

AN EXPLORATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL BELIEF
SYSTEM PROCESS AS A MEANS FOR HELPING
EDUCATORS FORMULATE CURRICULUM DECISIONS

A Dissertation for the Degree of Ph. D.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

AN EXPLORATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL BELIEF SYSTEM PROCESS AS A MEANS FOR HELPING EDUCATORS FORMULATE CURRICULUM DECISIONS

By

Michael G. Pasternak

The Educational Belief System Process is composed of the theories and techniques used in helping people: (1) to grow, (2) to develop a more conscious educational belief system, and (3) to employ both (1) and (2) in curriculum decision making.

This study is designed to explore the Educational Belief System Process in order to help educators:

- (1) formulate curriculum decisions that they believe in and express a high level of commitment to,
- (2) reject a "mindless" conditioning process and develop an organic perspective toward curriculum decision making,
- (3) understand and accept human differences and potential, and
- (4) grow and therefore make more effective curriculum decisions.

The process is based upon a series of assumptions that are included within Chapter II, which focuses on the

underlying theory of the Educational Belief System Process. A basic assumption is that growing individuals are able to make more effective curriculum decisions. Included within this chapter are theories related to human growth, the educational belief system, the curriculum frame of reference, curriculum decision making, and how all of these concepts are linked together.

Following a focus on the EBSP theory is a presentation of how the theory might be put into practice. Chapter III includes some theoretical guidelines for implementation and a series of techniques and activities that might be used in working with groups of people.

Chapter IV relates information about an initial attempt to estimate, examine, describe, and explain the effectiveness of the process, as put into use with two selected groups of educators. It includes the study's description and design, analysis and results, and summary of significant findings. Some opinions of selected writers are included within this chapter in order to highlight the magnitude of the task with which the process is designed to interact, the positive nature of the results of the study, and support for the EBSP.

Within the scope of the EBSP theory, the design of the study, and the limitations of the data gathered, the following conclusions are made:

1. The positive relationship between growing human beings and the development of potentially more effective curriculum decision making was demonstrated within this study.

2. The Educational Belief System Process is able to help people grow.

3. The Educational Belief System Process is able to help people develop a more conscious educational belief system.

4. The Educational Belief System Process is able to help people develop potentially more effective curriculum decisions.

5. Most educators who have participated in an EBSP workshop have indicated it to be very helpful. The EBSP experience has the potential to be perceived as helpful by many more people.

Some of the implications generated by the study are:

1. There is a potential means for contributing to the creation of schools that are psychologically healthy for children and adults, as educators grow and make more effective curriculum decisions.

2. As educators grow and make more effective curriculum decisions, there is a higher probability for the development of schools that reflect an appreciation for understanding and accepting human differences and potential.

3. In no way should the EBSP be considered as having arrived. It is not complete. It merits future efforts to improve its ability to help people.

4. The conclusions imply that the EBSP is worthy of further examination in order to determine and explain more clearly its long-range effectiveness.

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FORMULATE CURRICULUM DECISIONS

By

Michael G. Pasternak

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DEDICATION

To Dale and Chuck. . . Thank you for
helping so many to grow. . .

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Without any doubt, my wife Jan has been the most loving and helpful to me. Wow, what a delight!! How very good she helped me to feel when I came home! Together, we were able. Thank you Lisa and Brett for understanding why "daddy" was away and all the kisses "hello" and "good-bye."

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Thank you John Suehr and George Myers for your faith, trust, and care as friends and committee members.

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And, to my friend, colleague, and Chairman, Dale Alam, ...much love...no man could I hold in higher regard.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES.	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
LIST OF APPENDICES.	viii
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION.	1
The Need for the Study.	1
Definition of Terms	4
The Purpose of the Study.	5
Delimitations	5
Overview.	7
II. THE UNDERLYING THEORY	9
Human Growth.	10
The Educational Belief System, The Curriculum Frame of Reference, and Curriculum Decision Making.	22
III. THEORY INTO PRACTICE.	26
Introduction.	26
Theoretical Guidelines.	27
Process Methodology (Techniques- Activities)	30
Summary	55
IV. NEW INFORMATION	57
Description and Design of the Study	58
Techniques-Activities	59
The Questionnaire	60
Analysis and Results of the Study	63
Summary of Significant Findings	82
Opinions of Selected Educational Writers.	85

Chapter	Page
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	91
Summary	91
Conclusions	92
Implications.	93
General Recommendations	94
Specific Recommendations.	95
The Author's Growth	97
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	98
APPENDICES.	100

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Items Focusing on Participants' Ability to Make More Effective Curriculum Decisions . .	65
2. Items Focusing on Degree of Helpfulness of EBSP Workshop/Class Experience in Compar- ison to Other University-Related Experiences. .	66
3. Items Focusing on the Participants' Skill and Understanding Related to the Process of Changing Their Schools	68
4. Items Focusing on Commitment to Changing the Educational Institution and Desire to Become More Involved in Curriculum Decision Making . .	70
5. Items Focusing on the Belief-Value System Components of the Experience.	78
6. Items Focusing on Belief-Value Change	79
7. Items Focusing on Participants' Levels of Trust and Acceptance.	81

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Human Growth Chart	12
2. Development of Behaviors or Purposes and Goals.	16

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix	Page
A. The Pre-Test Instrument and the Post-Test Instrument.	101
B. Data Result Tables.	113
C. Examples of Responses to the Open- Ended Questions	117

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Need for the Study

Public schools are all too often psychologically unhealthy for children and adults. Most schools have very little regard for individual differences, participant involvement in the decision-making process, or pluralistic concepts. The joy of learning is being crushed! In America, the land of the free, it is not difficult to document the above statements.

. . . What is mostly wrong with the public schools is not due to venality or indifference or stupidity, but to mindlessness This mindlessness -- the failure or refusal to think seriously about educational purpose, the reluctance to question established practice -- is not the monopoly of the public school; it is diffused remarkably evenly throughout the entire educational system, and indeed the entire society.¹

This mindlessness is reinforced by a number of practices exhibited by colleges of education and the public school systems. Some of these practices are:

(1) program and evaluation systems which focus on work rather than learning,

¹Charles E. Silberman, Crisis in the Classroom (New York: Random House, 1970), pp. 10-11.

(2) competency-based teacher education programs that emphasize sameness rather than differences or creativity,

(3) a conditioning process which reinforces a teacher teaching in the same manner by which he was taught,

(4) an accountability scheme which fails to recognize human potential and breeds insecurity among educators (Generally, when threatened, insecure people close themselves to new ideas.),

(5) school programs which attempt to provide the same basic education for children who have different needs, and

(6) bureaucratic decision-making organizations which attempt to condition educators to accept and reflect the values of the institution, rather than incorporating their own values into the system.

Attempts to alleviate the mindlessness which exists in American education often take the form of calling for an infusion of common purpose into the system. National, state, and local educational organizations call meetings for the purpose of establishing "New Goals for Our Schools," but this measure fails to solve the problem. Goal setting of this nature rarely effects meaningful changes at the school level, because it seldom reflects the high-priority beliefs and values of the classroom teacher. Where there is little commitment, little change results.

The bases upon which school curriculum decisions have been made in the past reflect similar and interrelated problems. Curriculum decisions most often do not adequately take

into consideration the beliefs and values of the teachers they affect. They are frequently cast as uncommitted behavioral objectives and perceived as meaningless by students and teachers. The practice of handing curriculums down from the "top" is most typical. However, in many areas the curriculum committee is becoming prominent. This is a committee comprised of teachers and administrators, whose task it is to select a new textbook or write a curriculum guide for all of the teachers responsible for a given course or grade level. After the compromise decisions are made, they still do not echo the educational beliefs and values of all of the classroom teachers who are to use the materials. When programs are developed which do not have the teachers' commitment, in the end teachers do "whatever we want when we close our classroom doors" or "do a poor job of using something we don't believe in." Generally, the "top" or "committee" curriculum decisions make the same mistake of designing plans which provide the same lesson for each student in the class, therefore utilizing the same rationale for working with children as is used with adult "professional" educators. Group solutions fail to meet the individual needs of students and teachers. Individual differences, uniqueness, and creativity are seldom fertilized within this system. Therefore, curriculum decision-making processes are blessed with a number of interwoven problems, some of the most critical of which are:

(1) curriculum decisions which do not reflect the high-priority values of teachers and children,

(2) teachers making curriculum decisions which are based upon a "mindless" conditioning process of which they have become a part,

(3) the lack of understanding and acceptance of human differences and potential,

(4) the lack of a human growth component built into the decision-making process, and

(5) the lack of in-service programs that attempt to resolve the above problems and the resultant "dropping or copping out" by educators.

Who would dispute motherhood and apple pie by claiming that solutions for these problems are not definitely needed?

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined in the context in which they are used in this study.

An educational belief system is composed of an individual's values and degree of commitment to them in relation to the various elements and dimensions of education.

The Educational Belief System Process is composed of the theories and techniques used in helping people: (1) to grow, (2) to develop a conscious educational belief system, and (3) to employ both (1) and (2) in curriculum decision making.

Human growth is the process by which an individual develops a conscious belief system and creates behaviors that are in the process of becoming more congruent with that system.

Curriculum is all the factors that affect or have the potential to affect the learner.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to present an exploration of the Educational Belief System Process, in order to help educators:

(1) formulate curriculum decisions that they believe in and to which they express a high level of commitment,

(2) reject the "mindless" conditioning process and develop an organic perspective toward curriculum decision making,

(3) understand and accept human differences and potential, and

(4) to grow -- and therefore make more effective curriculum decisions.

Delimitations

1. Within the study the statistical results that indicate a change in feelings of participants involved in the Educational Belief System Process experience can not prove that the change was due to treatment by the process. It is not possible to prove empirically.

2. The study is not designed to examine the effect the author's personality (or any other facilitator's) has on the utilization of the Educational Belief System Process.

3. Because of the exploratory nature of the study, it is not an attempt to prove the reliability or validity of the process with all groups of people. Rather, it is an attempt to explain the process, to indicate its potential, and to raise questions for further study and improvement of the process.

4. The questionnaire is designed to gather information about the participants in the selected groups in relation to the feelings they hold about the process and their future actions (especially future curriculum decision making). Their expressed feelings may not reflect their behavior. A study of behavioral changes of the participants is beyond the scope of this study. The questionnaires examining the feelings of the participants are suitable for the exploratory nature of the study, because they should elicit ample information for indicating potential, explaining the process, and raising questions for further study.

5. The opinions of selected educational writers are not designed to cover the previous systems or approaches to curriculum decision making. They are intended to explain further the Educational Belief System Process and the results of the study. A review of the literature that focuses on values and value clarification is beyond the scope of this study.

6. The groups of people selected as participants in the study do not clearly represent the total educational community.

7. The time element clearly limits this study. It might take the author a lifetime to explain fully the process and answer all of the questions related to it.

8. The difficulty of having to create an instrument to examine intricate and complex areas of concern is another limitation. These kinds of studies seldom yield precise data which are normally considered "excellent" research. However, such an undertaking can help to develop ideas which point the way to growing areas of investigation.

Overview

Chapter I contained an introduction to the study, including a discussion of the need for and purpose of the study, a definition of terms, and delimitations of the study.

A basic assumption of the Educational Belief System Process (EBSP) is that people who are growing are able to create more effective curriculum decisions. Therefore, the first step in the exploration of the EBSP is to present the theory which underlies the process and to examine the author's theory of human growth. These areas are developed in Chapter II. An explanation of the educational belief system and the curriculum frame of reference utilized in making curriculum decisions are also found in Chapter II.

Chapter III contains a weaving of the theories regarding human growth, the educational belief system, and the curriculum frame of reference into the Educational Belief System Process. How do we help someone to grow, develop a conscious educational belief system, and formulate more effective curriculum decisions? Chapter III gives a theory-into-practice presentation of a process that includes theoretical guidelines and methodology.

Chapter IV is designed to provide new sources of information related to the Educational Belief System Process. Included are the results of an elementary attempt to examine, describe, and explain the effectiveness of the EBSP, as put into practice with two selected groups of educators. Also included within Chapter IV are the design of the study, analysis of the results, and some brief opinions of other educators which relate to the EBSP.

Chapter V contains a summary of the study, and includes conclusions, implications, recommendations for further study, and a section on the author's perceptions of his own growth.

CHAPTER II

THE UNDERLYING THEORY

The Educational Belief System Process is composed of the theory and techniques used in helping people: (1) to grow, (2) to develop a conscious educational belief system, and (3) to employ both (1) and (2) in curriculum decision making. The process is based upon the following assumptions:

(1) Growing people are developing a conscious belief system,

(2) Growing people are creating behaviors and decisions that are more congruent with their belief systems,

(3) Growing people are better able to develop conscious belief systems,

(4) A curriculum frame of reference's data sources are related to one's educational belief system,

(5) A growing person, utilizing his educational belief system and curriculum frame of reference, will make curriculum decisions that are becoming more congruent with his belief system, and

(6) Curriculum decisions that are becoming more congruent with one's educational belief system are therefore more effective.

This chapter is designed to present the theory which underlies the Educational Belief System Process and the assumptions presented above. It is divided into two sections:

(1) Human Growth

(2) The Educational Belief System, The Curriculum Frame of Reference, and Curriculum Decision Making

Human Growth

Human growth is the process by which an individual develops a conscious belief system and creates behaviors that are in the process of becoming more congruent with that system.

The growing person is continually clarifying his belief system and creating behaviors that are more consistent with what he claims to value. Human beings frequently make value statements but fail to reflect the stated values in their actions (a link between educators and politicians?!). Growing people value the consistency between one's changing, yet stated, belief system and the actions he exhibits.

The process of growing is cyclical, in the sense that one is able to enter the process or pattern at any point and somehow return to "home" after touching all or some of the bases. One begins to travel the cycle again and again, entering and leaving at a variety of intervals, with the bases frequently changing order. The individual must consciously value the growth process itself. He is internally motivated to become more aware of his values, create behaviors

that are consistent, and constantly evaluate both his values and behaviors. Figure 1 presents an illustration of the human growth process.

The individual...is motivated to clarify his values, to develop a belief system, to become aware of why he does what he does...He learns...he orders his values and evaluates his behavior in terms of his values...he learns...He evaluates (clarifies and orders) his values in terms of his experiences...he accepts...he changes...he learns...he attempts consciously to set directions or behave consistently with his values...he re-evaluates his values and behaviors in terms of his values and experiences...evaluates his consistency...reorders his values...changes behavior...learns...values growth...develops more congruent behavior in terms of his values...he grows...he processes again. This growth process occurs with all of the components illustrated in the growth chart; they all are active and alive.

People who live this process are growing and have grown. They are in the process of becoming more self-directing and independent, hence better able to develop purposes and goals and attain them successfully. Growing people are most likely to value human potential and to accept human differences. These are elements of the growth process itself.

The basic elements and dimensions of the growth process are internal motivation, values and evaluating (clarifying), learning, openness and acceptance, awareness and consciousness, conscious valuing of change and growth, and

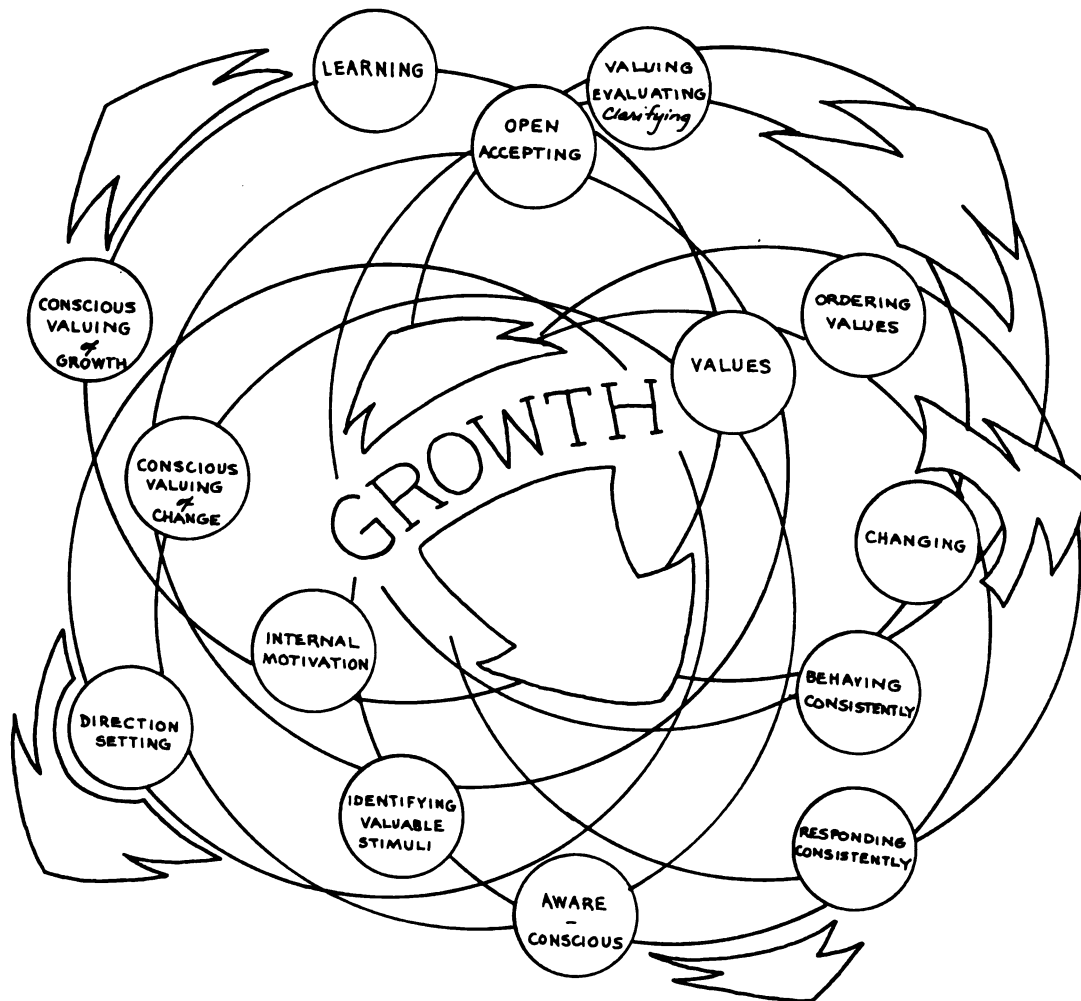


Fig. 1.--Human Growth Chart

direction setting. An explanation of these components follows, in order to support and explain the earlier description of their relationships in the illustration of the human growth process.

