CURRICULUM RHETORIC AND CONTEMPORARY PRACTICE IN THE
BAHAMIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL SYSTEM

by

LINDA AGATHA DAVIS

B.A., The College of Saint Benedict, 1977
M.Ed., The University of Ottawa, 1981

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Department of Social & Educational Studies
The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the 'intended' curriculum and the processes of its translation into classroom practices. The 'intended' curriculum is the rhetoric incorporated in state documents of the independence era in The Bahamas. These state documents included three key general educational policy documents in which policy makers presented persuasive arguments and strategies for the nation's development, and the curriculum guides based on these earlier policy documents. Since these documents represent the educational intentions and objectives of the nation, it was assumed that an examination of their rhetoric would produce a portrait of the government's 'independence plan.' However, because one cannot assume that rhetoric is translated into practice, this study also examined the extent to which teachers in the Bahamian Primary School System have translated this 'independence plan' into their contemporary practices.

The methods of investigation included documentary analysis, participant observation, informal interviews with classroom teachers and other Ministry of Education officials, and a teacher questionnaire.

The documentary analysis revealed a continuity of themes ran throughout the major educational documents. Foremost among these themes were the move toward the Bahamianisation of the educational system, the production of indigenous materials, the recognition of the classroom teacher as central in the reform process, and the importance of communication between policy makers and teachers. Field investigations revealed a divergency between the rhetoric of the educational policy documents and the practices within the contemporary educational context. The study identified five major factors that influence the success of the curriculum implementation process. These factors include resources, support services, the internal dynamics of the school context, assessment practices, and the personal backgrounds and professional experiences of teachers.
The evidence reported in the study pointed to several components that would enhance success in the implementation of the intended curriculum. The question of resource availability, specifically resources of an indigenous nature, was the most significant issue uncovered by this study. In addition, the need for a more collaborative support network for teachers was evident. Finally, the study highlighted the importance of two components that are directly related to the formulation of policy. These include the need for policy makers to use teacher experience and insight, and be more cognizant of the factors that have an impact, both internally and externally, upon the school context.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Commonwealth of The Bahamas is an archipelago that extends from the Manzanilla Bank off the coast of Florida to Great Inagua, which is 590 miles to the southeast near Cape Nicholas, Haiti. The width of the archipelago stretches about 380 miles from the Cay Sal Bank off Cuba to San Salvador in the western Atlantic Ocean. There are some 700 islands and cays, yet only about 30 of them are inhabited. The total land mass of The Bahamas, including small, uninhabited rocks and islets, is about 5,400 square miles. New Providence, the island on which the capital, Nassau, is located, is 80 square miles. Most of the islands are below 200 feet, and large areas of land are covered by brackish water ponds or swamps. The land itself is poor with little soil or mineral wealth.

Most of the population and economic activity are situated on the islands of New Providence and Grand Bahama. Tourism and offshore banking form the bases of the Bahamian economy. The agricultural and industrial sectors are comparatively small. The tourism sector employs about 50,000 people, roughly half the work force, while banking employs a little over 3,000 persons, 95 percent of whom are Bahamians. Bahamian people enjoy one of the highest per capita incomes (about $9,000) in the region (Bahamas handbook, 1990).

The Bahama Islands experience a subtropical climate with the temperatures seldom above 92 degrees Fahrenheit, or below 40 degrees Fahrenheit. The islands can be affected by hurricanes or tropical storms between June and November. Oolitic limestone, formed by precipitation from sea water, is the major component of which the islands are made.

The indigenous population of The Bahamas, the Lucayans, gradually disappeared after the controversial, historic landfall of Columbus in 1492. It was this time, 1492, that
marked the beginning of introduction of European and world ideas, and European Christianity. Today's population includes descendants of African slaves, the Eleutheran Adventurers, the Loyalists from the American continent, and twentieth century immigrants. The population of The Bahamas is approximately one-quarter of a million inhabitants, representing an increase of about 45,180 persons since the last census taken in 1980 (Stubbs, 1991). The 1980 census recorded a noticeable immigrant population in The Bahamas. Stubbs (1991) reported that, according to the 1980 census, 88.59% of the population was Bahamian, while the largest immigrant percentage was Haitian (4.93%).

