings, individual school staffs selected particular attitudes they wished to study. The consultant met with them to work out ways of observing the behavior which they thought reflected these attitudes. The pattern of observation was different for each school, and so was the method of reporting it. The consultant's role here was that of expeditor. He compiled the results of the observations and brought them back to school staffs which considered next steps. In most cases the next step was an attempt to explain the behavior, and this explanation required further observation. This pattern continues.

Purposes May Drift Apart

The problem of maintaining cooperation is essentially one of keeping purposes identical. It takes more than high resolve and mutual respect to make this happen; it takes constant attention at every stage of the development of the project. The problem takes different forms at different times. Sometimes it is expressed as a proposal for action; sometimes it is a demand for a clarification of purpose; sometimes it is a willing subordination of the purpose of one participant to that of the other. Identity of purpose may sometimes be lost, and the problem may not

reach verbal statement at all but remain embedded in a vague feeling of personal drift.

Cooperation and Coordination

The problem is to keep a cooperative relationship from degenerating into one that is merely coordinate. We remain partners in the ownership of the idea only if we develop it jointly. No one person is the constituted leader of the enterprise. We don't just work together, coordinating our efforts; we share the responsibility for decisions on method and interpretation as they arise. This pattern differs radically from that in which a carefully predesigned experiment is brought into a school or community and worked out with or without the aid of the local personnel.

Intermediate Results

Cooperative research tends to start a stream of action and to seek explanation of what happens along the way. What we have called coordinate research also starts a stream of action, but channels it in certain ways in order to lead ultimately to the test of pre-conceived hypotheses. There are many intermediate results of both kinds of research, but cooperative research deliberately allows these intermediate results to occupy a central position. These intermediate results are likely to be reported as increased understanding of certain trends, as statements of inference based on the weight of evidence, or as insights concerning appropriate methods for studying a given area. Since mutuality of purpose as we mean it here demands that the research be carried on in a relatively unstructured operating situation, cooperative re-

search is less likely to result in the establishment of proven cause and effect relationships.

Some results of the Springfield study of attitude formation are beginning to emerge. One group of these results is concerned with terms like cooperation, sharing, responsibility, and consideration. Examination of the behavioral records seems to indicate that:

- ♦ there is a great overlap in the behavior which is categorized under these terms
- ♦ mere understanding of a child's apparent behavior patterns does not, of itself, lead to constructive action—it is necessary to look behind the pattern to factors which may control it
- ♦ the relationship between some factors and some behaviors has been examined in a preliminary manner. The following seem to go together: belongingness and consideration, measurable emotional security and behavior in terms of group purpose. The relationship between the following seems very much more tenuous than we had supposed: age and responsible behavior, socio-economic background and considerate behavior. Some inadequacies in our own perception have become obvious: we don't know enough about the children's conception of the significance of their own behavior; we don't know enough about the influence of the teacher's value system on her judgment.

Some changes in classroom practice are beginning to develop:

- ♦ The research point of view is being carried into the usual classroom pattern so that even the children learn to weigh evidence and suspend judgment
- ♦ Teachers report that their judgments concerning children's social development

have become more tentative than they used to be

- ♦ There has been a considerable broadening of the teacher's notion of what constitutes the range of important learning activity. They report that they see with greater clarity the importance of such activities as planning for a party, distribution of supplies, and organizing for play.

Next Steps

It would be possible for one who is familiar with past research in this general area to see many profitable next steps. The list of inadequacies in our own perception might be considerably lengthened. To do this, however, would violate the very cooperativeness which gives this sort of research activity its value. The next steps have to be stated by the participants (including the consultants) if the big unknown quantity always present in an active situation is to have its influence. It is precisely the ignoring or ruling out of such unknowns that has rendered so much traditional research ineffective in operational situations. Our hope of finding out something of utility beyond the research situation rests heavily on our ability to develop generalizations which include the unknown variables. We can do this if the cooperative relationship remains close from beginning to end of the project. The ultimate test of the value of a cooperative research enterprise is whether or not it results in a desirable change in the situation in which the research takes place.

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