Internal Motivation

Internal motivation underlies much of the theory of human growth. Why does man do what he does? The author believes there are basically two forms of human motivation, other than a striving to meet one's physical needs. The two are labeled external and internal motivation.

External motivation theory assigns the stimulation and control of human behavior to forces called rewards and punishments. The stimulus to act is presented to the individual, and he is controlled to elicit the desired response via an application of punishments or rewards provided by an external controlling agent. This system of motivation is also called the conditioning process because it conditions a person to respond to stimuli without questioning the right or wrong of the act to be exhibited. The system conditions a person to become dependent on others to control his being through future rewards and punishments. When the absence of rewards and punishments exists, the desired behavior previously controlled may disappear because it is no longer forced upon the person. Often times, given the same circumstances, the conditioning process might be so strong that the person would elicit the desired behavior and not be

aware of "why" he was doing so. A state of mindlessness may develop. Therefore, the conditioning process stifles self-direction and encourages one to become dependent on other persons or institutions to make decisions for him. An individual who becomes so conditioned to focus on the rewards or punishments controlled by others may seldom question the purposes for the control and frequently takes on the value system of the conditioning agency. Therefore, he too becomes a controlling agent as he interacts with other human beings.

Internal motivation differs from external in that no outside agency selects or controls either the stimuli to be responded to or the type of response to be produced. This form of motivation rests upon the individual identifying, creating, and internalizing the stimuli to which he wishes to respond, and then reacting (responding) in a manner he deems appropriate. The author believes that human beings have a basic need to identify, create, and internalize stimuli that are perceived to be valuable or self-enhancing to their own being. Therefore, the selection or creation of stimuli is internally controlled by the individual's need to identify, create, and internalize stimuli that are perceived to be valuable, important, meaningful, or self-enhancing.

A person's value system and self-concept needs internally motivate the individual to develop behaviors or purposes and goals that reflect their influence. Curiosity, cognitive dissonance, and psychological dissonance are internal motivating factors. People are internally motivated by

each of these factors in conjunction with their value systems and self-concept needs. Curiosity motivates. Cognitive dissonance, the uncomfortable inner frustration to know something, motivates. Psychological dissonance, the frustrating need to have others "get off my back" when I'm wrong, motivates. All three of these factors are indicated in Figure 2, which illustrates the development of behaviors or purposes and goals that reflect a person's internal motivations.

Continually developing within an internally motivated person is a sophisticated ability to be independent or self-directing. An internally motivated individual reflects this ability by creating stimuli that are valuable or self-enhancing to his being.

The author believes all people are internally motivated, and as a result have the ability and potential to grow. One of the existing barriers to internal motivation and human growth is the external motivation agency that doesn't share this belief. The conditioning process can stifle an individual's internal motivations, just as one's internal motivations are able to act as bases for rejecting the external model.

Values and Evaluating

As indicated in the preceding section, all people have a need to identify, create, and internalize stimuli that are perceived to be valuable or self-enhancing. The author believes every person has a belief (value) system, consisting

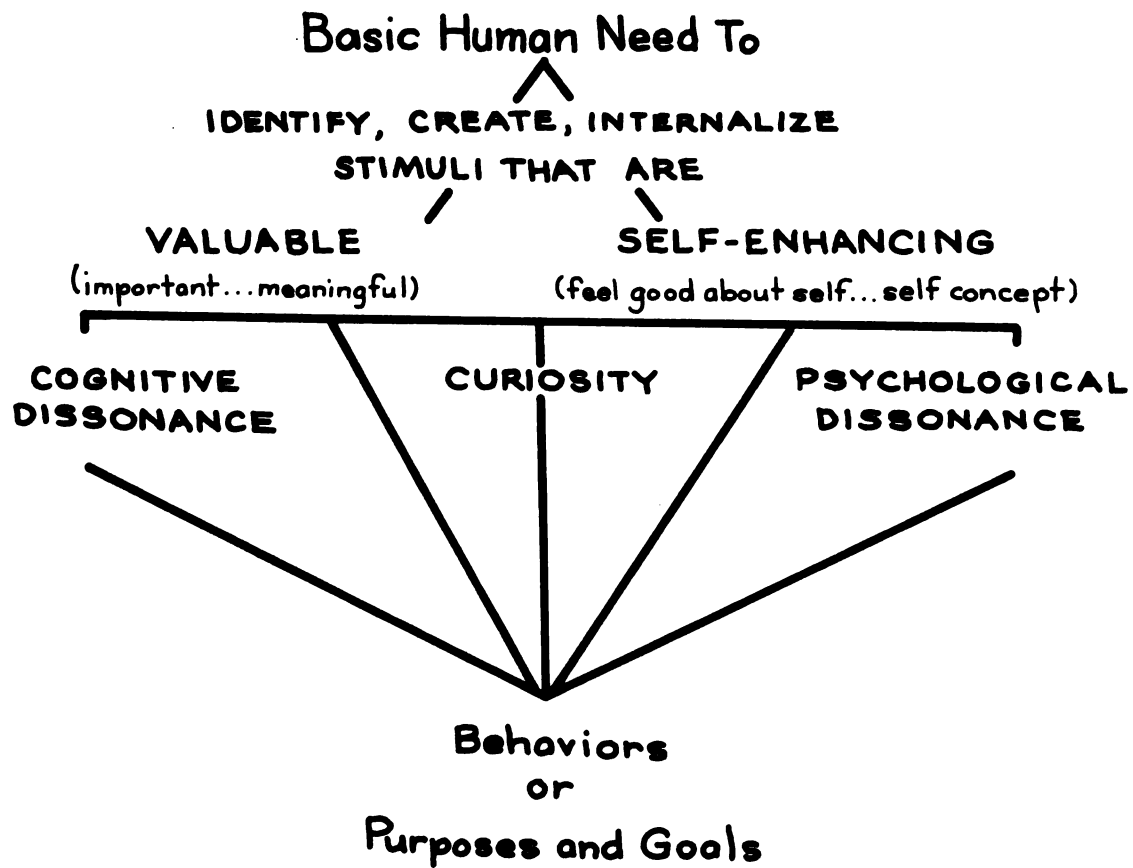


Fig. 2.--Development of behaviors or purposes and goals.

of all his beliefs or values and their relative strengths in terms of affecting behavior. Therefore, some values have higher priorities than others and differing degrees of predictability in affecting one's behavior. One way to indicate the levels of valuing would be to consider some values as quite changeable. For example:

I value shaving cream but I'm open to using any brand or even an electric shaver.

I value one brand of shaving cream but I might try another you suggest. (This value has a stronger level of predictability.)

I value Brand X shaving cream and I'm willing to lose my job if my boss won't allow me to use it. (This value has an even higher level of predictability and commitment.)

I value Brand X shaving cream and I'm willing to die or go to Viet Nam or Canada in order to use it. (This value has the highest degree of predictability and conviction.)

Therefore, each individual has a belief system composed of his values and their levels of strength in terms of predicting behavior.

A value priority system of a slightly different order also exists within the belief system, and involves the ordering of different values. The determination of value order relationships may be best observed in conflict situations. One might have two strong values that are in conflict with one another. For example:

I value NOT giving grades to my students and inhibiting the learning process...and

I value the income from my job...but if I don't give bell-shaped curve grades in my classroom I'll get fired. Whichever of these values is the strongest or has the highest level of valuing may determine its order of priority within the belief system, as well as the behavior of the person.

An evaluation or value clarification process provides an individual with the opportunity to focus on his behavior; what he values; and the level of predictability, strength, and priority of his values. It plays a vital role in the development of a conscious belief system within the human growth process. A value clarification process may be initiated by examining a person's behavior and its consistency with his stated values, but the clarification aspect is enhanced by focusing on stating the values. Clarification is the process of determining what one's values are, and their levels of predictability and priority. What values are held that are bringing on your behavior and why are you behaving this way if there is no value to it? Why is that valuable to you?

Evaluation is the process of examining the consistency between one's stated values and the behaviors exhibited, as well as identifying the worth of an experience.

In order to become better aware of one's own value system, an individual should be provided with the opportunity

to explore; check it out; and receive feedback and reactions to his ideas, values, and behavior.

Awareness-Consciousness

To be aware or conscious of one's own being is likened to holding up a mirror to view your behavior, motives, and feelings. The mirror provides one with self-awakening, realization, appreciation, cognizance, understanding, sensation, and a broader perspective to be utilized in responding to his own behavior and environment. If one is aware or conscious of his value system or behaviors, he is better able to modify them. If one is mindful of his motives, behavior, feelings, and environment he can deal with them more effectively than if he were closer to a state of mindlessness. If one is conscious of the value of the human growth process, he is more likely to utilize its worth.

Awareness and consciousness are integral parts of the human growth process. Without them an individual would find it more than difficult to develop a conscious belief system or behaviors that are in the process of becoming more consistent with that system. The clarifying and evaluating processes would be unable to function.

Learning

Learning is an element and dimension of the growth process because it provides new sources of data for the individual to interact with, as well as being a result of the process itself.

The author believes that learning is not a measurable change in behavior. Learning is being, and human beings are always learning. Learning helps to create attitude, understanding, and knowledge data sources for the individual to interact with and process in terms of value and behavior development. The interaction and processing create new learnings. Therefore, learning is a source for growth as well as a product of growth.

Strong disagreement now exists within the educational arena over the question of how people learn most effectively. Learning theories fall somewhere between the Stimulus-Response and Organic schools of thought. Proponents of the former focus on how we can "make" people learn, and oppose the latter, who want to help children develop their own meaningful learning environments. Should one control or help to provide an atmosphere for growth by recognizing that the learner is the determiner of what is learned and remains a part of his being? As implied within the internal motivation section, the Organic theory represents the author's viewpoint and supports his theory of human growth.

Openness and Acceptance

Openness and acceptance are closely related to awareness and consciousness, as well as to one another. To have openness or to be open is to have open-mindedness. To be open-minded or be receptive is an important component of the growth process. If one is not open to examining another's

total environment, behavior, or values it would be difficult for him to evaluate his own. If one is open, he is able to identify a larger number of options with which to interact. As one interacts with larger numbers of options, he increases his opportunity to discover alternatives that are important or meaningful to himself. Enlarging one's alternatives provides increased directions to follow and more opportunities to meet one's needs -- a greater chance to identify, create, and internalize stimuli that are valuable or self-enhancing.

Acceptance reflects openness as well as tolerance, indulgence, patience, and sympathetic understanding. If one accepts and tolerates human differences, he has a better opportunity to learn about others as well as himself. If he is not open to, or accepting of, new or differing ideas, it would be most difficult for him to grow because the closure would create a block in examining and interacting with a portion of his environment, self, and belief system. Openness and acceptance create the opportunity to process and evaluate feedback. If one is open and accepting, he is better able to help others grow by providing feedback to them.

Direction Setting

Carried within the discussion of internal motivation and values was the basic notion that through the process of internal motivation, behavior is being created that is more congruent with one's values. In discussing direction setting, the author means to focus on the word create. While

the general direction of an individual's behavior is being guided by his values, he still utilizes his creative abilities in developing the actual behavior itself. Therefore, direction setting includes recognizing the direction set by one's values and transforming those values into an action plan intended to be more congruent with one's values.

Change and Growth as Values

Change is a given element and dimension of growth. The author does not "just" include change as a dimension of the growth process. He sees it as a value of the process, as well as a happening that never stops. People are always changing, but those who are growing consciously value the change, as well as valuing the growth process itself. Change and the total growth process are highly valued by those who are growing. These values are internal motivators for people to grow and continue growing. For example:

As the author grows and changes, so will his theory of human growth.

The Educational Belief System, The Curriculum Frame of Reference, and Curriculum Decision Making

An educational belief system is composed of an individual's values and degree of commitment to them in relation to the various elements and dimensions of education. One's educational belief system is an interwoven part of his total belief system. Just as a person's total belief system is an internal motivator, so too is the educational belief system.

The author believes that all educators have an educational belief system, and among individuals its incorporated values differ in terms of relative strength and degree of predictability for affecting one's behavior.

The elements and dimensions within the educational belief system to which the individual's values are related are those which have an effect or potential effect upon the learner. For example, a teacher might hold a positive attitude toward grades, which stems from his valuing external motivation. The same value, which is a part of his educational belief system, might be reflected in his positive attitude toward paddling "troublesome" youngsters. Human motivation is one of the elements within this teacher's educational belief system.

The degree of motivational impact the educational belief system has on one's behavior is dependent upon the degree of growth occurring within the individual, as well as the strength of his values. As indicated in the discussion of the human growth process, people have varying degrees of awareness regarding their values and, in turn, affecting their behavior.

The curriculum frame of reference is composed of the beliefs and values held by an individual in relationship to the curriculum data sources that reflect all of the factors that affect or have the potential to affect the learner.

The elements and dimensions of the author's curriculum frame of reference may be organized into categories

(data sources) which are all-inclusive of one's values related to education. These categories or data sources are:

the learning process

human motivation

the nature of the learner

the nature of the knowledge

the purposes and goals of education (society)

the role of the teacher (communication)

These should be considered data sources for curriculum decision making. Though they stand as stable guidelines, one's values held in relationship to them are able to change. The elements and dimensions of the curriculum frame of reference are formed by joining an educational belief system with the author's definition of curriculum as all of the factors that have an effect or potential effect upon the learner, or, in other words, the elements and dimensions to be valued within the educational belief system. It is important to recognize that one's educational belief system acts as a basis (motivator) for creating curriculum decisions.

Therefore, the curriculum frame of reference that the author is presenting is one that includes all of the factors that affect or have the potential to affect the learner and utilizes an individual's educational belief system as the basis for reflecting those factors in the formulation of curriculum decisions. This base exists because a person's value system internally motivates him to develop behaviors that reflect his values.

A growing person, utilizing his curriculum frame of reference (author's definition), will formulate curriculum decisions that are becoming more congruent with his own belief system. Those curriculum decisions that are becoming more congruent with his educational belief system are therefore more effective decisions because they are a result of:

- (1) a consciously developing educational belief system,
- (2) a higher level of commitment initiated by the internal motivation and valuing processes,
- (3) new learnings (as a part of the growth process),
- (4) an openness and examination of alternatives, resulting in awareness and consciousness of choices, and
- (5) congruent direction setting which would indicate the decision to be the best at that given point in time.

The following might depict more clearly the relationship between the educational belief system, the curriculum frame of reference, and curriculum decision making.

The educational belief system = same definition as curriculum = the curriculum frame of reference = the beliefs and values regarding data sources = curriculum = the educational belief system... The educational belief system = motivation for formulating curriculum decisions.

CHAPTER III

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Introduction

The Educational Belief System Process is composed of the theory and techniques used in helping people: (1) to grow, (2) to develop a conscious educational belief system, and (3) to employ both (1) and (2) in curriculum decision making.

Chapter II focused on the underlying theory of the Educational Belief System Process. Chapter III is designed to provide a process that represents an extension of the underlying theory into practice. The process is composed of theoretical guidelines and process methodology (techniques-activities) to be utilized when working with groups of people.

The theoretical guidelines have been created to:

(1) reflect the underlying theories of the Educational Belief System Process,

(2) focus on the implementation of the underlying theories,

(3) act as further guidelines (in addition to the underlying theories) for the development of the techniques of the process, and

(4) represent the rationale (in addition to the underlying theories) for utilizing the various techniques or activities (methodology) within the process.

The author strongly believes that the theories of the process are more valuable than its methodology. If one focuses on theory, he may be better able to change, improve, or utilize a variety of related techniques-activities (methods). People and settings differ and may require dissimilar methodology based upon similar theories.

This chapter is divided into two sections:

(1) Theoretical Guidelines

(2) Process Methodology (Techniques-Activities)

Theoretical Guidelines

Guideline One: The Educational Belief System Process is designed to focus on helping participants perceive human growth and its elements and dimensions as valuable. If they are perceived as such, the opportunity for internalization and growth is enhanced.

Guideline Two: The cyclical growth syndrome (presented in Chapter II) may occur when implementing techniques-activities. For example, an activity may be designed to help participants clarify values. During the activity session people may be clarifying values, but at the same time experiencing learning, openness, acceptance, and/or other components of the growth process. The total group experience is an interwoven process of growth components. Therefore, though a technique is

presented and identified with particular components, it is not limited to them.

Guideline Three: The process is not limited to what is "taught" within the sessions. Participants may be learning, evaluating, or processing the sessions inside or outside of the group activity environment. The meaning or value of the group experiences may be intensified by the participants relating the sessions to their everyday environments. As individuals interact with growth components and their environments, new meanings and insights may be generated.

Learning is being -- people are always learning.