The Anglican, Methodist, and Baptist churches were among the earliest to arrive in The Bahamas, each trying to inculcate ideas of Protestant morality in its members. According to Saunders (1990), early slave regulations of the then dominant white population encouraged slaves to be instructed in the Christian religion. The Roman Catholic Church came later and tried to fill a need (educational, medical, and social services) which the others, because of dwindling funds, could no longer provide adequately (Craton, 1986). Today, Bahamians are typically members of one of the several Christian denominations in the islands. The Baptist, Anglican and Roman Catholic are the three largest denominations found in the islands (Bahamas handbook, 1990).

Except for brief periods when the Spanish and Americans occupied the islands, the British ruled from 1648-1973. On July 10, 1973 the colony gained its independence. The parliamentary government of the nation is patterned on the British monarchy and recognizes Queen Elizabeth II as Head of State and Head of the Commonwealth.

Background of the study

One of the most important tasks for the newly independent Commonwealth Caribbean was that of restructuring the educational system. This restructuring included two central elements. First, national leaders had to eradicate the dual system of education
established during the colonial era. Under the British colonial system one branch catered to the ruling elites and urban middle class, while the other catered to the lower strata and the rural folk class. The colonial power had intended to separate the school from the indigenous culture. Secondly, new governments made systematic efforts to encourage national unity through schools, mostly by incorporating Caribbean content into the school curriculum.

The Bahamas was no exception. Leaders expanded educational facilities and made efforts to improve and 'Bahamianise' the educational system. Throughout the 1970s, and into the 1980s, the education budget continued to increase. In 1969, the government's budget totalled approximately $99 million and the education budget was $15 million or 15 percent of the national budget. In 1976 when the government's total budget was $177 million, the Ministry of Education's was $38 million or 21 percent. In 1986 the figures were $400 million and $82 million respectively, or 21 percent of the national budget (Ministry of Education: Education Statistics, 1985-1986). The national leadership sought to attain 'Bahamianisation' primarily by including indigenous components in the curriculum, instituting technical education, and upgrading the qualifications of Bahamian teachers through courses at the College of The Bahamas and institutions abroad.

Bahamian leaders recognized the importance of developing a sense of national pride through cultural independence. Educators highlighted the necessity of relating educational objectives to national goals. These objectives represented the government's commitment to social and economic development through education. Educational programmes and practices were to reflect these concerns. Planners produced various educational policy documents during the period following independence in 1973. These documents included the government's initial policy statement, Focus on the future: White paper on education (1973), the report of a commission appointed by the Government of The Bahamas, the Maraj Report: Educational development in an archipelagic nation (1974), the commission's subsequent guide for educational planning for the period 1976-1981, Education for national
progress (1976); and the various Curriculum Guides (1982) for all subjects taught at the primary and secondary levels.

In 1985 the Evaluation, Planning, Research and Development Unit of The Bahamas Ministry of Education sponsored the "Curriculum Evaluation Project." Yet, except the "Curriculum Evaluation Project" (1985), Bahamian policy makers have not investigated the crucial nexus between curriculum policy and classroom practices. Recently, Caribbean educators and other scholars from the developing world have questioned whether efforts, such as those made by Bahamian political leaders, have been effective (e.g., Carnegie, 1982; Morrissey, 1983; Nettleford, 1989). In fact, developmental theorists (e.g., Jennings-Wray, 1980; Miller, 1983; Watson, 1984) have called for examinations of educational systems in developing countries, but few countries have completed comprehensive studies.

Placed against this background, two categories of questions emerge. The first calls for an examination of the indigenous components of the 'intended curriculum.' These questions include: Has educational policy incorporated the national concern for the formation of a cultural identity? What of the philosophy upon which the educational system rests, its values, assumptions and operations? And, have planners addressed the need to "redress the balance between the international and the local components of the culture [through] fundamental curriculum reform" (Brock & Smawfield, 1988 p. 236)? The second category of questions addresses the need for an investigation of classroom practices. These questions include: What is happening in the classrooms? And, have teachers embraced the goals and objectives of proposed national policies, and thereupon translated them into practice?

This study sought to link both categories of questions and thereby to generate knowledge about the processes of schooling, in particular curricula processes, within the Bahamian context. An estimation of how these processes and practices appear to be derived from the stated policies could show the congruence, or divergence, between classroom practices and curriculum rhetoric. Such a study is timely as developmental theorists continue
to debate the quality of educational systems in the developing countries, and the role of these systems in the development of these nations.

