

*Education has no money of its own.
Will government and industry allow education,
for that reason, to become a victim of tradition?*

UNTIL recently, traditionalism in educational practice had come to mean economy. Even now it is much easier to justify an item in an education budget a second, third, fourth, or fifth time than a first time. There seems to be a sort of self-justification which starts for practices after they become established and increases as they grow older.

Common practice in education, like mass production in industry, is much less expensive in dollars per unit cost, than is the promotion of change. The financial philosophy and structure of American education have developed out of such a perspective. It is, therefore, uncommon to find in a regular educational budget at the local, state, or national level, funds allocated for the promotion of change.

The notion that education should be a stabilizing institution in society has perhaps influenced budgetary behavior. When societal stability rather than orderly change is accepted as the dominant role of education, it would be unreasonable to expect generous amounts of money to be available for the promotion of change either in society or in education itself.

Under such circumstances, it is rather popular to regard "the process of edu-

MONEY AND CHANGE

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cation" as "informing" or "dispensing knowledge." And, the very nature of that knowledge is historical. History has its place in the educative process. But chronologizing in the sense used here leaves to chance the development of creativity and ingenuity. These are among the talents necessary for instituting selective change.

While there is a strong overt tendency to regard the preservation of stability as a major role of education in society, it can be observed that education is really an instrument of selective and more or less orderly change. As a

matter of fact, change seems to be a dimension of education. An educated person is somewhat characterized by his ability to analyze problematic situations, design and institute desirable changes in the situation, or in the way in which he relates to the situation. Therefore, a qualitative judgment about the structure and practices of education in a democratic society will ultimately reflect the extent to which its people will develop this ability.

Inasmuch as change is a factor in the quality of education, it appears that appropriate efforts should be focused in the direction of having the process itself so characterized. In other words, change should be expected and planned for as one of the characteristics of education as well as one of its outcomes. It must be recognized that change, in itself, does not necessarily represent progress. There will be the hazards of unexpected outcomes of change, both desirable and undesirable. However, it is also true that there can be no progress without change.

Certainly in efforts to bring about changes in the structure and methods of education there will be some failures. Nevertheless, given sufficient encouragement and financial support, there is a good chance that the successes will outweigh failures both in money invested and improvements instituted. The unknown paths that lead to greater success have not been numbered. This assumption has been verified innumerable times by industry—so much so that the operational budget of any successful firm includes generous funds for research and development. While the proven products must be forthcoming in order that the enterprise may sur-

vive, the challenge of changing the way they are produced in the hope of developing superior means of providing better materials is always present and accepted.

The Challenge of Change

Educators would like to accept the challenge of change. They are the first to recognize that there must be better and more successful ways of doing their job. However, there are many forces which resist prolonged exertion to bring about change. Most of these can be reduced to one factor, money.

In the first place, the majority of educators are both practical and realistic. They know that it is a sign of sanity to keep their aspirations within the bounds of possibility. So when funds are not available to support activities required to change, they are reluctant to venture into such activities. This often makes educators appear indifferent toward change, when in reality they are interested but are caught up in the limitations of a financial structure which controls their ambitions. Given adequate financial resources to provide time, experience, and equipment, much more activity in this direction will be discernible.

In the second place, the typical educator in America has little time for anything other than staying on top of the routines of his job as it is defined by traditional standards. In order for thoughtful change to be promoted in a rational and selective manner, someone needs time to consider the alternative purposes and processes. The production of desirable changes in education requires the proper combination of philosophy, architecture, and construction.

Neither of these could be randomly tended if change is to be selective and consequently desirable.

From the standpoint of the general public, attitudes regarding change in education range from indifference to hostility. Citizens who seldom come face to face with the actual operation of educational institutions would understandably be unaware of innovations in education. Funds for the promotion of change, therefore, would need to include expenses for educating the public to the possibilities of changing for better results. A well-planned program which would include the dissemination of information to the public may improve the chances of getting local encouragement for innovations.

Facilitating Change

Money can facilitate change by providing time, equipment, experience, and expertness. It can be recognized from observation that richer school districts tend to try new things much more readily than poorer districts. As a result, teachers in more favored situations have opportunities which might be worth sharing with less fortunate districts. Schools in Anaheim, California, Norridge, Illinois, Melbourne, Florida, and elsewhere represent practical examples of how money can stimulate change.

Likewise, an era of innovation began in University City, Missouri, when the city received a \$300,000 grant from the Ford Foundation to study curriculum change. With the aid of this grant,

. . . speakers and consultants were brought to inject a zeal for experimentation. Traveling teams were sent out to observe innovative practices in other schools.

Personnel—both administrative and teaching—were hired with the change process conspicuously in view. And a full-time consultant for innovation, a "change agent," was employed. His assignment was the introduction of new methods of organization, new teaching strategies, and new curricula.¹

University City, Missouri, as a community, and change-conscious educators over the Nation point to the education programs there with pride. At least some of the potential for the educational changes that are under way in University City and other places must have been there for some time. Yet money was required for any significant action to become discernible.