Guideline Four: The process is designed to minimize psychological threat, yet deal with it when it occurs. For some people the notion of concentrating on one's own "self," one's beliefs and values, is highly threatening. Some people are threatened by their peers, their close ones, strangers, or their "self." The author believes that insecure people, when threatened, tend to close themselves to the examination of new alternatives. They become closed to looking inside themselves and others. The Educational Belief System Process aims at providing a psychological support base for participants, to help them share "where they're at" (their beliefs and values) -- to recognize the value of exploring differences and belief systems.

Guideline Five: The process encourages independent, free, and creative behaviors. If identification of the curriculum frame of reference as the elements and dimensions of one's

educational belief system is internalized, people will be more likely to depend upon their own beliefs and values when creating curriculum decisions.

Guideline Six: The process is intended (and has the potential) to help people examine all of the factors that have an effect or potential effect upon the learner.

Guideline Seven: In any helping relationship, the helper and the helped are able to grow. The helper and helped become indistinguishable; both hold dual roles. All are able to be teachers and learners.

Guideline Eight: By responding to the needs of others, people re-examine their own beliefs and values.

Guideline Nine: A cooperative rather than a competitive methodological focus is better able to reflect and enhance the utilization of the growth components of the process.

Guideline Ten: Solitary introspection is not the healthiest environment in which someone can become more aware of his belief system. Interaction with a group of people provides a better opportunity for feedback, sharing, accepting and rejecting, openness, value clarification, and awareness and consciousness. Learning about oneself or others is much more difficult when one is alone.

Guideline Eleven: Expanding the alternatives or options from which a person is able to examine and select, provides a better chance for identification, creation, or internalization of those choices that are most meaningful or valuable to him.

This process creates a better opportunity to behave and set directions that have higher levels of motivational commitment. The broader the range of alternatives from which one has chosen, the more certain he may be that he has been able to make the right choice.

Guideline Twelve: Helping a person to develop an awareness of the inconsistencies that exist between what one states he believes or values and his behavior, is intended to help the individual actualize or realize those behaviors or goals that might be derived from his value statements. This assistance might also help the person become aware of stated values that are no longer valid for him. This help is not intended to force a human being to do what he says he believes, nor is its purpose to act as a judgment of behavior.

Process Methodology (Techniques-Activities)

The process methodology is designed to help people to: (1) grow, (2) develop a conscious educational belief system, and (3) employ both (1) and (2) in curriculum decision making.

The techniques-activities in this section represent just one approach to implementation ("just one way"), and should be improved upon through replacement or modification. The author frequently changes, reorders, and interchanges various techniques. The reader is requested to look for inconsistencies within the methodology (techniques-activities).

Such discoveries might lead to improved methodological development.

The meaningfulness of the techniques-activities presented within this section might be enhanced by relating each one to the theoretical guidelines in the previous section and to the underlying theory (growth components, educational belief system, curriculum frame of reference) discussed in Chapter II.

Although each technique-activity presented will have a brief focus explanation, theoretical Guideline Two (cyclical growth syndrome) should constantly be taken into consideration by the reader.

It is often difficult to visualize the realities of techniques-activities when they appear on the written page. With this realization, the author hopes that his minimum explanations and the reader's maximum dreamings will somehow provide a suitable degree of focus.

The techniques-activities to be presented have been developed for working with groups of people. The groups may have varied compositions -- individual school staffs, educators from an assortment of locations and positions, graduate or undergraduate students, or a conglomeration of all of these. The process may be modified to work exclusively with individuals, as well as adapted to focus on members of organizations identified with other institutions. These particular group experiences have been designed for a 25- to 35-hour extended meeting period.

The frequently mentioned growth components focused upon in this section are the previously presented elements and dimensions of the growth process -- internal motivation, values and evaluating (clarifying), learning, openness and acceptance, awareness and consciousness, conscious valuing of change and growth, and direction setting.

The Techniques-Activities

After some "getting to know you" activities and an explanation of direction by the facilitator and the group, the process focuses on human differences. (It might be beneficial to hold brief "trust" or "getting to know you better" exercises at the beginning of each group session.)

Technique-activity: "That We Are Different."

Focus: This activity is designed to help participants become aware of the large number of differences that exist within the group, especially in terms of differing belief-value systems. Acceptance and valuing of uniqueness and differences are the major intents. Value clarification, awareness, and openness are the highlighted growth components. "Should we provide options in order to capitalize on human uniqueness?...How else do we do it?"

Process: The facilitator announces that there are four designated places (usually corners) in the room. Each place has one of the following labels: Strongly Agree, Agree, Strongly Disagree, and Disagree.

The facilitator reads a belief statement, and the group members are to respond to the statement by moving to the designated place in the room which best reflects their individual reactions.

Following are some of the statements that have been used with a number of groups:

1. Teacher tenure should be abolished in (your town).
2. I admit that most of my teaching behavior is a result of the conditioning process.
3. Given a million dollars, I would get out of teaching.
4. The (your town) schools are guilty of destroying human beings.
5. Nothing really exciting has happened in our schools during the past year.
6. If kids could choose their teachers, I would have very few kids in my room.
7. My school meets my needs much better than it does my students'.
8. Given an opportunity, I would leave this school system.
9. Administrators in (your town) really hinder rather than help in the educational process.
10. As I see it today, the (your town) school system is a failure.
11. Tomorrow each teacher should initiate his own method of reporting pupil progress to parents.

12. By next week each classroom environment should be described and the child should be encouraged to seek the environment that best meets his needs.
13. Our schools are such a mess that they should be shut down until we can regroup!
14. We simply must devise a system that recognizes, accepts, and encourages differences among teachers and kids.

After each statement is read and the participants have moved to their chosen designated places, they are asked to spend five minutes sharing with others who made the same place designation, why they moved to that particular place. The group at each designated place is asked to develop a brief consensus explanation that is to be shared (not debated?) with the other groups. After the sharing, another belief statement is read by the facilitator, new response groups are formed, and the activity continues.

Processing (exploring, evaluating, summarizing, examining, sharing the experiences of the participants) the technique-activity and its intended focus and what this has to say about educational direction for individuals is generally the way this session closes.

Focus of following three activities: In order to dive into the arena of values, value clarification, belief systems, belief-behavior consistency, and their roles in affecting human behavior, the facilitator briefly explains these concepts to the group. This presentation either precedes or follows the next three technique-activities.

The three activities are designed to help develop an understanding of value clarification, valuing, internal motivation, awareness and consciousness, direction setting, the value of growth, and openness and acceptance.

Technique-activity: "The Island Game."

Process: The facilitator relates the following story.

Once upon a time five people were stranded on a deserted South Seas island. There was Annie, about twenty years of age, beautiful, and engaged to wed Danny; Bertha, Annie's mother; Charlie, age twenty-three; Danny, about twenty-one; and Eddie, the same age as Charlie.

One day an earthquake snapped the island into two separate islands that were now three miles apart, with rough seas and sharks in between. Annie, Bertha, and Charlie were now on one island, Danny and Eddie on the other. After a month passed without any communication between the two islands, Annie went to her mother, Bertha, to indicate that she wanted somehow to get over to Danny's island to marry him . . . but she was worried about leaving her mother, who might terribly miss her. Bertha told Annie, "Do whatever you think is right and I'll support you any way I can." So Annie went about the island looking for a way to get over to Danny. She discovered that Charlie had a small boat, so she went to ask him to take her to the other island. Charlie said he would if Annie would go to sleep with him. Annie responded with, "I'll have to think about it," and went back to Bertha. She told Bertha Charlie's conditions and asked for her advice. Bertha told Annie to "Do whatever you think is right and I'll support you any way I can." So Annie went back to Charlie, slept with him, and Charlie took Annie across to the other island. He dropped her off and went back. Danny was delighted to see Annie and they immediately began to make wedding plans. Two days before the scheduled wedding, Annie got guilt feelings and went to Danny to tell him how she had had to sleep with Charlie in order to get over to be with him. Danny told Annie that she had done "wrong" and that he could not marry her ever. He could only marry a virgin. Eddie was listening close by and knew what was going on. He went to Annie, told her that he loved her and that she should marry him and live a happy life. So they were married . . . The End.

Following the story, the task for each individual in the group is (without discussion) to rank the five characters

in the story on a piece of paper, from one to five, in terms of whom he liked the most to whom he liked the least. Number One would indicate the best liked, and Number Five the least liked. Upon completion, groups of five or six participants are formed for sharing rankings and discussing differences and inconsistencies. Afterward, the total group membership can create a composite ranking on the blackboard. An exploration of the values reflected by each of these individuals and their level of priority might take place. Does Annie's love rank over Charlie's free enterprise? Or was Annie stupid and Danny strong in religious well-being? Or was he selfish? Should Bertha have "told" Annie what to do? If Charlie was honest and valued this quality, wasn't everyone honest? Someone liked Eddie...what if he was black and Annie white? Why did you rank them from one to five like you did? Why?

Most of the human growth components are incorporated in this activity. There is no set or recommended ending for the activity. It always seems to end differently, depending upon participant direction.

Technique-activity: "The Grading Game."

Focus: The major intents of this activity are evaluation, valuing of human growth, identification of human growth, human motivation, value clarification, and other growth components.

Process: This activity follows the small group/large group pattern utilized by "The Island Game." The grading sheet instrument used for this activity is shown on the following page. After each participant enters his marks on the "Give a Grade" sheet, small groups are asked to form for sharing individual answers. The next task for the small groups is to develop a consensus grading sheet -- one to which each participant within the group agrees. (Each small group must complete one of the grading sheets as a consensus project; each grade put onto the sheet must have been decided upon by group consensus, and all group members must come to agreement for it to be marked so.) Afterwards, the facilitator might attempt to develop a large group picture of responses. A discussion of the technique-activity, its intent, and the participants' feelings about the experience might be a valuable portion of the processing at the end of the activity.

Technique-activity: "Creating 'Where You Are At' Tasks."

Focus: "Where you are at" tasks provide the opportunity for group members to create their own value clarification techniques and therefore gain further understandings of the valuing processes.

Process: Each group of four to five people is requested to create a task for the membership in another small group. The task should be designed to determine "where they are at" in terms of educational issues having a value base. In other words, the task should help the individual to determine,

Read each of the descriptions of students and pretend you are the teacher. You are to give each of them a mark, an A, B, C, D, or E in the blank at the left of each paragraph.

A = Excellent, B = Good, C = Average, D = Poor, E = Failure

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- | | |
|------|--|
| Mark | 1. "John is one of the brightest boys in the 6th grade class, with an I.Q. of 140. His immediate interest, however, is with airplanes and during English class he spends his time drawing excellent designs of planes instead of attending to class activities. His written work is hastily done and is usually turned in late; his recitation is often poor because of his lack of attention to questions and class discussion; and his performance on various tests is about average." |
| Mark | 2. "Mary is in an algebra class, not because she has an aptitude for, or an interest in algebra, but because her parents want her to attend a college where algebra is a prerequisite for entrance. Despite a great deal of home study, considerable tutoring by her mother, who was a former mathematics teacher, careful attention to class activities, a wholesome attitude toward study, and a determined effort to master the work, her performance on daily exercises and tests falls in the lowest tenth of the class, which is an average class." |
| Mark | 3. "Herbert is somewhat handicapped in scholastic aptitude for science and mathematics, but he is anxious to master these subjects sufficiently to be admitted to the radio division of the Air Force. He gives his closest attention to the instruction and demonstration in his physics class. He puts forth his best effort in laboratory exercises, but is slow and frequently makes errors. By virtue of "burning considerable midnight oil," his written work is of excellent quality and submitted on time. Due to an inadequate background and aptitude for science, however, his performance on tests and class recitations is slightly below average." |
| Mark | 4. "Eddie has always found school work simple and easy. Because of his superior mentality, he always "has the correct answers" and scores high on all tests with a minimum of effort. Knowing that he will pass the final examinations without extending himself, he spends a good deal of his time "cutting up" in class, much to the amusement of certain classmates and to the annoyance of others, including you. He is frequently sent to the principal's office for disciplining. He skips classes occasionally, but makes up his assignments quickly and accurately and scores at the top of his class on term tests." |
| Mark | 5. "George is the oldest of eight children of poor parents. He is compelled to work after school and Saturdays in order to help support the family. Consequently, he has neither the time nor the proper environment to do essential home study. He manifests an excellent attitude toward his teacher (you). He is more attentive and uses his time during history classes better than anyone else in the class. Due to the fact, however, that he has insufficient time for outside reading, his achievement on tests falls in the lowest quarter of his class." |
| Mark | 6. "Betty is the daughter of prominent and wealthy parents. She is bright and studious and has the reputation of being an A student. Her parents promise to give her a new car, and to send her to an exclusive girls' college in the East if she completes high school with straight A's. She has performed brilliantly in her Latin class, but missed a week of school near the end of the term. In order to compensate for daily work missed, Betty realizes that she will have to write an almost perfect exam paper. She is observed by the teacher to be cheating on the term test." |

discover, or clarify the values related to an educational issue. For example, one of the tasks recently created by a group was: "It's 10 o'clock on a Tuesday morning. You're standing in front of your classroom when suddenly you throw down your chalk, walk down to the principal's office, go in, and tell him that you quit...you resign! Why did you do it?"

Two other examples written by group members are:

"While presenting a lesson in your classroom, you notice a student busily engaged in a homework assignment for another class. What is your reaction? How do you deal with the situation? Why?"

"Your school board has set policies ordering that all teachers in the school district will (must) have 'open classrooms' in five months. It is reported that the teachers' organization will strike if this comes about. Will you support the strike, and why? What issues do you see at question?"

After the tasks are created and passed on to the various small groups, the individual group members focus (prepare reactions) on the task that was given to them. After each person has decided how he wishes to respond, a sharing session occurs in each small group or with the large (total) group. Feedback related to the effectiveness of each task might be valuable to the group members.

Individual answers to the task questions generally provide considerable data regarding the values people hold. Clarification of the presented values is designed to help

each person look at himself through the eyes of others and to gain some experience in group process.

Technique-activity: "The Curriculum Picture."

Focus: The focus of this activity is to examine the variety of meanings held about curriculum and to present the broad definition and data sources utilized by the Educational Belief System Process. It provides a base for further exploring the curriculum frame of reference, the educational belief system, curriculum decision making, and the growth components as presented in the next technique-activity.

Process: Discussed in Chapter II, the curriculum frame of reference the author is presenting is one that includes all of the factors that affect or have the potential to affect the learner, and utilizes the individual's educational belief system as the basis for focusing on those factors and formulating curriculum decisions.

The participants, divided into small groups, are asked to draw a picture of curriculum -- "Illustrate what curriculum means to you." Upon completion, the pictures are placed in front of the large group and the differences in meanings are discussed by the participants. The author's data sources and curriculum definition are then related to the illustrations and discussion.

Technique-activity: The Educational Belief System Inventory."

This technique-activity is a blend of many methods:

(1) It reflects all of the theoretical principles and growth components presented in this dissertation.

(2) It is open ended, yet direction facilitating in the sense that new or unexpected behaviors or directions by the group participants might be developed that could result in a variety of unanticipated follow-up decisions or activities.

(3) It is the most complex of the group experiences and requires at least four to six three-hour sessions to complete.

Focus: This activity has three main intents:

(1) Help people to grow, utilizing all of the human growth components.

(2) Help people to develop a conscious educational belief system by utilizing value clarification techniques and evaluating their behavior in relation to their stated values (consistency or congruency).

(3) Help people to focus on direction. If one believes, what are the behaviors and consequences that are and may be going to develop? What are you seeking? As one seeks and finds answers, committed curriculum decisions are in the process of being made.

Process: In the first session, after an overview of the total technique-activity (including review of the curriculum frame of reference), the participants are requested to form small groups and within them share and record belief statements related to two data sources. A belief statement

is any narration, declaration, premise, piece of information, or proposal related to the data source. It generally takes thirty to sixty minutes to finish writing belief statements for two data sources.

Explanation and instructions: In a typical two- to three-hour session, one of the tasks is for small groups to write belief statements. The belief statements should be related to two of the data sources per session. One person in each group should act as a recorder.

The order in which data source belief statements are written is flexible. The author has generally utilized learning and human motivation as the first two data sources, followed by the learner, the nature of the knowledge, purposes and goals of schools (society), and the role of the teacher (communication).

The recorded belief statements are not to be only those that reflect a consensus of the total small group membership. After each statement is examined within the small group for clarity, consistency, and level of agreement and disagreement by the participants, it should be recorded even if only one member of the group believes it to be true.

A typical introduction to the task of writing learning and human motivation belief statements might be: "Discuss and record any beliefs you hold about human learning. How do people learn? What is learning? What are the characteristics of learning?"

After the groups finish writing the learning belief statements, they should then write those statements that refer to human motivation: "What is motivation? How are people motivated? What are the components or characteristics of human motivation? How are people best motivated? How are your students most effectively motivated?"

Some typical belief statements are: "All learning is related...People learn at different rates of speed... Internal motivation is more effective than external."

Process: When the belief statements for both data sources have been completed, a sharing of those statements considered to be most important takes place within the larger total group. A discussion might occur, but whether it does or not, at this point it is the task of the facilitator to provide input and direction for the group. He should present to the group brief selected theories related to human motivation and learning, which will, in turn, be related to many of the belief statements.

Explanation and instructions: The facilitator might go over the differences between Stimulus-Response and Organic learning theories, as well as the differences between external and internal motivation. Examinations of the perceived weaknesses and strengths might be helpful to the participants. The facilitator might raise the following questions: "What do the theories say about human needs?...Psychological, physical, and intellectual needs? What results occur when these theories are utilized with children or adults? Where

do you, as a group participant, stand in relation to these theories? How are they reflected in your classroom? How are they reflected in your school and other institutions? What about competition, cooperation, evaluation, and identification of human growth? Does your classroom behavior reflect the theories you claim to believe in?" The facilitator might relate how the theories are now being used in schools. He might develop a variety of ways to help the participants focus on the issues.