The composition and management of the Bahamian educational system

During the 1989-1990 school year, there were 226 schools in The Bahamas, compared to 30 in 1865 and 38 in 1890. In the 1989-1990 school year, the government maintained 185 (81.9%) of the 226 schools. There were 228 schools in The Bahamas in 1990-1991. Of the 185 (81.1%) of these schools in 1990-1991 maintained by the government, 34 of them were on the island of New Providence. Today (1992), of these 34 schools on the island of New Providence 24 of them are primary schools. In The Bahamas, the primary level includes grades one through six. During the 1991-1992 school year, The Bahamas Ministry of Education reported that of these 24 primary schools, 4 were Grade A (over 1,000 students), 5 were Grade B (701 - 1,000), 13 were Grade C (301 - 700), 1 was Grade E (101 - 200), and 1 Grade F (1 - 100).

The Ministry of Education's 1989-1990 data showed, that of the total student population (45,158) in The Bahamas, 3,346 (7.4%) students were Haitian. Similar figures were reported for 1991, as the records showed that 3,346 (7.4%) of a total student population of 47,560 were Haitian. Stubbs (1991) reported further that of the 185 schools maintained by the government in 1990-1991, 79 (42.7%) had Haitian students enrolled in them. It is important, then, that since the Haitian student population represents the largest immigrant percentage in the Bahamian schools that some attention to paid to this variable in the selection of schools taken to representative of those found in the system. The significance of the Haitian presence is that the language of instruction in The Bahamas, English, is not their first language.

During the 1990-1991 school year of the 27,257 students in the government school system on the island of New Providence, the Ministry of Education statistics classified
2,495 (9.2%) as students with Haitian ties, and 24,762 (90.8%) as Bahamians (Stubbs, 1991). Only one government primary school during the same school year (1990-1991), on the island of New Providence, did not have any Haitian students enrolled in it. The Haitian student enrolment in the remainder of the government primary schools on the island of New Providence ranged from 1% - 72%, with the mean at the primary level of 13.75% (Stubbs, 1991).

The Minister of Education, whose portfolio also includes libraries and cultural affairs, is responsible for the supervision of the educational system in the country. As it is intended to function, the Ministry of Education is organized in the following manner. An Education Advisory Council, whose members the government appoints, advises the Minister of Education. Posts within the Ministry of Education for a Permanent Secretary, an Under Secretary, and a Deputy Permanent Secretary are also established. The Director of Education has five Assistant Directors of Education (ADEs) who are, in turn, responsible for Curriculum and the Learning Resources Unit; Schools Management; Evaluation, Planning, Research, and Development; the Supervisory Division and Family Islands; and Special Services. A Chief School Welfare Officer also works with the Director of Education and is responsible for school welfare personnel.

The section of the Ministry of Education's organization that has direct responsibility for the curriculum falls under the jurisdiction the Assistant Director of Education in charge of Curriculum and the Learning Resources Unit. According to the Ministry of Education's organizational chart, this Assistant Director of Education has an administrative staff comprised of education (curriculum) officers for each school subject, a chief librarian, senior librarian, librarian, an education officer (broadcasting), radio programme producers, and a senior printer.
Overview of the study

This study examined the 'intended curriculum' and the processes of its translation into classroom practices. In this study, the 'intended curriculum' is the rhetoric or the official statements as incorporated in major educational policy documents of The Bahamas. These documents include the general educational policy documents, and the specific curriculum guides of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas since this nation gained its independence in 1973. However, since one cannot assume that rhetoric translates into practice, this study also examined the extent to which teachers in the Bahamian Primary School System have translated the government's curriculum policies of the independence era into their contemporary practices. In an attempt to examine the extent of this translation, I explored the everyday practices of teachers in The Bahamas Ministry of Education Primary School System by observing classroom practices and talking with teachers.