There are experiences of a kind with change, which originate in enterprises and institutions other than education that might be adapted to education. Perhaps the utilization of experiences from such sources has been handicapped by a general lack of funds. If a stronger coalition between other institutions and education could even bring about a more general awareness of these experiences, on the part of the educational community, and of the boldness with which some other institutions regard change, this in itself should be a significant contribution.

It is obvious that significant departures from general practice often require alterations in old facilities and equipment. Indeed, in order to institute some changes, completely new facilities and equipment will be necessary—new in the sense that they have never been created before. This source of expenses for change could range from the price of a minimum number of consumable

¹Don Glines. "Changing a School." *Phi Delta Kappan* 48 (4): 167; December 1966.

items in a classroom to that of a Nova High School. Whatever the specifications for equipment, some money will be needed to initiate the change. So, though given the capabilities, the courage, and even a clear vision of the objectives, if adequate funds are still unavailable, the change could hardly be implemented.

Effecting Change

It appears that the availability of money affects the objectives of education in two fundamental ways: (a) their scope and (b) the accomplishment of such objectives.

First, educational objectives reflect the aspirations of the community. The public seldom aspires to do the impossible. But the more money that is available for education, the greater the educational aspirations may become. The scope of educational objectives, therefore, is influenced by the availability of money. This matter probably has significant implications for the American ideal of equal educational opportunity. There seems to be a tendency for granting agencies—including those of the federal government—to favor applicants who have already demonstrated inclinations toward innovation. This results in money begetting money. Because educational objectives are so closely related to the availability of money, the equal opportunity ideal becomes increasingly difficult to achieve.

The questions arise: "Can America afford, as it faces problems resulting from improvements in communication and transportation, migration, rising aspirations, and automation, to be indifferent to the effects that money has upon educational objectives?" "Is it

coherent with this ideal to ignore the expanding hiatus between the well supported and the poorly supported school districts?" That there are some aspects of this problem which present stubborn challenges is obvious. Yet it appears equally clear that this problem must be confronted if the ideal of equal educational opportunity is to become a reality.

Second, educational goals can be well conceived, precisely formulated, and generally acceptable, yet if there is not sufficient money, the goals may not be attainable. If educators experience frustrations about change, this is usually due less to insufficient knowledge about what they want to do and how to get it done than it is to a lack of financial support to promote their objectives. Consideration of educational goals in many cases can be reduced to discriminating between the cheapest of several educational alternatives. Ideally, the development of educational objectives should proceed in the opposite direction.

Role of Research

The extent to which money is a factor in whether teachers can use their creativity and ingenuity in clarifying and pursuing educational objectives may stagnate or energize efforts to accomplish such objectives.

There is a good chance that the availability of money influences much of the research in education. The researcher may be fully aware that his undertakings are something less than real creativity. However, he plans within the context of tradition because financial support for his activities is more easily justified. This does not represent intellectual dishonesty. Rather, it repre-

sents a clear understanding of the relationships between traditionalism, money, and change. A researcher whose activities must be financed will be less inclined to tackle a problem for which there are no precedents, no methods, and no tools. Lack of funds plus timidity, has created a type of parochialism in educational change. Money will perhaps be the most effective instrument for cracking the shell which incarcerates educational innovation.

In the 1964 Annual Report of the Carnegie Corporation, John W. Gardner, now Secretary of HEW, said: "... Since the beginning of the American Nation, federal and state enactments have sought to encourage private initiative on behalf of the public welfare." In fact, Gardner asserted in his report, "that in a pluralistic society such as ours, it is important to perpetuate both governmental and private sources of initiative in the public interest."²

Although both the federal government and private industry have put large sums of money into education, many people are concerned about the impact of such funds upon widespread innovations in educational structure, content, and methods. There seem to be several fundamental questions related to their concerns. It is not supposed that these questions are new or exhaustive.

² *News, Notes & Quotes. Newsletter of Phi Delta Kappa* 11 (6): 1; May 1967. Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., Bloomington, Indiana.

They just appear to be so basic to the production of widespread change in education that it is worthwhile to mention them here.

1. Is it possible to combine the resources of the federal government, industry, and education in an effort to create an atmosphere that encourages effective and continuing changes that pervade the total educational institution?

2. What needs to be done to recruit and maintain an adequate supply of educational innovators, to sustain them, and to support their work?

3. How can ideas and experiences from other institutions and enterprises best be made available to and utilized in the institution of education?

4. How can the sensitivity of the general public toward educational innovations be improved?

The influence money has upon change is fundamental and significant. It appears, therefore, that a successful assault on traditionalism in education requires the collective efforts of the federal government, industry, and education itself. Education has no money of its own. Will government and industry allow education, for that reason, to become a victim of tradition? After all, education is in partnership with government and private enterprise in furthering the public interest. ❀



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