After the session closes, the facilitator should collect and save the recorded belief statements.

Process: The next two sessions should follow the same pattern as the first, except for the belief statements (two per session) focusing on the learner, the nature of the knowledge, purposes and goals of schools (in relationship to society), and the role of the teacher (communication and human relationships).

Explanation and instructions: Some helpful questions for the data source introductions are: Who is the learner? What are his characteristics? What is he like...psychologically? ...physically?...intellectually? What is knowledge? What is it that every child has to know? Every adult? By when? What is it that's important enough that everyone should be given (not forced) the opportunity to learn? Are skills knowledge? Attitudes? Who should determine what ought to be learned? What are the purposes and goals of your school? Our schools? What should they be? Why? Who says so?

Should schools maintain the traditions of society or change them? How is this reflected in your role within the school? What do you do about it? What is the role of the teacher? What should it be? For you? For all? Can teachers be different? To what extent? How do you or should you relate to kids, teachers, others? How do you most effectively communicate?

Process: Following the same pattern as the first session, the second and third sessions should also find the facilitator providing input (after belief statement writing and sharing) in the form of diverse theories and issues that relate to the data sources and group concerns.

Explanation and instructions: Some of the theoretical issues related to the last four data sources are lodged in the introductory questions raised in the above explanation and instructions section. Some other issues that might be focused upon are the self-fulfilling prophesy, tracking, ability grouping, freedom, responsibility, intellectual development, social development, physical development, alternatives, creativity, institutional suppression, change, the economic system, the future world of living versus work, and the acceptance of differences-pluralism.

Process: After the belief statements from the first three sessions have been collected, the facilitator uses them to create an educational belief system inventory. At the fourth session, each group member completes the inventory. A completed educational belief inventory is found on the following

pages. A group consisting of junior high school teachers provided the belief statements for the inventory, which the author then revised and edited. The inventory shows group answer totals and percentages for each item.

Explanation and instructions: The belief inventory is developed by the facilitator between the third and fourth sessions. In order to do so, he pulls from the collected belief statements those he considers to be the most discriminating, i.e. those that have the potential to represent and clarify the beliefs and values that the participants would or should examine as part of their educational belief systems (in relation to the data sources). They reflect the issues and theories that were examined by the group in the previous sessions. A number of the statements should be easily identifiable as representing those that have been created by the group membership. Others should be added by the facilitator if he feels the collected belief statements omit them. If necessary, the facilitator should rewrite the belief statements to be of a discriminating nature, so that the participants are able to respond to them on a belief inventory, utilizing Strongly Agree, Agree, Strongly Disagree, and Disagree responses. (See sample belief inventory.)

Process: After the belief inventories have been filled out by the participants and the results tallied, the following session should be devoted to examining the product.

Circle the letter on the right which best expresses your choice of answer.

SCHOOL _____

I. LEARNING, MOTIVATION & LEARNERS	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Learning is "Being" - a person is always learning.	21-72.4 A	7-24.1 B	1- 3.4 C	... D
2. Learning is determined only by a measurable change of behavior.	1- 3.4 A	10-34.5 B	17-58.6 C	1- 3.4 D
3. Children have a desire to learn; they expect to learn something, but will learn only when (and what) they are ready to learn.	7-24.1 A	16-55.2 B	5-17.2 C	1- 3.4 D
4. Learning is best achieved through the reward-punishment system.	... A	5-17.2 B	21-72.4 C	3-10.3 D
5. If children are not interested or motivated to learn what the teacher wants them to know, then the teacher should find ways to make the child learn.	6-20.7 A	16-55.2 B	6-20.7 C	1- 3.4 D
6. Learning should best meet the needs of the child as he perceives them, not as the teacher sees them.	10-34.5 A	10-34.5 B	9-31.0 C	... D
7. Because students learn better in different environments, we should attempt to match students with the environment in which they are best able to learn.	16-55.2 A	13-44.8 B	... C	... D
8. Students learn at different rates of speed; therefore grade levels should be abolished in our school.	3-10.3 A	18-62.1 B	6-20.7 C	1- 3.4 D
9. Students best learn when they are able to experience or relate to what they are learning.	27-93.1 A	2- 6.9 B	... C	... D
10. Learning should take place without pressure.	5-17.2 A	17-58.6 B	7-24.1 C	... D
11. Until the learner's psychological and physical needs are met, the learner cannot meet his academic needs.	6-20.7 A	19-65.5 B	4-13.8 C	... D
12. Learning best takes place when the student is given the responsibility to develop his own learning environment.	4-13.8 A	18-62.1 B	6-20.7 C	... D
13. All learning should be guided by teachers.	2- 6.9 A	2- 6.9 B	17-58.6 C	7-24.1 D
14. Children learn better when they set goals for themselves.	7-24.1 A	21-72.4 B	1- 3.4 C	... D

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
15. Learning best takes place when the learner admires or relates to the teacher.	7-24.1 A	19-65.5 B	3-10.3 C	... D
16. If a student is internally motivated to learn, then it is not necessary to provide external motivation.	4-13.8 A	5-17.2 B	16-55.2 C	4-13.8 D
17. If a student is not internally motivated to learn, then I must apply external motivation.	5-17.2 A	19-65.5 B	5-17.2 C	... D
18. For those who do not choose to compete, competition with others is a negative force in learning.	5-17.2 A	19-65.5 B	5-17.2 C	... D
19. Students should have the option of whether or not they are to be graded.	2- 6.9 A	14-48.3 B	... C	... D
20. Except for safety requirements, children in our school should learn only what, why, how, where, and when they want to learn.	1- 3.4 A	6-20.7 B	20-69.0 C	2- 6.9 D
21. If a teacher judges a student, he loses <u>all</u> his chances to help him learn.	1- 3.4 A	3-10.3 B	21-72.4 C	4-13.8 D
22. Kids learn more outside of the classroom than in.	9-31.0 A	14-48.3 B	6-20.7 C	... D
23. If learning is meaningless to the child, then it will not be put to use by him.	7-24.1 A	13-44.8 B	8-27.6 C	1- 3.4 D
24. Only the kid can determine whether or not he has learned something.	4-13.8 A	8-27.6 B	15-51.7 C	2- 6.9 D
25. Learning best takes place in a well-controlled, disciplined atmosphere.	... A	13-44.8 B	13-44.8 C	3-10.3 D
26. Students are concerned about what is happening in their world, but a gap exists between school and real life.	12-41.4 A	16-55.2 B	1- 3.4 C	... D
27. Children should learn to stand up for their rights.	7-24.1 A	19-65.5 B	3-10.3 C	... D
28. All children should be treated with respect.	25-86.2 A	3-10.3 B	1- 3.4 C	... D
29. All children have differing needs.	27-93.1 A	2- 6.9 B	... C	... D
30. Students should learn whatever the teachers wish them to know.	1- 3.4 A	5-16.2 B	15-51.7 C	7-24.1 D
31. Learners should be given opportunities to experience more freedom and responsibility than the traditional school affords.	11-37.9 A	16-55.2 B	2- 6.9 C	... D

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
32. Lazy is a description used for those students who don't want to do what the teacher desires them to do.	6-20.7 A	12-41.4 B	9-31.0 C	2- 6.9 D
33. The learner is the best judge of what he should learn.	2- 6.9 A	10-34.5 B	12-41.4 C	5-17.2 D
34. Schools should exist primarily to meet the needs of the learner as he perceives them.	3-10.3 A	13-44.8 B	12-41.4 C	1- 3.4 D
35. All rules and regulations within a school should be developed by the kids.	2- 6.9 A	2- 6.9 B	24-82.8 C	1- 3.4 D
36. All kids want success, but only they can determine if they are successful.	4-13.8 A	14-48.3 B	10.34.5 C	1- 3.4 D
37. Children can only become responsible in an environment which allows them to act irresponsibly.	1- 3.4 A	6-20.7 B	14.48.3 C	8-27.6 D
38. If a child is bored with subject matter, challenging him with more subject matter of the same kind is a dead end.	14-48.3 A	10-34.5 B	3-10.3 C	2- 6.9 D
39. Kids know what they need.	... A	9-31.0 B	19-65.5 C	1- 3.4 D
40. Only the child knows or can determine his potential. Teachers can not determine a child's potential.	2- 6.9 A	7-24.1 B	17-58.6 C	3-10.3 D
II. KNOWLEDGE, THE TEACHER, AND PURPOSES AND GOALS OF SCHOOLS				
41. Knowledge does not have to be taught sequentially.	7-24.1 A	17-58.6 B	2- 6.9 C	2- 6.9 D
42. All children should be expected to have reached the fifth grade level in reading, writing, and math skills by the eighth grade...These are the essential "demands" of our schools and our priorities should reflect them.	1- 3.4 A	11-37.9 B	14-48.3 C	3-10.3 D
43. It is more important for students to know how to find information than to know the information itself.	18-62.1 A	8-27.6 B	3-10.3 C	... D
44. Content is understanding, not retention of facts.	12-41.4 A	14-48.3 B	3-10.3 C	... D
45. All students should have the opportunity (not forced to understand) to learn how to become a responsible citizen.	17-58.6 A	10-34.5 B	2- 6.9 C	... D
46. Knowledge is almost impossible to measure.	11-37.9 A	13-44.8 B	5-17.2 C	... D

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
47. Content must reflect reality as perceived by the learner.	4-13.8 A	24-82.8 B	1- 3.4 C	... D
48. Content is best learned by experiencing.	16-55.2 A	12-41.4 B	1- 3.4 C	... D
49. Content acquisition is not the most important purpose in the classroom.	7-24.1 A	20-69.0 B	2- 6.9 C	... D
50. After the basic skills, content should be determined by the learner.	5-17.2 A	15-41.7 B	9-31.0 C	... D
51. Repetition as a device for insuring that knowledge learned is useless if the child does not perceive the knowledge as meaningful and/or important.	7-24.1 A	18-62.1 B	4-13.8 C	... D
52. Other than reading and very basic math skills, no other <u>subject matter</u> is critical for children to learn by the ninth grade.	1- 3.4 A	15-51.7 B	11-37.9 C	2- 6.9 D
53. Reading and math skills are not critical for children to learn by the ninth grade.	... A	1- 3.4 B	12-41.4 C	15-51.7 D
54. All children think...Therefore teaching children to learn to think is meaningless.	4-13.8 A	... B	17-58.6 C	8-27.6 D
55. All knowledge or subject matter should be made optional for children to learn.	2- 6.9 A	2- 6.9 B	22-75.9 C	3-10.3 D
56. Knowledge divisions or content area (English, social studies, etc.) labels are unnecessary because all knowledge is related.	3-10.3 A	17-58.6 B	8-27.6 C	1- 3.4 D
57. Schools should exist to meet the needs of society as it demands.	4-13.8 A	17-58.6 B	7-24.1 C	1- 3.4 D
58. Schools should help students cope with life by being able to earn a living as students want to.	3-10.3 A	21-72.4 B	5-17.2 C	... D
59. The primary responsibility of the schools is to change society.	... A	3-10.3 B	15-51.7 C	11-37.9 D
60. It is the primary responsibility of the school to maintain the traditions of society.	1- 3.4 A	1- 3.4 B	20-69.0 C	7-24.1 D
61. Developing student responsibility should be <u>the</u> most important goal of schools. Therefore more time should be spent in schools developing responsibility and freedom to act responsibly than any other activity.	10-34.5 A	10-34.5 B	9-31.0 C	... D

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
62. Schools should help children become social critics.	3-10.3 A	15-51.7 B	10-34.5 C	1- 3.4 D
63. Schools should help students become more sensitive to others.	18-62.1 A	10-34.5 B	1- 3.4 C	... D
64. The development of a healthy self-concept in a child is more important than learning skills and concepts.	17-58.6 A	12-41.4 B	... C	... D
65. Learning skills and concepts is more important than the development of a healthy self-concept.	... A	2- 6.9 B	15-51.7 C	12-41.4 D
66. Schools should help children learn that learning is a continuous, ongoing process through life.	19-65.5 A	10-34.4 B	... C	... D
67. In order to create independent, autonomous students, schools should provide an atmosphere where students can begin to accept the responsibility for their own learning.	12-41.4 A	16-55.2 B	1- 3.4 C	... D
68. Schools should foster individuality rather than sameness.	13-44.8 A	16-55.2 B	... C	... D
69. Schools should be modeled after the U. S. Constitution.	2- 6.9 A	9-31.0 B	13-44.8 C	5-17.2 D
70. Schools must help children to learn what freedom is.	12-41.4 A	16-55.2 B	1- 3.4 C	... D
71. A teacher should be tolerant of individual differences, even when they clash with his own opinion of right and wrong.	16-55.2 A	13-44.8 B	... C	... D
72. One of the primary aims of the teacher should be to enhance the student's self-image.	20-69.0 A	7-24.1 B	1- 3.4 C	... D
73. The teacher should decide what is good or bad learning.	... A	9-31.0 B	16-55.2 C	4-13.8 D
74. A teacher's personality has little to do with his ability to be an effective teacher.	2- 6.9 A	... B	14-48.3 C	13-44.8 D
75. Teachers must present a model to students that reflects acceptable social and moral beliefs.	3-10.3 A	21-72.4 B	4-13.8 C	1- 3.4 D
76. Teachers should be good friends with students.	1- 3.4 A	14-48.3 B	13-44.8 C	1- 3.4 D
77. A teacher's main task is to help students discover, select, and choose experiences for themselves.	9-31.0 A	16-55.2 B	4-13.8 C	... D

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
78. The teacher should assist students in developing their own learning activities.	11-37.9 A	17-58.6 B	1- 3.4 C	... D
79. Teachers can learn as they teach. Therefore, they are able to teach almost all of the concepts that they have not "formally" been prepared for.	2- 6.9 A	20-69.0 B	7-24.1 C	... D
80. Teachers should constantly evaluate themselves by involving students in this process.	7-24.1 A	22-75.9 B	... C	... D
81. Teachers should act the way they say they believe.	16-55.2 A	13-44.8 B	... C	... D
82. A teacher must be able to explain and justify his beliefs and behavior within his classroom.	11-37.9 A	16-55.2 B	2- 6.9 C	... D
83. Teachers should be more concerned with the child's self-concept than with teaching subject matter.	9-31.0 A	18-62.1 B	2- 6.9 C	... D
84. Teachers should be aware that students are trying to take wrongful advantage of them, and punish them for doing so.	... A	5-17.2 B	17-58.6 C	7-24.1 D
85. Teachers, not students, should set attitudes for the class.	1- 3.4 A	15-51.7 B	11-37.9 C	2- 6.9 D
86. The teacher's role is not to teach students a body of knowledge; rather, it is to help students learn whatever they wish to know.	2- 6.9 A	16-55.3 B	11-37.9 C	... D
87. Discipline is the result of a teacher's inability to help students meet their needs through developing their own learning environment.	3-10.3 A	12-41.4 B	11-37.9 C	3-10.3 D
88. The teacher should be perceived by the students as a helper rather than an authority figure.	12-41.4 A	14-48.3 B	3-10.3 C	... D
89. It is O.K. if students take wrongful advantage of teachers, because this is how they learn.	... A	3-10.3 B	17-58.6 C	9-31.0 D
90. The role of the teacher is to teach the child to be quiet and do work.	1- 3.4 A	... B	17-58.6 C	11-37.9 D

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
91. For every activity in my classroom I should offer alternatives for students, including the opportunity to develop their own options.	8-27.6 A	17-58.6 B	4-13.8 C	... D
92. The teacher should spend a great amount of time helping students to clarify their perceived values, interests, and goals.	9-31.0 A	15-51.7 B	5-17.2 C	... D
93. Teachers and programs must not be developed for what is demanded in the "next class."	6-20.7 A	14-48.3 B	8-27.6 C	1- 3.4 D
94. A teacher must be a good salesman.	9-31.0 A	16-55.2 B	2- 6.9 C	2- 6.9 D
95. Teachers must be able to accept their differences with other faculty members to the extent of each teacher being able to develop his own classroom goals and purposes and live them.	14-48.3 A	14-48.3 B	1- 3.4 C	... D

Explanation and instructions: The participants (small groups recommended) examine, explain, compare, and discuss the inconsistencies that exist between each other's beliefs and values and the belief inventory results.

Process: Group members examine the consistency between their inventory responses and their behaviors as educators in the schools.

Explanation and instructions: At this point, the group members (especially if the group consists of a total school or district staff) generally will determine directions for the remaining sessions. Some alternatives that might develop are:

(1) Examine and develop changes within existing classrooms and schools to reflect the conscious educational belief systems of the group membership.

(2) Focus on one's own individual classroom and/or the total school program.

(3) Examine and develop alternative educational approaches in contrast to what now exists in their schools.

(4) Re-examine previously raised issues and problems which have a number of different direction focuses (especially if the group consists of a variety of personnel from a number of school districts).

The open-ended nature of the activity now appears.

Another experience might be added to the educational belief system inventory technique-activity to help individuals focus on their educational belief systems and direction setting.

Process: ("Educational Environmental Description") The facilitator presents an option for those individuals who wish to focus on their own beliefs and classroom behaviors: the development of an environmental description of their own classrooms.

Explanation and instructions: The description might be of one's classroom as it is "now," or how he would like it to be. The participants are requested to respond to the following set of questions: What are the purposes and goals of your classroom? Who determines these? How do you implement the purposes and goals? How do you evaluate within your classroom? The program? Children? Yourself? What other information would help to describe your classroom?

Explanation and instructions: The direction taken by the group is now open ended.