The focus of this study was restricted to fifth and sixth grade teachers in The Bahamas Ministry of Education's Primary School System on the island of New Providence. I chose New Providence because not only is this the island on which the capital, Nassau, is located but also because 60% of the teaching population and 57% of the student population are located on this island (Ministry of Education Statistics, 1990-91). The data was collected through participant observations during September - December, 1991. I also conducted informal interviews with classroom teachers and Ministry of Education officials during this period. Finally, to put these observations and interviews into their larger context, I asked all fifth and sixth grade teachers in the Ministry of Education's primary schools on the island of New Providence to complete a questionnaire. This questionnaire is an adaptation of one used in 1985 by the Evaluation, Planning, Research and Development Unit of The Bahamas Ministry of Education.
Investigators have conducted valuable educational research in developing countries using conventional quantitative research approaches (e.g., Benavot & Riddle, 1988; Fuller, 1986; Halpern, 1986; Heyneman & Loxley, 1983; Psacharopoulos & Loxley, 1985). However, there are particular research questions that warrant a more qualitative approach. It is through the combination of survey techniques and in-depth interviewing and participant observation that I attempt to highlight the interaction between policy and practice.

**Assumptions of the study**

The use of qualitative research in developing countries is infrequent. Shaeffer and Nkinyangi (1983) and Shaeffer (1986) have noted the reliance on the quantitative resulting in the production of data analyzed by statistical methods. Researchers in developing countries have often applied a quantitative research strategy when either a qualitative or a combination of qualitative and quantitative would have been more appropriate. In addition, "some research questions have rarely been addressed at all, despite their potential relevance to both the process of policy-making and to the more theoretical study of schooling in the developing world" (Vulliamy, 1990, p. 151).

Qualitative studies of the processes of educational innovations can "document the myriad ways implementations of innovations differ from intended designs of innovations... [as] participants respond to innovations in a variety of unintended ways" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984 p. 110). In addition, if, as Fullan (1982) has suggested, educational researchers have neglected investigations of the phenomenology of change (how people actually experience change as distinct from how it might have been intended), we have been overlooking a key area in the study of educational reforms. Also, such research can provide useful insights for policy makers by "showing how much change actually occurs in practice; identifying the unintended consequences of policy initiatives; [and] exposing the
contradictions in policy that are apparent when it is implemented" (Finch, 1988, p. 190). Finally, such research can offer the policy maker "a theory of social action grounded on the experiences – the world view – of those likely to be affected by the policy decision or thought to be a part of the problem" (Walker, 1985, p. 19).

The underlying assumptions of ethnography have particular salience for the investigation of educational settings. Various interactions complicate the multidimensional context of the classroom that then have consequences for how one views the nature of the subject under investigation, and the nature of knowledge itself. In turn, these assumptions, or 'theoretical presuppositions,' influence one's choice of methods. Based on the recognition that educational research is a complex enterprise, that research has different purposes, and that single models are problematic, I find ethnographic research techniques appropriate to the issues that I explore in this study.

The literal translation of 'ethnography' as it appears in an English dictionary is 'writing about the nations.' Yet, as Erickson (1984) has argued "the 'ethnos,' the unit of analysis for the ethnographer, need not be a nation, linguistic group, region, or village, but any social network forming a corporate entity in which social relations are regulated by custom" [original emphasis] (p. 52). The ethnographer's task, therefore, is to interpret behaviour in particular social, cultural, political, and economical contexts. An ethnographic study, like any other research project, is laden with theoretical perspectives whether explicit or implicit. Furthermore, the predominant approaches "presuppose a standpoint outside – looking at, objectifying, or, somewhat closer, 'reading,' a given reality" (Clifford, 1986, p. 11). As a researcher I recognize this presupposition and acknowledge that ethnographic truths are "inherently partial – committed and incomplete" (Clifford, 1986, p. 7). Yet, this acknowledgement need not, "lead to ethnographic self-absorption, or to the conclusion that it is impossible to know anything certain about other people" (Clifford, 1986, p. 7). There are, distinct strengths of this approach and contributions that it can make to scientific inquiry.
The advantages of ethnographic techniques vary. The development of theory is perhaps the greatest strength. As an ethnographer I can challenge misleading preconceptions that social scientists often bring to research. While in the field, I had the opportunity to analyze my understanding of the phenomena under study. In addition, I was able to change strategies and directions of the research as required. The use of field observations in combination with the ethnographic interview in this study permitted me this very flexibility. I could pursue promising ideas, resulting in the pursuance of theory development that was both effective and economical.

Since ethnographers investigate social processes in everyday settings, "the danger that findings will apply only to the research situation is generally lessened" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p. 24). This does not mean, however, that ethnographers do not use survey techniques, for they often use multiple data sources, thus avoiding the risks that stem from reliance on a single kind of data. The use of primary documents, the questionnaire instrument, and field observations and interviews in this study address the concern of reliance.