Summary

A variety of experiences has been provided to help an individual develop more effective curriculum decisions, as perceived by the individual. The decisions are more effective because they are a result of:

- (1) a consciously developing educational belief system,
- (2) a higher level of commitment initiated by the internal motivation and valuing processes,
- (3) new learnings (as a part of the growth process),

(4) an openness in the examination of alternatives, resulting in awareness and consciousness of choice,

(5) congruent direction setting, which would indicate the decision to be the best at that given point in time, and

(6) a person growing and utilizing his curriculum frame of reference as a basis for decision making.

CHAPTER IV

NEW INFORMATION

This chapter is designed to relate new information about the Educational Belief System Process. The information is new in the sense that it represents an elementary attempt to estimate, examine, describe, and explain the effectiveness of the process as put into practice with two selected groups of educators. It is an initiatory effort to indicate the potential of the process. This initiatory effort is referred to in the following pages as the study, but it is not the central focus of this dissertation (or over-all study) and should not be interpreted as such.

This new information chapter contains a number of opinions taken from educational writings that relate to the study. They are intended to explain further the EBSP and the results of the study.

The chapter is divided into the following sections: description and design of the study, analysis and results of the study, summary of significant findings, and opinions of selected educational writers.

Description and Design of the Study

In May, 1971, the author was requested by the Grand Rapids, Michigan, school district to develop and conduct a staff in-service project. The purpose of the project was to help a group of teachers and administrators develop a new curriculum for Ottawa Middle School, scheduled to be opened in the fall of 1972. Ottawa Middle School was to be housed in the old Ottawa Hills High School and was to replace Ridgeview Junior High School. The changing of school boundaries would send some of the students from Burton Junior High and Harrison Park Junior High to the new school.

Through the cooperation of Michigan State University, the project received the course label Education 881: Workshop in Middle School Curriculum. Participants received three university credits for their involvement in the course. The Grand Rapids school district paid the tuition, and the author was listed as the instructor-facilitator. The course consisted of ten-three-hour weekly sessions; it began in September and ended in December of 1971.

Thirty-five people attended the course. The teachers who joined the group experience were employed at three different Grand Rapids junior high schools: Ridgeview, Harrison Park, and Burton. Five of the participants were administrators. Sixteen of the teachers were from Ridgeview, and the rest were about equally divided between the other two schools.

The only prerequisites for entrance into the in-service project were: the individual was presently teaching at one of the three schools, wanted to attend the course, and had at least minimal positive feelings about teaching at the new school.

For easy identification purposes, this total selected group will be labeled the Ridgeview group. Thirty-three participants from this group were involved in the study.

The second group of people selected for the study came from a Michigan State University graduate course. The course was entitled Education 820: Principles of Curriculum Improvement. The class had approximately thirty-five members; twenty-nine took part in the study. The class was scheduled for ten, three-hour weekly sessions. The group consisted of educators from an assortment of locations and positions, and a few full-time graduate students. The instructor-facilitator was Dale Alam, who was assisted by the author.

For some of the members of the group, the course was taken as an elective. For others, it was a requirement for a degree program. For identification purposes, this total group of educators will be labeled the 820 group.

Techniques-Activities

The EBSP techniques-activities utilized by the facilitator of the Ridgeview group were almost identical to those presented in Chapter II. The EBSP techniques-activities used with the 820 group were somewhat different from those employed

with the Ridgeview group. Those methods exercised with the 820 group represented the same underlying theories and theoretical principles of the EBSP, but approximately half of the actual techniques-activities were different from those used with the Ridgeview group.

The Questionnaire

During the first meeting with each of the groups in September, 1971, the facilitator requested that the participants fill out the pre-test questionnaire. (See Appendix A for questionnaire instruments.) During the last session in December, 1971, the group members completed the post-test questionnaire. The questionnaire test forms were identical for both groups, but the post-test included a number of new items.

The participants were asked not to put their names on the questionnaires, in order to encourage honest responses. Respondents included on the questionnaires their mother's maiden name initials so that pre- and post-tests could be matched for gain scores.

After developing the questionnaire instrument, the author pilot tested it, using as subjects students from Michigan State University graduate education classes, in order to check for question clarity and meaning. The questionnaires were put into use after the revisions were completed.

The instrument was designed to raise questions and gather data related to the selected groups and the EBSP. The questions on which the author intends to focus are presented in the analysis and results section of this chapter. The pre- and post-test instruments are located in Appendix A if the reader wishes to see how the questions are reflected in the questionnaire items.

Questionnaire items 1 through 18 and 20 through 26 are identical on both the pre- and post-tests. This arrangement was used to gather comparative feelings (responses) related to the same questions before and after the group experiences. Questions numbered 19a, 19b, and 19c were revised in the post-test to provide the opportunity to increase the accuracy of the measures focusing on how helpful the experience was in relationship to others they had had. Number 27 on the post-test has a different focus than the same number on the pre-test; therefore no gain score for that item is possible. Items numbered 28 through 34 were used exclusively on the post-test instrument. They refer to particular aspects of the EBSP experience that would be difficult to pre-test. On the data tables which follow, the pre-test and gain score columns for these items are blank.

A number of questions on the instrument refer to the individual's ability. Ability was defined on the questionnaire as "skills, knowledge, and understandings." Participants were requested to respond to each instrument question on a ten-point scale.

The calculations which followed the gathering of the data were designed to provide individual group and combined group mean and mean gain scores on every questionnaire item. Four items on the instrument were designed to be open-ended, in the sense that the participants in the study were asked to respond to them in writing. The statements (data) gathered by these items were categorized and converted into analytical generalizations by the author and three judges.

The resultant group mean, combined group mean, group gain, combined group gain, maximum value, and minimum value scores for all of the questionnaire items are included in Appendix B. All data result tables are categorized to indicate Ridgeview group, 820 group, and combined Ridgeview and 820 group item scores.

With four exceptions, all mean gain scores are positive. In some instances, the mean gain scores may indicate low gains due to a statistical ceiling effect. If the pre-test scores are quite high, it is statistically most difficult to raise them higher. When the ceiling effect occurs, it is possible that the score increased but it is difficult to measure the increase. This effect may be evident with a number of item scores. Because of the broad range of maximum-minimum values for some of the items, it should be remembered that if some people gained, it is also likely that some others produced scores that went down. If the mean gain score on an item is zero, it should be assumed that half the people marked above zero and half below. If the mean gain

score is greater than .00 but less than 1.0, it should be assumed that there is a very small positive change in the group's total reaction to the item, although significant changes among individual scores may have occurred that were both positive and negative. A substantial number of items had group gain scores of less than 1.0. If one takes into consideration the possibility of measurement error in a gain score that is less than 1.0, it could be said that no positive results occurred for that item at all.

If a gain score is above 1.0, it should be considered significant in light of the broad range of scores gathered, the ceiling effect possibility (it is possible the scores went up even higher but it is more difficult to measure the increases), the lower possibility of measurement error, and the need for substantial numbers of positive scores to move a high based pre-test mean up the scale.

Analysis and Results of the Study

In this section, each question selected for analysis is stated, followed by the questionnaire items related to that question. Results for the question are then presented in tabular form, followed by an analysis of the results.

Question: Do the participants feel that as a result of the class/workshop they are able to make more effective curriculum decisions?

Instrument items related to this question:

Number 34: As a result of this class I am able to make more effective curriculum decisions. (scale: 1=no, 5=uncertain, 10=yes)

Number 2: Your ability to develop curriculum which is consistent with how you believe people learn. (scale: 1=low ability, 10=high ability)

Number 4: Your ability to develop curriculum which is consistent with how you believe people are motivated.

Number 5: Your ability to make effective curriculum decisions in your classroom.

Number 6: Your ability to make effective curriculum decisions in your total school.

Number 7: Your ability to make effective curriculum decisions in your total school district.

Number 16: Your skill in changing your educational system.

Number 32: As a result of this class I believe that my educational beliefs and values and behavior have . . .

(scale: 1=remained about the same, 5=become more consistent, 10=become totally consistent)

Results: See Table 1.

Analysis: All of the combined mean and mean gain scores are substantially positive. The Ridgeview group tended to show higher gains than the 820 group, even though the Ridgeview pre-test mean scores were initially higher. The participants indicated they felt as a result of this experience they were able to make more effective curriculum decisions. They also

felt their skills in changing their educational systems have increased and at the same time their educational beliefs and values and behaviors have become more consistent.

TABLE 1.--Items focusing on participants' ability to make more effective curriculum decisions.

Item	Ridgeview Pre-Test Mean Scores	Ridgeview Post-Test Mean Scores	Ridgeview Mean Gain Scores	820 Pre-Test Mean Scores	820 Post-Test Mean Scores	820 Mean Gain Scores	Combined Ridgeview-820 Pre-Test Mean Scores	Combined Ridgeview-820 Post-Test Mean Scores	Combined Ridgeview-820 Mean Gain Scores
34	..	7.80	..	..	7.51	..	..	7.65	..
2	6.15	7.30	1.15	4.41	5.76	1.34	5.34	6.58	1.24
4	5.67	7.36	1.69	4.86	6.07	1.21	5.29	6.76	1.47
5	6.79	7.76	.97	5.41	6.28	.86	6.15	7.06	.92
6	5.67	7.21	1.54	4.62	5.29	.71	5.18	6.33	1.16
7	4.44	6.73	2.28	3.70	4.69	.78	4.10	5.77	1.59
16	5.21	6.45	1.24	4.75	5.56	.81	5.00	6.05	1.05
32	..	7.12	..	..	6.35	..	..	..	6.77

Question: Do the participants feel that this experience was more helpful than previous university-related experiences?

Instrument items related to this question:

Number 19: (pre-test) Degree of helpfulness of previous university College of Education experiences . . .

Number 19a: (pre-test) University classes were: (scale: 1=of little help, 10=generally highly helpful)

Number 19b: (pre-test) Previous in-service workshops were:

Number 19c: (pre-test) Previous university consultants were:

Number 19a: (post-test) Degree of helpfulness of this class/workshop experience.

Number 19b: (post-test) Degree of helpfulness of previous university classes/workshops.

Results: See Table 2.

TABLE 2.--Items focusing on degree of helpfulness of EBSP workshop/class experience in comparison to other university-related experiences.

Item	Ridgeview Pre-Test Mean Scores	Ridgeview Post-Test Mean Scores	Ridgeview Mean Gain Scores	820 Pre-Test Mean Scores	820 Post-Test Mean Scores	820 Mean Gain Scores	Combined Ridgeview-820 Pre-Test Mean Scores	Combined Ridgeview-820 Post-Test Mean Scores	Combined Ridgeview-820 Mean Gain Scores
19a	4.54	7.82	3.27	3.75	7.68	3.93	4.18	7.41	3.23
19b	4.64	4.78	.14	3.75	5.04	1.29	4.25	4.90	.65
19c	4.06	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
19ab	..	..	2.39	..	..	2.74	..	..	2.55

Analysis: Mean gain scores representing these instrument items are the highest of the total study. Mean scores indicate that the EBSP experiences were perceived as more helpful than any previous university-related workshops or classes in which the participants had ever been involved. Number 19c was omitted in the post-test because the facilitator did not

want to focus on himself rather than the experience. Number 19a is a direct comparison between previous workshops/classes and the Ridgeview-820 experiences. Number 19b is a check item to determine if the perceptions of the participants toward previous workshops/classes had changed after the EBSP experience. The Ridgeview perceptions remained about the same, while those of the 820 group tended to rise; the combined scores were about equal. The 19ab statistics represent a comparison of 19a and 19b on the post-test. These scores may be the most valid of those posted in relation to this question, because the participants had to respond at almost the same moment in time to each item. A direct comparison occurred. The helpfulness of the EBSP workshop/class combined mean gain score was 2.55 points above those of the previous university-related experiences. This clearly indicates that as a group the participants felt the EBSP experiences were more helpful than any previous workshops or classes.

Question: Do the participants, after the experience, feel that they better understand the process of change and strategies for such change?

Instrument items related to this question:

Number 16: Your skill in changing your educational system.
(scale: 1=low level of skill, 10=high level)

Number 18: Your ability to state to your own satisfaction the process of change and strategies for changing your school. (scale: 1=low ability, 10=high ability)

Results: See Table 3.

TABLE 3.--Items focusing on the participants' skill and understanding related to the process of changing their schools.

Item	Ridgeview Pre-Test Mean Scores	Ridgeview Post-Test Mean Scores	Ridgeview Mean Gain Scores	820 Pre-Test Mean Scores	820 Post-Test Mean Scores	820 Mean Gain Scores	Combined Ridgeview-820 Pre-Test Mean Scores	Combined Ridgeview-820 Post-Test Mean Scores	Combined Ridgeview-820 Mean Gain Scores
16	5.21	6.45	1.24	4.75	5.56	.81	5.00	6.05	1.05
18	5.15	6.84	1.66	4.85	6.10	1.14	5.02	6.49	1.41

Analysis: This question is related to the question examined earlier: "Do participants feel that as a result of this workshop/class they are able to make more effective curriculum decisions?" The positive results of the previous question can be somewhat transferred to this analysis, because it is necessary to understand certain elements of change strategy in order to develop "more effective" curriculum decisions.

Item 16 received positive results from the Ridgeview and combined gain score columns. Item 18 also had positive results. With this information and the earlier "ability to develop more effective curriculum" results, one could

conclude, "Yes, the participants did feel that they better understood the process of change and strategies for such change." This conclusion must be based not only on the data results, but also must rest on the assumptions that feelings regarding increased skill in changing an educational system and increased ability to state processes of change and strategies for such change reflect the feeling of the participants that they better understand the process and strategies of change. The author believes these assumptions to be reasonable and therefore concludes that the question should be answered affirmatively.

Questions: Do the participants, after the experience, feel more committed to changing the educational institution? Do the participants, after the experience, have a higher level of desire to become more involved in making curriculum decisions?

Instrument items related to these questions:

Number 15: Need for changes in your educational system.

(Scale: 1=no change is needed, 10=drastic changes needed)

Number 17: Your desire to change your educational system.

(scale: 1=low level, 10=high level)

Number 9: Your desire to become more involved in making curriculum decisions within your classroom.

Number 10: Your desire to become more involved in making curriculum decisions within your total school.

Number 11: Your desire to become more involved in making curriculum decisions within your total school district.

Number 12: Your present involvement in making curriculum decisions within your classroom.

Number 13: Your present involvement in making curriculum decisions within your total school.

Number 14: Your present involvement in making curriculum decisions in the total school district.

Number 8: Your desire to improve your skill in making curriculum decisions.

Results: See Table 4.

TABLE 4.--Items focusing on commitment to changing the educational institution and desire to become more involved in curriculum decision making.

Item	Ridgeview Pre-Test Mean Scores	Ridgeview Post-Test Mean Scores	Ridgeview Mean Gain Scores	820 Pre-Test Mean Scores	820 Post-Test Mean Scores	820 Mean Gain Scores	Combined Ridgeview-820 Pre-Test Mean Scores	Combined Ridgeview-820 Post-Test Mean Scores	Combined Ridgeview-820 Mean Gain Scores
15	8.27	8.10	-.18	7.93	8.70	.74	8.11	8.37	.23
17	8.00	8.30	.30	8.36	8.67	.26	8.16	8.47	.28
9	8.82	9.15	.33	8.14	8.74	.52	8.50	8.97	.42
10	8.15	8.64	.48	7.51	8.18	.61	7.85	8.43	.54
11	6.97	8.00	1.03	7.36	7.68	.41	7.15	7.85	.75
12	8.18	8.24	.06	7.00	7.00	.04	7.62	7.67	.05
13	5.15	5.94	.79	4.69	4.68	-.03	4.93	5.36	.44
14	3.78	4.73	.94	3.52	3.75	.25	3.66	4.28	.62
8	8.51	9.03	.51	8.62	8.64	.04	8.56	8.85	.26

Analysis: A quick glance at the Table 4 data indicates that there was no significant gain score increase representing the participants' perceptions of a need for change within their educational system or their desire to change the system. There were only small increases related to the participants' desires to become more involved in making curriculum decisions. At closer scrutiny, one will discover the high levels of needs and desires indicated by both groups on pre- and post-test questions 8,9,10,11,12,15, and 17. This indicates a high probability that the statistical ceiling effect is in operation. The maximum and minimum value gains show a number of people going up and down on the scale, but the overall desire or commitment level of this group is quite high. It should be noted that the desire to improve your skill in making effective curriculum decisions (#8) and your desire to become more involved in making curriculum decisions within your classroom (#9) had the highest combined post-test mean scores in the study, 8.85 and 8.97, respectively. Statistically, it can not be implied that the EBSP increased the already high levels. However, if the Mafia made the participants "an offer too good to refuse," they might not be able to move those post-test gain scores any higher! The levels of present involvement within total schools and school districts were not high on the pre- or post-test scales, and showed little gain between tests. This may be due to the brief period of time between pre- and post-tests.

The open-ended questions: The data gathered from the four open-ended questions on the instrument were examined and analyzed by the author and three judges. The results of the analysis are represented by a series of generalizations. The questions and generalizations follow. (See Appendix C for examples of participant answers.)

Question number 34: Why do the participants feel that, as a result of the experience, they are able to make more effective curriculum decisions?

Analytical generalizations of the responses:

1. The participants indicated the examination and clarification of their educational belief systems provided them with a basis for making more effective curriculum decisions.

2. The participants indicated the curriculum decisions they would make after the experience would be more effective because they would have a higher level of commitment to them.

3. The participants indicated they would now make more effective curriculum decisions because they better understood the meaning of curriculum.

4. The participants indicated they would make more effective curriculum decisions because they were now more sensitive to the needs and feelings of students and they wanted to help students express and meet those needs.

5. The participants indicated that they would make more effective curriculum decisions because their behavior would be changed to become more consistent with their educational belief systems.

6. The participants indicated they would make more effective curriculum decisions because they realized the teacher is an important part of the decision-making process. They felt it was their responsibility to become more involved in such decision making.

Questions number 35 and 36: Why do you feel that this class/workshop was helpful? What aspects of the class/workshop were more helpful than others?

The responses to these questions were so similar that it is too difficult to categorize and generalize them separately. The generalizations that follow represent the responses made to both question 35 and question 36.

Analytical generalizations of the responses:

The experience was helpful because:

1. of the examination and clarification of "my" beliefs and values.
2. of the opportunity to share and exchange ideas and feelings openly, freely, and honestly.
3. of the ability to view myself and my behavior.
4. of the new opportunity to examine and utilize the notion of aligning one's behaviors with his beliefs and values.

5. of the examination of curriculum in the light of the total school and nonschool environment.

6. it helped people to involve their feelings in decision making.

7. it reinforced and supported those searching for new and experimental ideas.

8. it helped people to realize how inconsistent they are.

9. it helped people to understand better their beliefs and values regarding learning, motivation and the learner, and how to create behaviors that are more consistent with those beliefs.

10. people had the opportunity to evaluate themselves.

11. people could be honest because they did not have to worry about a grade.

12. people could have in-depth discussions on issues and help one another solve problems.

13. many teachers now see students as individuals.

14. of the realization that teachers are able to make curriculum decisions.

15. of the examination of individual classroom and school environments. It helped to focus on differences and strengths and weaknesses...to examine possible improvements.

16. of a better understanding of the needs of my colleagues.

17. of the linking of beliefs and values to curriculum decision making.

18. it helped people to be able to disclose themselves to others and receive feedback in return.

19. it examined the process of developing strategies for changing schools...and helped people to realize the need for changing the institution.

20. it helped people to be open and accepting.

21. it helped people to be more aware; to be more conscious of oneself and others.

22. it helped people to learn.

23. it helped people to grow.

Question number 37: What aspects of this experience should be improved upon?

This question represented an attempt to gather information that would indicate the feelings participants held about aspects of the EBSF that needed improvement and why the process might not be perceived as successful or helpful to some individuals. The responses were helpful to the extent that the author has become aware of these feelings and is able to focus on their resolution. They represent the kinds of feelings which the EBSF was designed to help people examine. To determine why the participants held these feelings is now a task for further explorations and may be resolved through continuous modification of the process.

Analytical generalizations of the responses:

The process should be improved upon so that after the group experiences the following are no longer indicated as negative aspects of the EBSP.

A few participants were uncomfortable with the "lack of control" of the sessions. They seemed to be asking the facilitator to exert more control over what they were doing.

A few of the participants indicated that the sessions moved too slowly. They wanted quicker results.

A few participants indicated there was too much dealing with beliefs and values, and that the instructor should tell the participants what a curriculum should look like, and how they should solve their problems, and the class should sit right down and decide upon "a" curriculum. This is the arena that seems to need the most improvement. Evidently, some (as far as can be determined, less than 6 per cent) of the participants did not feel the examination of beliefs and values and their relationship to curriculum decision making was meaningful enough to spend as much time on them as they did.

A few individuals were uncomfortable with examining and disclosing their beliefs and values.

A few viewed curriculum as a product rather than all of the factors that affect or have a potential to affect the learner, and they did not want to focus on these factors.

Some of the most frequent responses to "Why was the class/workshop so helpful?" were related to the multiple

uses and relationships of value clarification and belief system components. The responses may become more meaningful when the results are viewed from other portions of the questionnaire instrument.

Question: Do the participants feel that the examination and clarification of their beliefs and values was helpful?

Instrument items related to this question:

Number 27: I feel that the examination and clarification of my own beliefs and values stimulated by this class were:
(scale: 1=of little help, 10=highly helpful)

Number 28: I feel that the examination and clarification of others' beliefs and values stimulated by this class were:

Number 29: Examining one's own classroom in relationship to what you believe or value about education was:

Number 30: The development of educational ideas or programs that reflect what you believe about education was:

Number 33: Before making any curriculum decisions within your classroom or school do you find yourself consciously thinking about your beliefs and values regarding education (learning, motivation, purposes and goals, etc.)? (scale: 1=never, 5=occasionally, 10=almost always)

Results: See Table 5.

Analysis: The participants indicated they felt the belief-value clarification and examination process was helpful not only to themselves, but to others as well. The mean scores were substantially high for all of these instrument items.

The helpfulness of the relationship between the participant's classroom behavior and beliefs and values was positively established in questions 29 and 30. Some hope for the continuation of the participant's perceived worth of the linkage between curriculum decision making and his educational belief system was positively indicated by the results from question number 33.

TABLE 5.--Items focusing on the belief-value system components of the experience.

Item	Ridgeview Post-Test Mean Scores	820 Post-Test Mean Scores	Combined Ridgeview & 820 Post-Test Mean Scores
27	8.03	7.97	8.15
28	8.00	7.88	7.98
29	8.09	7.24	8.00
30	7.76	6.52	7.52
33	8.06	7.51	7.81

Question: Do the participants feel that as a result of this class/workshop their beliefs and values relating to education have changed?

Instrument items related to this question:

Number 31: As a result of this class I believe that my beliefs and values relating to education have: (scale: 1=not changed, 10=been greatly changed)

Number 32: As a result of this class I believe that my educational beliefs and values and behavior have: (scale: 1=remained about the same, 5=become more consistent, 10=become totally consistent)

Results: See Table 6.

TABLE 6.--Items focusing on belief-value change.

Item	Ridgeview Post-Test Mean Scores	820 Post-Test Mean Scores	Combined Ridgeview & 820 Post-Test Mean Scores
31	7.12	6.52	6.84
32	7.12	6.36	6.77

Analysis: The results indicate positive feelings toward the effect of the process on changing beliefs and values (#31). The question could be raised: "Toward what did their values and beliefs change?" Positive results indicate that the participants felt their educational beliefs and values were becoming considerably more consistent (#32). Therefore, the changes involved could be linked with the human growth process...a healthy direction for changing beliefs and values.

The development and demonstration of openness, trust, and acceptance by group members were frequent responses to the open-ended question: "Why was the class/workshop so helpful?" Some of the following questionnaire items provided further information related to those responses.

Question: Do the participants feel that after the experience they were more trusting and accepting of others?

Instrument items related to this question:

Number 20: Level of trust you hold toward all of the teachers in this total group. (scale: 1=low level, 10=high level)

Number 21: Level of trust you hold toward administrators in this group.

Number 22: Level of trust you hold toward the leader (facilitator) of this group.

Number 23: Level of trust you hold toward all of your students.

Number 24: Level of acceptance you hold toward all of the teachers in this group.

Number 25: Level of acceptance you hold toward the administrators in this group.

Number 26: Level of acceptance you hold toward all of your students.

Results: See Table 7.

Analysis: The results indicate that the 820 group felt considerably more trust and acceptance toward all of the teachers, administrators, and the leader of the group. The scores relating to the participants' students were noticeably higher on the pre-test than their feelings of trust and acceptance toward the other item categories. This may be part of the reason for the lower positive gain scores reflected in the student columns. If one already has a high trust and

acceptance level, a small gain might be considered positive.
(The ceiling effect might also be in evidence.)

TABLE 7.--Items focusing on participants' levels of trust
and acceptance.

Item	Ridgeview Pre-Test Mean Scores	Ridgeview Post-Test Mean Scores	Ridgeview Mean Gain Scores	820 Pre-Test Mean Scores	820 Post-Test Mean Scores	820 Mean Gain Scores	Combined Ridgeview-820 Pre-Test Mean Scores	Combined Ridgeview-820 Post-Test Mean Scores	Combined Ridgeview-820 Mean Gain Scores
20	6.48	7.09	.61	5.16	7.22	2.06	5.91	7.15	1.24
21	7.30	6.88	-.42	4.60	6.92	2.32	6.14	6.90	.77
22	7.21	8.30	1.09	5.00	8.30	3.30	6.28	8.30	2.02
23	7.72	8.36	.64	7.46	8.35	.89	7.61	8.36	.74
24	7.36	7.85	.49	6.42	7.81	1.39	6.95	7.83	.88
25	7.91	7.70	-.21	5.44	7.42	1.98	6.84	7.55	.73
26	7.97	8.79	.82	8.00	8.78	.78	7.98	8.78	.80

The Ridgeview results are more complex, therefore more difficult to analyze. A new administrative team had been assigned to the school just a few weeks before the workshop began and the pre-test was administered. The initial scores related to the administration were high, but it is significant that the gain scores were negative. The positive direction of other gain scores might indicate that the administration's scores were even more negative than the data reflect. The student-directed scores were almost

identical to the 820 group results, and reflect the same analysis. The Ridgeview group scores on trust and acceptance toward teachers within the group indicate little gain, therefore little change (not in full accord with the open-ended question results).

The combined gain scores indicate that the trust and acceptance feeling levels increased most in relationship to other teachers and the leader of the group. They also indicate that the group members felt more trusting and accepting of students than of any other group involved.

Summary of Significant Findings

The group mean scores clearly indicate the participants felt that as a result of the EBSP experience they were able to make more effective curriculum decisions. The group members indicated they felt they had developed higher levels of ability to:

1. make curriculum decisions in their classrooms.
2. develop curriculum which is consistent with how they believe people learn and are motivated.
3. change their educational system.
4. behave more consistently with their educational beliefs and values.

In response to the question, "Do the participants feel that the EBSP experience was more helpful than any previous university class or workshop?" the group members answered an overwhelming "Yes!" The item results related

to this question had the highest mean gain scores of the study.

The participants indicated they felt an increase in their ability to change their educational systems.

The open-ended questions provided new information about why the participants felt as a result of the EBSP experience they were able to make more effective curriculum decisions, why they felt the class/workshop was helpful, and what aspects of the class/workshop were more helpful than others. The responses were very positive, in the sense that they reflected and supported the underlying theory and purposes of the EBSP. The participants also provided some answers that indicated aspects of the experience that need improvement.

The analytical generalizations related to why the participants felt that as a result of the EBSP experience they were able to make more effective curriculum decisions were:

1. The participants indicated that the examination and clarification of their educational belief systems provided them with a basis for making more effective curriculum decisions.

2. The participants indicated that the curriculum decisions they would make after the experience would be more effective because they would have a higher level of commitment to them.

3. The participants indicated they would now make more effective curriculum decisions because they better understood the meaning of curriculum.

4. The participants indicated they would make more effective curriculum decisions because they were now more sensitive to the needs and feelings of students, and they wanted to help students express and meet those needs.

5. The participants indicated they would make more effective curriculum decisions because their behavior would be changed to become more consistent with their educational belief systems.

6. The participants indicated they would make more effective curriculum decisions because they realized the teacher is an important part of the decision-making process. They felt it was their responsibility to become more involved in such decision making.

The participants felt the utilization of value clarification was helpful in relation to:

1. examining and clarifying their own and others' beliefs and values.
2. examining their classrooms and schools.
3. developing educational ideas and programs.
4. what they believe or value about education.

The participants indicated they felt that as a result of the class/workshop their educational beliefs and values had changed and that their beliefs and values and behavior were becoming more consistent.

The findings indicate that a number of participants were interacting with the elements and dimensions of growth and were, in fact, growing. This is especially evident in the data referring to the examination of beliefs and values, the utilization of beliefs and values in curriculum decision making, and in the development of more consistent behaviors. Both statistical and open-ended data reflect and support these findings.

Opinions of Selected Educational Writers

This section contains a number of opinions taken from educational writers, which relate to the present study. They are intended to explain further the EBSP and the results of the study. Hopefully, the writings will tend to highlight the magnitude of the task with which the process is designed to interact, the positive nature of the results, and support for the EBSP.

The following excerpts are taken from Curriculum Development as Re-education of the Teacher by George Sharp:

It follows, then, that if children's experiences are to be improved, that is to say, if the curriculum is to be developed, the teacher must grow as a person. This growth cannot be confined to classroom practice alone; the total personality must be helped to grow.¹

. . . because they have accepted a crystallized system of teaching, traditional teachers are usually

¹George Sharp, Curriculum Development as Re-education of the Teacher (New York: Teachers College of Columbia Press, 1951), p. 2.

more difficult to encourage to grow. In short growing is seen as an end in itself.¹

A final factor of significance is the magnitude of the task. Changing from the traditional approach to the modern in education requires a change in the teacher's whole frame of reference not only to teaching but to life itself. The modern conception is not just a new "method" of teaching -- it is a way of looking at the growth of human beings. It involves a teacher's philosophy of life, his social understandings, his psychological beliefs, his skills, attitudes, and knowledges. It is not something that can be "explained"; its acceptance is linked with his growth and development as a human being.²

. . . with both the abnormal person and the traditional teacher stimulating a resumption in growing must be approached by indirection rather than by direct attack upon the problem.³

. . . people change themselves. . . . Direct methods may bring about a temporary change in behavior -- a conforming; but if the teacher has not accepted the changes there will be no permanent or effective change. In the long run the indirect way is the more practical, efficient, and economical, for the results gained are permanent.⁴

If teachers are to accept children as children rather than as "pupils," they must first accept themselves as human beings rather than as "teachers"; and if teachers are to be helped to do this, the curriculum worker must lead the way by presenting himself as a human being and accepting teachers as such.⁵

Re-education has fully taken place only when a new set of values has been developed. The individual not only "knows" and "does" but believes in what he "knows" and "does". . . . The process of re-education can not stop with correct knowing nor with correct doing. It is

¹ Ibid., p. 6.

² Ibid., p. 8.

³ Ibid., p. 12.

⁴ Ibid., p. 13.

⁵ Ibid., p. 111.

completed only when a new system of values dominates the individual's perceptions.¹

The following excerpts are taken from Freedom to Learn by Carl R. Rogers:

I. There is an organismic base for an organized valuing process within the human individual.

II. This valuing process in the human being is effective in achieving self-enhancement to the degree that the individual is open to the experiencing which is going on within himself.

III. In persons who are moving toward greater openness to their experiencing, there is an organismic commonality of value directions.

IV. These common value directions are of such kinds as to enhance the development of the individual himself, of others in his community, and to contribute to the survival and evolution of his species.²

In my judgement, commitment is something that one discovers within oneself Thus commitment is more than a decision. It is the functioning of an individual who is searching for the directions which are emerging within himself Thought of in the sense in which I am describing it, it is clear that commitment is an achievement. It is the kind of purposeful and meaningful direction which is only gradually achieved by the individual who has come increasingly to live closely in relationship with his own experiencing.³

The following are excerpts from "Modern Concepts of Learning," an address given by Arthur Combs to the Michigan Department of Education Staff, May, 1966:

Most of us have more information than we can use There are few failures in learning due to lack of information The informational aspects of learning lie outside the person while the discovery of personal meaning of information lies inside the person.

¹Ibid., p. 27.

²Carl R. Rogers, Freedom to Learn (Columbus, Ohio: Merrill Publishing Co., 1969), pp. 251-252.

³Ibid., p. 273.

Basic principle of learning: any information will affect a person's behavior only to the degree to which he has discovered the meaning of that information for him Whatever checks a person's own explorations reduces learning Too many things we do in education discourage self-direction. The future demands it. If the public schools do not turn out self-directing people, we have failed the student, the community and the nation. We need self-directing people -- people upon whom we can depend.

If you want creativity, you have to pay the price. If you want them to conform, "they ain't going to be creative." And we are going to take it one way or the other and ask ourselves, "What do we really want?"

Whatever discourages a person's commitment and involvement gets in the way of learning Somebody once said, "Isn't it interesting that when children are in kindergarten and presumably have less capacity to make decisions than at any other time in their lives, that is the time we let them make the most." As they go up the ladder, they make less and less until when they reach graduate school, we don't let them make any.

The following are excerpts from Values in Teaching by Louis E. Rath, Merrill Harmin, and Sidney B. Simon.

If we define the term "values" as those elements that show how a person has decided to use his life, it would be as if the first group's members knew what they valued and the members of the second group had very unclear values The critical test of a person's insights is whether they provide him with a set of beliefs about himself in relation to his social and physical environment which are extensive in scope, dependable in action, and compatible with one another.¹

Imagine a giant continuum with persons standing at various points along it Imagine a sign above the people's heads that says CLARITY OF RELATIONSHIP TO SOCIETY We find a large cluster of persons at the clear end of the continuum If we seek words to describe the persons who live their lives at this extreme point on the relationship-to-society continuum we think of positive, purposeful, enthusiastic, proud. . . . All is not so rosey at the other end of the line As we become familiar with persons in this

¹Louis E. Rath, Merrill Harmin, and Sidney B. Simon, Values in Teaching (Columbus, Ohio: Merrill Publishing Co., 1966), p. 6.

group, it is interesting to note how their common confusion about how to relate their lives to their surroundings has led to quite different patterns of behavior: Some are apathetic . . . others are flighty . . . some are very uncertain They there are the very inconsistent ones others at this end of the continuum might aptly be called drifters A large number are over-conformers . . . finally we note a group of role players.¹

The following are excerpts from "Educational Goals in a Pluralistic Society" by Stuart C. Rankin.

To argue that individuals and groups should not have their own unique goals is not to argue against common goals for an open democratic society. Having unique goals is indeed itself a common goal. The point is that the individual goals are as important as the common goals. Allegiance to uniqueness and diversity does not imply a conflict with allegiance to common purpose. It does imply a pluralistic society rather than a melting pot where the major culture assimilates minor ones.