The potential of ethnographic approaches for obtaining 'emancipatory knowledge' is yet another attractive dimension that I sought to encourage in the participants of this study. Lather (1986) defines 'emancipatory knowledge' as that which "increases awareness of the contradictions hidden or distorted by everyday understandings, and in doing so it directs attention to the possibilities for social transformation inherent in the present configuration of social processes" (p. 259). Such an approach requires that the researcher establish a dialectical relationship between her and the researched so that the data undergoes the scrutiny of the researched. Through my discussions with classroom teachers, we raised many issues that encouraged self-reflection both for the participants and for me as a researcher.

Simultaneously, I do not wish to imply that the participants must approve a published analysis of their culture or social relations as proof of accuracy of the account.
Rather, there is an on-going discourse with them during the collection of data, as I incorporate the notion of 'reflexivity,' or 'negotiated meaning' in the research framework. In addition, this data gathering process connects in an on-going way with the analysis/interpretation of the data. This is an ethnography whose theory is produced 'democratically.' That is, it is:

a collective effort among the researcher and the research subjects, [that] is less likely to generate propositions that are imposed by the researcher and more likely to be responsive to the logic of evidence that does not fit the researcher's preconceptions. (Roman & Apple, 1990, p. 62)

Such an approach does not attempt to 'minimize' the research subjects' 'reactivity' to the researcher, but seeks to challenge and transform through empowerment.

Researchers in the natural sciences believe that certain laws and conditions of the physical world constitute sufficient grounds to explain the occurrence of an event, or to give meaning to phenomena. However, in the social sciences, "a debate has been raging since the latter part of the nineteenth century about the suitability of this deterministic mode of explanation for the investigation of human action" (Doyal & Harris, 1986, p. 52). I submit that there are explicit advantages of using ethnographic strategies, such as those that I use in the present study, in educational investigations. In taking this stance, I assume several things about the relationship of the researcher to the subject, the nature of knowledge, the kinds of analysis most suited for the data, the nature of validation, and generalizability of that data. These assumptions, and the theoretical assumptions underlying the use of primary documents, observation, participant observation, informal interviews, and formal questionnaires specifically, present a definitive picture of what I perceive to be one avenue to conducting legitimate research.

I do not believe that the investigation of human action can be framed in the same way as natural scientists do in their attempts to determine causes and effects for the physical states of affairs. Instead, social science researchers must consider reasons, beliefs, and choices that influence people's actions. Direct experience and interaction with the
phenomena under study is the only way to explore assumptions and concepts, as the researcher negotiates the meaning of experiences that she shares with other participants. Within such an environment, evidently the method(s) that a researcher selects must appreciate, not minimize, the complexity of social life. Finally, the recognition that society has underlying structures, and that there are political, historical and ideological contexts of the phenomena is crucial to any analysis.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Educational researchers have been concerned about a great variety of issues in considering questions of the curriculum, and of pedagogical practice. Measures of scholastic attainment have been common (e.g., Coleman, 1966; Garden, 1987; Plowden Report, 1967; Postlethwaite, 1975; Rosier, 1987). Studies have also considered the features of schools such as the amount of teaching that children experience, the size of the school, the organization of teaching groups, the effects on students of differing teacher expectations, teaching styles, patterns of discipline, and school climate (e.g., Armitage, 1986; Heyneman & Loxley, 1983).

Documented studies of the implementation of innovations, especially in the Third World, are not readily available. This situation exists because many Third World nations are not a part of the international knowledge exchange networks. Still, as Hurst and Rust (1990) have reported "most of the studies of educational innovation and reform are sociological (e.g., Beeby, 1966) and concentrate on structure and process [e.g., Marsh & Huberman, 1984] rather than individual actors and their interactions" (p. 167). Other examples include Psacharopoulos and Loxley (1985) who measured the success of the vocational curriculum in Columbia and Tanzania by calculating costs and benefits, and by tracing graduates into the labour market. In considering the 'quality' of primary schools in the Third World, Fuller (1986) considered indicators such as total recurrent expenditures per pupil, expenditures on instructional materials per pupil, pupil-teacher ratio, and years of schooling required for fully qualified teachers. Benavot and Riddle (1988) used enrollment figures in their investigation of the expansion of primary education in the Third World from 1870-1940.
Other studies have addressed curriculum issues and teacher decision-making in the implementation of a curriculum. Ben-Peretz and Kremer (1979), for example, in their investigation of Israeli teachers concluded that "teacher performance is not closely related to [the] comprehension [of curricular characteristics], but is determined by previous teaching experience, general characteristics of the curriculum and other characteristics" (p. 254). Using the case of Jamaica, Jennings-Wray (1980) investigated what primary school teachers perceived as influences on curriculum decision-making, and the major factors that inhibit the achievement of curriculum aims. She examined the behaviour patterns of these Third World teachers whom policy makers had asked to implement an instructional innovation in which they had no input. She concluded: "that the teacher feels that [s]he has such a strong control over what [s]he teaches in the classroom is an indication that these pre-packaged materials are not being implemented" (p. 242).