Curriculum development has traditionally followed the pattern of (a) goal-setting, including the establishment of specific objectives; (b) selection and organization of learning activities; and (c) evaluation to determine progress toward objectives. Perhaps we need to consider again a step which should precede goal-setting, namely, a re-examination of basic beliefs. Today's counter-cultures are helping us to look behind common goals to humaneness, uniqueness, equality of opportunity, liberty, free choice, and the importance of diversity. As we examine our individual beliefs and goals, we need to use them as criteria for evaluating what we are doing in schools.²

To allow for some variety within a general framework is not what we mean by prizing diversity. I must value your uniqueness, your difference, not only for your sake but for my sake. I am richer because you are different. I must treasure and nourish and salute and protect your singularity, your uniqueness, your solitude.

¹Ibid., p. 4.

²Stuart C. Rankin, "Educational Goals in a Pluralistic Society, Educational Leadership, Vol. 28, No. 6 (March, 1971), p. 596.

Among other things, this concept means that the student must be the actor. Not be acted upon. He chooses his own goals. I do not set them for him. He is the player, I am the coach. He makes choices, I try to provide options.¹

¹Ibid., p. 576.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study has been to present an exploration of the Educational Belief System Process in order to help educators:

(1) formulate curriculum decisions that they believe in and express a high level of commitment to,

(2) reject the "mindless" conditioning process and develop an organic perspective toward curriculum decision making,

(3) understand and accept human differences and potential, and

(4) to grow -- and therefore make more effective curriculum decisions.

The EBSP is composed of the theories and techniques used in helping people (1) to grow, (2) to develop a conscious educational belief system, and (3) to employ both (1) and (2) in curriculum decision making.

The theory underlying the EBSP was presented in Chapter II. The discussion included theories related to human growth, the educational belief system, the curriculum

frame of reference, curriculum decision making, and how all of these concepts are linked together. The underlying theory explained and provided a support base for the assumption that people who are growing are able to make more effective curriculum decisions.

Following a focus on the EBSP theory was a presentation of how the theory might be put into practice. The presentation included some theoretical guidelines for implementation and a series of techniques and activities that might be used in working with groups of people.

Chapter IV contained information about an initial attempt to estimate, examine, describe, and explain the effectiveness of the process as put into use with two selected groups of educators. It included the description and design of the study, analysis and results, and a summary of significant findings. Opinions of selected writers were included in this chapter to highlight the magnitude of the task with which the process was designed to interact, the positive nature of the results of the study, and support for the EBSP.

Conclusions

Within the scope of the EBSP theory, the design of the study, and the limitations of the data gathered, the following may be concluded:

1. The positive relationship between growing human beings and the development of potentially more effective curriculum decision making was demonstrated within this study.

2. The Educational Belief System Process is able to help people grow.

3. The Educational Belief System Process is able to help people develop a more conscious educational belief system.

4. The Educational Belief System Process is able to help people develop potentially more effective curriculum decisions.

5. Most educators who have participated in an EBSP workshop have indicated it to be very helpful. The EBSP experience has the potential to be perceived as helpful by many more people.

Implications

1. The above conclusions are all related to what may be occurring in the lives of children and adults in places called school and the world.

2. Many of the people who participated in the study will be able to share in many ways with others the benefits they perceived they had acquired from the EBSP experience.

3. The demonstrated positive relationships between human beings and the development of more effective curriculum decisions should be used to good account by continuing to help people to grow and make more effective curriculum decisions.

As educators grow and make more effective curriculum decisions, it might mean that:

4. There is a potential means for contributing to the creation of schools that are psychologically healthy for children and adults.

5. There is a higher probability for the development of schools that reflect an appreciation for understanding and accepting human differences and potential.

6. In the long range, schools could have a positive effect upon the total society. The conclusions could be extended to imply that the worth of human growth and its components could become cultural values in the eyes of children and adults. Human growth could become the highest of values ...the good life...self-actualization and beyond...continuous growth for all who perceive it as valuable.

7. In no way should the EBSF be considered as having arrived. It is not complete. It merits future efforts to improve its ability to help people.

8. The conclusions imply that the EBSF is worthy of further examination in order to determine and explain more clearly its long-range effectiveness.

General Recommendations

In order to increase the EBSF's effectiveness in helping others, the following recommendations are presented:

1. More in-depth research related to the EBSF should occur, to increase its effectiveness, assist in its improvement, and explore new arenas for its use.

2. The EBSP should be improved upon and the search for new processes to take its place should continue.

3. New processes for sharing information about the EBSP should be developed.

Specific Recommendations

1. The underlying theories of the EBSP should be presented in greater depth, in order to provide people with a clearer and more meaningful base of understanding.

2. The theoretical guidelines and methodology should be expanded, to improve the implementation aspects of the process.

3. New ways of sharing and informing educators about the process should be developed so that others who might want to utilize the EBSP as a means for helping teachers, students, etc. may be able to do so. It is questionable whether reading about the process is the best way to help future facilitators use it. It is a challenge to create a way to share the process with others, based upon the EBSP theory and theoretical principles. The true meaning of the components of the process would be lost in a packaged or programmed approach.

4. As others use the process, improvements should be identified and data regarding its effectiveness should be shared. Valuable information might be acquired if the process were utilized in a variety of circumstances. Some of the possible arenas for its use are: college faculty

in-service programs, public school personnel programs in locations that differ in life styles, teacher renewal centers, or graduate and undergraduate teacher education programs. As improvements are identified and data gathered, a number of people may be helped in the process. A linkage among a number of different people and programs utilizing the process might be fruitfully explored.

5. New research instruments for providing more information about the process should be identified and/or developed. Some of the areas of focus for the instruments might be: What is happening to people during the workshop sessions? How do they feel about each session and what is happening to them? What are the long-range effects of the EBSP? What are the characteristics of the people who find it to be the most helpful? the least helpful? How are the growth components reflected within the sessions? Are more growth components identifiable? How are the sessions helping the children back in the classrooms? Are they helping children to grow? Are the schools changing as a result of the EBSP?

6. The acquired information should be made available to school districts and colleges; it might be helpful to them in planning to meet the needs of their staffs and students.

7. The author should not become so enmeshed in the attempt to prove the helpfulness of a process that it becomes a barrier to his growth.

The Author's Growth

For the author, human growth is the process by which an individual develops a conscious belief system and creates behaviors that are in the process of becoming more congruent with that system.

The author experienced growth in the process of developing this dissertation. Some of the growth occurred during the many hours that were spent by him alone and with others, focusing on his own beliefs and values and the creation of behaviors that were consistent with that developing belief system. That belief system and behaviors are expressed within the product...the author's changing being, the dissertation, and all they might represent. The author experienced growth in the sense that much of what was written by him was developed or created while he was living the theory he included within the theory and theory into practice chapters.

One broad area of awareness that the author identifies as most meaningful is the worth of constantly valuing human growth. Another is the development of beliefs that linked together human growth, curriculum decision making, and ways of helping people to do both. The valuing of human growth led to the linking that developed...a product of his changing belief system. The author is now asking himself the question: "How do I identify the growth that has occurred in me...that occurs in others?" Living his theory, he has not arrived, not stopped growing.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE PRE-TEST INSTRUMENT AND
THE POST-TEST INSTRUMENT

PRE-TEST INSTRUMENT

This form is designed to gather information regarding the feelings which you hold about yourself. Indicate on the continuums the points which best describe your feelings.

NOTE: Ability indicates skill, knowledge, and understandings.

1. Your ability to explain How People Learn.

LOW ABILITY

HIGH ABILITY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. Your ability to develop curriculum which is consistent with how you believe people learn.

LOW ABILITY

HIGH ABILITY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Your ability to explain how people are motivated.

LOW ABILITY

HIGH ABILITY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. Your ability to develop curriculum which is consistent with how you believe people are motivated.

LOW ABILITY

HIGH ABILITY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. Your ability to make effective curriculum decisions in your classroom.

LOW ABILITY

HIGH ABILITY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. Your ability (not authority) to make effective curriculum decisions in your total school.

LOW ABILITY

HIGH ABILITY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. Your ability (not authority) to make effective curriculum decisions in your total school district.

LOW ABILITY							HIGH ABILITY		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

8. Your desire to improve your skill in making effective curriculum decisions.

LOW LEVEL OF DESIRE							HIGH LEVEL OF DESIRE		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

9. Your desire to become more involved in making curriculum decisions within your classroom.

LOW LEVEL OF DESIRE							HIGH LEVEL OF DESIRE		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

10. Your desire to become more involved in making curriculum decisions within your total school.

LOW LEVEL OF DESIRE							HIGH LEVEL OF DESIRE		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

11. Your desire to become more involved in making curriculum decisions within your total school district.

LOW LEVEL OF DESIRE							HIGH LEVEL OF DESIRE		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

12. Your present involvement in making curriculum decisions within your classroom.

LOW LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT							HIGH LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

13. Your present involvement in making curriculum decisions within your total school.

LOW LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT							HIGH LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

14. Your present involvement in making curriculum decisions in the total school district.

LOW LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

HIGH LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

15. Need for changes in your educational system.

NO CHANGE IS NEEDED

DRASTIC CHANGES NEEDED

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

16. Your skill in changing your educational system.

LOW LEVEL OF SKILL

HIGH LEVEL OF SKILL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

17. Your desire to change your educational system.

LOW LEVEL OF DESIRE

HIGH LEVEL OF DESIRE

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

18. Your ability to state to your own satisfaction the process of change and strategies for changing your school.

LOW ABILITY

HIGH ABILITY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

19. Degree of helpfulness of previous university College of Education experiences...

19a. University classes were:

OF LITTLE HELP

GENERALLY HIGHLY HELPFUL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

19b. Previous inservice workshops were:

OF LITTLE HELP

GENERALLY HIGHLY HELPFUL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

19c. Previous university consultants were:

OF LITTLE HELP

GENERALLY HIGHLY HELPFUL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

20. Level of trust you hold toward all of the teachers in this total group.

LOW LEVEL

HIGH LEVEL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

21. Level of trust you hold toward administrators in this group.

LOW LEVEL

HIGH LEVEL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

22. Level of trust you hold toward the leader of this total group.

LOW LEVEL

HIGH LEVEL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

23. Level of trust you hold toward all of your students.

LOW LEVEL

HIGH LEVEL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

24. Level of acceptance you hold toward all of the teachers in this group.

LOW LEVEL

HIGH LEVEL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

25. Level of acceptance you hold toward the administrators in this group.

LOW LEVEL

HIGH LEVEL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

26. Level of acceptance you hold toward all of your students.

LOW LEVEL

HIGH LEVEL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

27. Level of honesty in filling out this questionnaire.

LOW LEVEL

HIGH LEVEL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

POST-TEST INSTRUMENT

This form is designed to gather information regarding the feelings which you hold about yourself. Indicate on the continuums the points which best describe your feelings.

NOTE: Ability indicates skill, knowledge, and understandings.

1. Your ability to explain How People Learn.

LOW ABILITY

HIGH ABILITY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. Your ability to develop curriculum which is consistent with how you believe people learn.

LOW ABILITY

HIGH ABILITY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Your ability to explain how people are motivated.

LOW ABILITY

HIGH ABILITY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. Your ability to develop curriculum which is consistent with how you believe people are motivated.

LOW ABILITY

HIGH ABILITY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. Your ability to make effective curriculum decisions in your classroom.

LOW ABILITY

HIGH ABILITY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. Your ability (not authority) to make effective curriculum decisions in your total school.

LOW ABILITY

HIGH ABILITY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. Your ability (not authority) to make effective curriculum decisions in your total school district.

LOW ABILITY

HIGH ABILITY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. Your desire to improve your skill in making effective curriculum decisions.

LOW LEVEL OF DESIRE

HIGH LEVEL OF DESIRE

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. Your desire to become more involved in making curriculum decisions within your classroom.

LOW LEVEL OF DESIRE

HIGH LEVEL OF DESIRE

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. Your desire to become more involved in making curriculum decisions within your total school.

LOW LEVEL OF DESIRE

HIGH LEVEL OF DESIRE

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11. Your desire to become more involved in making curriculum decisions within your total school district.

LOW LEVEL OF DESIRE

HIGH LEVEL OF DESIRE

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

12. Your present involvement in making curriculum decisions within your classroom.

LOW LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

HIGH LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

13. Your present involvement in making curriculum decisions within your total school.

LOW LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

HIGH LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

14. Your present involvement in making curriculum decisions in the total school district.

LOW LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

HIGH LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

15. Need for changes in your educational system.

NO CHANGE IS NEEDED

DRASTIC CHANGES NEEDED

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

16. Your skill in changing your educational system.

LOW LEVEL OF SKILL

HIGH LEVEL OF SKILL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

17. Your desire to change your educational system.

LOW LEVEL OF DESIRE

HIGH LEVEL OF DESIRE

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

18. Your ability to state to your own satisfaction the process of change and strategies for changing your school.

LOW ABILITY

HIGH ABILITY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

19a. Degree of helpfulness of this class/workshop experience.

OF LITTLE HELP

GENERALLY HIGHLY HELPFUL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

19b. Degree of helpfulness of previous university workshops/ classes.

OF LITTLE HELP

GENERALLY HIGHLY HELPFUL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

20. Level of trust you hold toward all of the teachers in this total group.

LOW LEVEL								HIGH LEVEL	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

21. Level of trust you hold toward administrators in this group.

LOW LEVEL								HIGH LEVEL	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

22. Level of trust you hold toward the leader of this total group.

LOW LEVEL								HIGH LEVEL	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

23. Level of trust you hold toward all of your students.

LOW LEVEL								HIGH LEVEL	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

24. Level of acceptance you hold toward all of the teachers in this group.

LOW LEVEL								HIGH LEVEL	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

25. Level of acceptance you hold toward the administrators in this group.

LOW LEVEL								HIGH LEVEL	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

26. Level of acceptance you hold toward all of your students.

LOW LEVEL								HIGH LEVEL	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

27. I feel that the examination and clarification of my own beliefs and values stimulated by this class were:

OF LITTLE HELP							HIGHLY HELPFUL		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

28. I feel that the examination and clarification of others' beliefs and values stimulated by this class were:

OF LITTLE HELP							HIGHLY HELPFUL		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

29. Examining one's own school and classroom in relationship to what you believe or value about education was:

OF LITTLE HELP							HIGHLY HELPFUL		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

30. The development of educational ideas or programs that reflect what you believe about education was:

OF LITTLE HELP							HIGHLY HELPFUL		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

31. As a result of this class I believe that my beliefs and values relating to education have:

NOT CHANGED							BEEN GREATLY CHANGED		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

32. As a result of this class I believe that my educational beliefs and values and behavior have:

REMAINED ABOUT THE SAME				BECOME MORE CONSISTENT			BECOME TOTALLY CONSISTENT		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

33. Before making any curriculum decisions within your classroom or school do you find yourself consciously thinking about your beliefs and values regarding education (learning, motivation, purposes and goals, etc.)?

NEVER				OCCASIONALLY				ALMOST ALWAYS	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

34. As a result of this class I am able to make more effective curriculum decisions

NO				UNCERTAIN				YES	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

34b. Why?

35. Why do you feel that this class/workshop experience was helpful?

36. What aspects of this workshop/class were more helpful than others?

37. What aspects of this class/workshop would you like to have seen changed during the sessions?

APPENDIX B

DATA RESULT TABLES

RIDGEVIEW GROUP SCORES

Item	Pre-Test			Post-Test			Mean Gain Scores		
	Min. Val.	Max. Val.	Mean	Min. Val.	Max. Val.	Mean	Min. Val.	Max. Val.	Mean Gain
1	3	9	5.909	4	10	7.060	-2	3	1.151
2	3	9	6.151	4	10	7.303	-2	5	1.151
3	2	10	5.969	5	10	7.363	-2	5	1.393
4	2	10	5.666	5	9	7.363	-1	5	1.696
5	3	10	6.787	5	10	7.757	-2	4	.969
6	1	10	5.666	4	10	7.212	-1	5	1.545
7	1	9	4.437	2	10	6.727	-1	8	2.281
8	5	10	8.515	3	10	9.030	-4	4	.515
9	5	10	8.818	7	10	9.151	-3	3	.333
10	5	10	8.151	4	10	8.636	-2	3	.484
11	3	10	6.969	5	10	8.000	-2	6	1.030
12	3	10	8.181	2	10	8.242	-5	2	.060
13	1	10	5.151	1	10	5.939	-2	7	.787
14	1	9	3.782	1	10	4.727	-6	5	.939
15	4	10	8.272	3	10	8.090	-6	2	-.181
16	1	8	5.212	3	10	6.454	-4	8	1.242
17	4	10	8.000	4	10	8.303	-4	4	.303
18	2	8	5.151	3	10	6.843	-1	5	1.656
19A	1	9	4.545	5	10	7.818	-4	6	3.273
19B	1	9	4.645	1	9	4.787	-4	6	.142
19AB	..	..	...	..	..	...	-3	7	2.393
19C	1	10	4.607	..	..	...	..	..	...
20	1	9	6.484	2	10	7.090	-6	5	.606
21	2	10	7.303	2	10	6.878	-5	4	-.425
22	3	10	7.212	4	10	8.303	-4	6	1.091
23	3	10	7.727	6	10	8.363	-3	7	.636
24	2	10	7.363	4	10	7.848	-5	3	.485
25	3	10	7.909	3	10	7.696	-5	4	-.213
26	4	10	7.969	7	10	8.787	-4	6	.818
27	9	10	9.090	5	10	8.031	..	..	...
28	..	..	...	5	10	8.000	..	..	...
29	..	..	...	3	10	8.090	..	..	...
30	..	..	...	3	10	7.757	..	..	...
31	..	..	...	5	10	7.121	..	..	...
32	..	..	...	3	10	7.121	..	..	...
33	..	..	...	6	10	8.060	..	..	...
34	..	..	...	5	10	7.799	..	..	...

820 GROUP SCORES

Item	Pre-Test			Post-Test			Mean Gain Scores		
	Min. Val.	Max. Val.	Mean	Min. Val.	Max. Val.	Mean	Min. Val.	Max. Val.	Mean Gain
1	2	8	5.172	3	9	6.068	-4	5	.896
2	2	8	4.413	3	8	5.758	-4	5	1.344
3	3	9	5.655	1	9	5.827	-5	4	.172
4	2	8	4.862	3	9	6.068	-3	4	1.206
5	1	10	5.413	2	10	6.275	-5	6	.862
6	2	9	4.620	1	10	5.285	-6	6	.714
7	1	8	3.703	1	10	4.689	-2	6	.777
8	4	10	8.620	7	10	8.642	-2	4	-.035
9	1	10	8.142	4	10	8.740	-6	6	.518
10	3	10	7.517	2	10	8.178	-6	6	.607
11	2	10	7.357	2	10	7.678	-5	6	.407
12	1	10	7.000	1	10	7.000	-5	4	.035
13	1	10	4.689	1	9	4.678	-4	7	-.034
14	1	10	3.518	1	8	3.750	-3	7	.250
15	5	10	7.928	6	10	8.703	-2	5	.740
16	1	9	4.750	2	10	5.555	-3	6	.814
17	4	10	8.357	6	10	8.666	-4	5	.259
18	2	9	4.857	3	10	6.103	-3	7	1.142
19A	1	9	3.750	3	10	7.678	-4	7	3.928
19B	1	9	3.750	1	9	5.035	-3	8	1.285
19AB	..	..	...	..	..	...	-5	8	2.740
19C	1	7	3.136	..	..	...	..	..	...
20	1	9	5.160	4	10	7.222	-1	6	2.062
21	1	9	4.600	3	10	6.923	-1	5	2.323
22	1	8	5.000	3	10	8.296	-6	5	3.296
23	4	10	7.458	5	10	8.346	-2	4	.888
24	1	10	6.423	5	10	7.814	-2	6	1.391
25	1	10	5.440	4	10	7.416	-5	4	1.976
26	5	10	8.000	6	10	8.777	-3	3	.777
27	5	10	9.000	6	10	8.275	..	..	...
28	..	..	...	5	10	7.965	..	..	...
29	..	..	...	6	10	7.880	..	..	...
30	..	..	...	4	10	7.241	..	..	...
31	..	..	...	2	10	6.517	..	..	...
32	..	..	...	2	9	6.357	..	..	...
33	..	..	...	5	10	7.500	..	..	...
34	..	..	...	1	10	7.511	..	..	...

COMBINED TOTAL RIDGEVIEW AND 820 GROUP SCORES

Item	Pre-Test			Post-Test			Mean Gain Scores		
	Min. Val.	Max. Val.	Mean	Min. Val.	Max. Val.	Mean	Min. Val.	Max. Val.	Mean Gain
1	2	9	5.564	3	10	6.596	-4	5	1.032
2	2	9	5.338	3	10	6.580	-4	5	1.241
3	2	10	5.822	1	10	6.645	-5	5	0.822
4	2	10	5.290	3	9	6.758	-3	5	1.467
5	1	10	6.145	2	10	7.064	-5	6	.919
6	1	10	5.177	1	10	6.327	-6	6	1.163
7	1	9	4.101	1	10	5.774	-2	8	1.593
8	4	10	8.564	3	10	8.852	-4	4	0.262
9	1	10	8.508	4	10	8.966	-6	6	.416
10	3	10	7.854	2	10	8.426	-6	6	.540
11	2	10	7.147	2	10	7.852	-5	6	.750
12	1	10	7.629	1	10	7.672	-5	4	.049
13	1	10	4.935	1	10	5.360	-4	7	.435
14	1	10	3.666	1	10	4.278	-6	7	.622
15	4	10	8.114	3	10	8.366	-6	5	.233
16	1	9	5.000	2	10	6.050	-4	8	1.050
17	4	10	8.163	4	10	8.466	-4	5	.283
18	2	9	5.016	3	10	6.491	-3	7	1.416
19A	1	9	4.180	3	10	7.409	-4	7	3.229
19B	1	9	4.254	1	9	4.901	-4	8	.647
19AB	..	..	...	..	..	...	-5	8	2.550
19C	1	10	3.960	..	..	...	..	..	...
20	1	9	5.913	2	10	7.150	-6	6	1.237
21	1	10	6.137	2	10	6.898	-5	5	.767
22	1	10	6.280	3	10	8.300	-6	6	2.020
23	3	10	7.614	5	10	8.355	-3	7	.741
24	1	10	6.949	4	10	7.833	-5	6	.884
25	1	10	6.844	3	10	7.578	-5	4	.734
26	4	10	7.983	6	10	8.783	-4	6	.800
27	5	10	9.050	5	10	8.147	..	..	...
28	..	..	...	5	10	7.983	..	..	...
29	..	..	...	3	10	8.000	..	..	...
30	..	..	...	3	10	7.516	..	..	...
31	..	..	...	2	10	6.838	..	..	...
32	..	..	...	2	10	6.770	..	..	...
33	..	..	...	5	10	7.813	..	..	...
34	..	..	...	1	10	7.655	..	..	...

APPENDIX C

EXAMPLES OF RESPONSES TO THE
OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

EXAMPLES OF RESPONSES TO THE OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Question number 34: Why do participants feel that, as a result of the experience, they are able to make more effective curriculum decisions?

Ridgeview group examples:

"Have come to a clearer understanding of why I believe the way I do."

"Been challenged into thinking about what I believe and become more aware."

"I believe that it has permitted me to discard a 'traditional yoke' which many educators wear because of community and 'system' pressures."

"My decision-making ability relative to curriculum has improved to the point that I know what other people share and believe about a common topic. If nothing else it offers security to know that others believe in parallel to what I believe in certain issues."

"I still feel myself drawn back to the control factor in operating a school. This interferes with my bringing my beliefs and behavior together. This, in turn, affects my ability to make better curriculum. My actions have not fallen in line with what I feel is best for kids."

"More aware of needs of students and the desire of not just me but others to make good."

"I would more consciously view the needs of students involved."

"I would also (maybe) be more inclined to accept the student's view of his needs."

"Since I have examined my beliefs and values which I firmly believe in, I do not hesitate making curriculum decisions unless the students object to what is being done."

"I feel that I now question the real value to the students of classroom activities and whether or not the curriculum is meeting or going to meet, the needs or wants of the student."

"Yes, but I am conscious of my inflexibility. This class has helped me because it has made me more aware of this part of me but I still believe some of my thinking is going to prove out over the long haul. Some of these areas of thinking are creating problems -- (the premissive parents & educators sometimes go too far."

"Try more to locate student needs."

"Because I had to decide what I believe about education and put it to much better use!"

"I think that when you realize the importance of examining beliefs and values and gear yourself to thinking about them before jumping in to make decisions, much more effective decisions will be the result."

820 group examples:

"Because I have a better idea as to what curriculum really is and some ways of changing it that keeps classroom activity and my belief system more consistent."

"Fit the individual to the environment he lives in. In other words, make curriculum applicable to the situation at hand."

"Greater awareness as to what is going on -- the 'security' (hell of a word) in knowing others feel great changes are needed."

"I feel more determined to stick to my beliefs and values and to be more assertive in changing other ideas."

"I feel that I have become more sensitive to the needs and feelings of students rather than before when I was only aware of their feelings."

"Understand the difference between students to a higher degree."

"If I am again in a position to do so, I think that some of the ideas, especially that of options, have made some of my biases or feelings about what learning ought to be, seem more realizable."

"I feel that the introduction to or the various ideas presented helped clarify in my mind what curriculum is. Therefore, I feel more capable of making a decision concerning curriculum."

"Simply for the reason that behaviors, attitudes, ideas, and values of the persons concerned in this course has been displayed and discussed. The teacher is an essential part of the curriculum process."

"They (decisions) are more effective to the extent that they are more reflective of my beliefs and values concerning education."

"I am now concerned more with the student, with affective rather than complete cognitive learning."

"I know more about where I stand."

"Because I have a little better idea of where I am going and a better idea of how to get there. However I feel that the only curriculum decisions I am making are only in my own room which are most essential to me."

"I am better able to explain and defend my position. I hopefully better understand what I believe and how to find out what the student wants."

"I feel much more sure of myself now, and the ideas and attitudes I have. I would be less afraid to assert them when the occasion arises."

"Because of little teaching experience and the inability to practice making these types of decisions."

"I'm becoming less 'I' centered. I want to do what is best for kids more often than I did in the past. I want my kids to know that I care for them personally and educationally."

"I think I am now more aware of what other teachers are doing in their classrooms and how they view the changes they have made."

Question number 35: Why might the process be helpful?

Ridgeview group examples:

"Have come to a clearer understanding of why I believe the way I do."

"Insights into how other teachers feel and believe they perceive kids."

"There was a reawareness for me that a philosophy of education and purposes did exist which supported or should support my daily activities as a teacher."

"It has given me a better understanding of my fellow 'professionals' and their beliefs concerning student learning."

"It provided me with the opportunity to really find out what a 'middle school' is. It also helped me to confirm some of my thinking relative to curriculum and learning."

"It made me examine some of my beliefs and it brought to the front some of the frustrations I feel operating within the current educational structure. It has made my question more than ever what we are now doing and made me begin to search for what we want."

"It has helped me put into oneness my philosophy of education."

"It has caused me to examine my own beliefs and to listen to others."

"Brought out the feelings of the total group and the beliefs of the total group that must be considered in the curriculum."

"It made me evaluate my beliefs and values which I hold dear and then see if I implemented them."

"Seeing what type of teacher one really should be in relation to what you are. This was through the 'games' we play."

"It pointed out the need to be more consistent and less hypocritical between professed beliefs and the application of those beliefs in the classroom and the development of a viable curriculum."

"I have geared my subject to meet more of the needs of the children. I have a better understanding of my students. I am no longer working against them, but with them."

"To be able to develop my own ideas and have a better understanding of variety of beliefs and needs of teachers and students."

"Yes -- definitely. Lots of new ideas & expressions of ones I'd never thought of."

"More sensitive to needs of students. From the groups, I scraped the gravy off the tops of other people's brains. In other words, listen to the things they feel are important."

"This class has stimulated us in certain areas, especially, in the area of acceptance of other teachers and how they perceive their roles as educators."

"It made me do some thinking as to whether or not some of the things in our city curriculum guide fit my idea of what students should be learning. Gave me a chance to settle down with others and discuss we should and could do."

"An opportunity was there to hear from other people. The opportunity to spend time thinking on beliefs and values which otherwise often doesn't exist."

"It forced me to examine and clarify my beliefs and values and helped me to expose me to the beliefs and values held by others. I think previously I subconsciously flashed them through my mind and now I consciously try to think about them in connection to educational decisions I make."

820 group examples:

"It made me stop and think about different phases of curriculum and got me to examine my own goals in my classroom carefully. I think I got some different ideas from the other members of the class as well as the outside people you brought in."

"Teachers were able to talk to teachers or have an exchange of ideas. This class was not the same old routine, exams, papers and see you later."

"The frank discussions were helpful, plus the fact that all opinions were accepted whether everyone agreed or not."

"Provided free and total interaction of students (teachers) who were interested in resolving problems similar to mine."

"Primarily allowing me to view myself and assemble many of the beliefs I have into a pattern of action."

"The experience has been helpful watching the instructor and reactions of students."

"Because I had never before thought much about aligning my practices with my beliefs. They just seemed too much a part of my own vague dissatisfactions and not so much a reflection of the bad things that have been continued for years in schools."

"It was helpful...because I had never thought of curriculum in the light of the total school. I thought it was more content & expectations from that."

"I was given the chance to think about my ideas about education."

"People are an important part of the learning process."

"I was forced to compare words (my beliefs) with actions (my classroom behavior)."

"It helped me to involve my feelings in my decision-making."

"Enable me to take a deeper look at myself and my beliefs."

"Helped clarify points of view. Opportunity to hear many opinions and reasons for the opinions."

"Because of interchange of ideas about what education is and should be which matched with my beliefs."

"It was a great opportunity to see how others feel, honestly, about some things through role playing and other things we did."

"It made me realize that my beliefs didn't always correspond with my actions. I've made some changes -- some good ones."

"Learning is more easily motivated when it is seen as being readily applied. The more useful as seen by the student, the more he will be stimulated to learn the subject matter."

"No pressure during my first graduate term from this class."

"Where I had to bullshit _____ with reports and papers I could sit back and talk to people here!"

Question number 36: What aspects of the experience were more helpful to some than others?

Ridgeview group examples:

"The becoming of one group -- learning to know each other."

"The search within myself and the discovery."

"The presentation and discussion concerning the continuum having 'teacher present, student recite' on one end and 'many stimuli offered to students' on the other was most helpful in terms of evaluating myself."

"The honest sharing by everyone of their thoughts and beliefs concerning students and what students want."

"I enjoyed sincere discussion on issues -- attempting to hammer out points of decision and lay a basis for extended development."

"Information on programs in other schools. We needed more of this, with more concrete examination of success and failures in existing middle school structures."

"Discussions in small groups -- exchanging, comparing ideas and thoughts on why, how people learn."

"The value belief implementation aspect."

"I have started to think in a totally different way about students and learning patterns -- each student is an individual -- each have different problems and each learn in a different way."

"The aspect of this workshop which I felt was most helpful was finally discovering (after two years of committee meetings) that the teachers might get the final or deciding voice in building curriculum decisions. Also I felt that many of the ideas which I have held for a long time, i.e., lots of freedom of choice for students and related ideas were also being considered by others."

"Idea & belief sharing -- hearing concerns of others -- aligning my own ideas."

"The sessions on learning and motivation were the heaviest."

"Discussing problems with other teachers. Getting the air cleared on some hidden issues. Finding out about types of classroom situations which could be used in the middle school."

"Swell group discussions, especially when two or three schools were represented within the groups."

"The discussions with the interchange of ideas among class participants was most helpful."

820 group examples:

"I thought the interviews (interviewing candidates for a Superintendent's position by groups of class members who then had to select their choice...the candidates were actually attempting to win the job) game was very helpful in pointing out some of the problems of the job."

"The discussion where everyone who wanted to, could express their opinion."

"Really enjoyed the choosing of a Super."

"Examining values and attitudes is good therapy."

"Role playing and the accompanying discussion of values-beliefs, etc."

"The most helpful for me was the chance to really see the way I believe and feel about certain educational issues and how my views conflict or agreed with other members of the class."

"The free or open exchange of ideas between students and instructor."

"Small group problem solving."

"Discussion groups -- often more honest feelings took place there than in school."

"The freedom and options provided by the course."

"Experiences and feelings which made me relate to the student's role."

"The times when others shared their feelings."

"Openness in discussion and of the instructor."

"Liked smallness of class & informal atmosphere."

"Acceptance of divergent views -- non-threatening, friendly atmosphere -- opportunity to examine beliefs."

"The times we made value and belief judgements were the most helpful to me."

"Small group interaction -- there was more personal interaction."

"The most beneficial 'value lesson' I received was from the island game. I realized that values I felt were good in some people were 'bad' in others. It got me to look at what I was really evaluating in people."

Question number 37: What aspects of the experience should be improved upon?

Ridgeview group examples:

"More discussion about the middle school."

"To see if staff members are equal to the types of students they will come in contact with."

"I am not a patient man. Things never move rapidly enough. I have a desire to see 'concrete' evidence even though I know it is impossible."

"I'm not sure the games were completely helpful."

"Questioning about individual belief in a four week period."

"More study of existing middle school structures."

"Development of a process to search out answers to our problems."

"Sometimes small groups were given too long a time to deal with the assignment."

"More exposure to movies or visitations or persons involved in a variety of middle school situations."

"Too much nonsense and wasted time. Split up the cliques. We need to get better acquainted."

"Work more on a new type of curriculum."

"I think the wrangling between different schools could have been changed but perhaps something in the way of trust and acceptance was gained through this exchange."

"I feel that for the preservation of the old rules, and standards, many of these teachers will butt heads with these new students (inner city blacks), and get their heads ripped off! We should have gone into this area more."

"Maybe more definite signs of progress. What kind I don't know."

"I always have the feeling I'd like to know the organization of the middle school exactly."

"I wish we could have gotten into meatier discussions about actual curriculum. I feel like we've only done the preliminary work to get us ready and I feel we've done too much of it. I feel like O.K. now let's get on with it."

"Not spending quite so much class time writing belief statements. Assign it to be brought in and then discussed. Try to get more written in the ten weeks we've had for class."

"Would like to have spent more time with teachers presently operating in a middle school situation."

"We were ready at one time for a little more direct dialogue concerning specific middle school situations various class members and the instructor had seen."

820 examples:

"I really was uncomfortable the first evening in the circle, but I guess (in the long run) it helped me become more open and able to express myself."

"Larger classroom -- I'm crowded all day and I like to spread out in the evening."

"Some class sessions seemed to be needlessly, totally without structure, a little more administrative structure could eliminate these few sessions."

"More time for discussion of how we feel about educational issues and what we do as teachers to help correct them."

"More practical experience using the theory demonstrated in our class."

"Unwillingness on part of some members to seriously consider the problems suggested."

"A little more of a look at some specific school cases and how they were handled."

"More feedback during the class from the instructor."

"Smaller class size for more challenging discussions."

"Only 1/2 the get together activities in the first class."

"More input of ideas from the instructor."

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