Some researchers (e.g., Bude, 1982) have been more critical of teachers and have suggested that the failure of innovations is attributable to "a lack of motivation on the part of teachers" (p. 117). On the other hand, there has been the recognition that teachers may be the main determinant in curriculum innovations, and that they are important agents in the process of innovation implementation in the school (e.g., Brown and McIntyre, 1982; Clarke and Yinger, 1977; Doyle & Ponder, 1977; McConnelogue, 1975; Spaulding, 1975). Both hypotheses, although differing in stance, point to the classroom teacher as the focus in any investigation of curriculum implementation.

Studies of schooling have used varied methods of investigation. Some have used systematic observations, employing predetermined schedules and interviews, over extended periods. Such researchers have concluded that "schools can do much to foster good behaviour and attainments" (Rutter, 1979, p. 205). The ethnomethodological investigations of Ramsay (1983) explored notions of oppression and ethnicity. Anyon (1980), used ethnographic strategies, including field observation, interviews and document
analysis, to assess the 'intended' and the 'hidden curriculum' in an investigation of the development of class structures.

The research of Saunders and Vulliamy (1983), and Avalos (1986) are two other examples of studies of schooling done in the Third World that employed ethnographic strategies. Saunders and Vulliamy (1983) examined the implementation of curriculum reform in Tanzania and Papua New Guinea using questionnaires, field observations and interviews. Avalos (1986) conducted a more extensive ethnographic study of the processes of schooling in Columbia, Venezuela, Bolivia, and Chile.

Researchers have offered various models of teacher decision-making in analyzing the adoption of innovations. Dunkin and Biddle (1974) considered similar variables (i.e., background of teachers, the context of teaching, the process of teaching with its interactive forms, and the contribution from pupils and their background characteristics) as those highlighted by Avalos (1986). Jones and Bhalwankar (1990) also emphasized the importance of examining presage and context variables as they interact in the classroom alongside the processes of teaching. Presage variables refer to teacher background characteristics, training experiences, and individual properties/traits. Context variables are properties of pupils, the school, the community, and classroom contexts. Teacher and pupil classroom behaviours are process variables, while product variables include immediate and long-term learning, attitude changes, and skills (cited in Rust & Dalin, 1990, p. xv-xvi).

Doyle and Ponder (1977) suggested that teachers use three major criteria in deciding on an innovation: "Is it instrumental in terms of classroom contingencies? Is it congruent with prevailing conditions? What are the costs involved in using the innovations?" (cited in Hurst & Rust, 1990, p. 168). Hurst and Rust (1990) extended this model proposing that in choosing to adopt an innovation teachers use one or more of the following criteria: information about the innovation, its relevance and desirability, its effectiveness and
reliability, its feasibility, its adaptability, and whether the innovation has been tried on a limited scale and proven to be successful (pp. 168-169).

In a complementary fashion, Avalos (1990) drew attention to the importance of the teacher effectiveness literature and innovation implementation by identifying four research concerns that underlie the concept of teacher effectiveness: teacher skills and behaviours (competencies) which impact upon the outcomes of the teaching process (e.g., Brophy, 1979; Brophy & Good, 1985); teacher patterns of decision-making at both the instructional and managerial levels (e.g., Burns, 1984); teachers' modes of thinking and how they interpret teaching situations (e.g., Clarke & Yinger, 1979; Shavelson & Stern, 1981; Stebbins, 1975; Woods, 1983; Yinger, 1980); and the "relationship between teaching purposes and the way in which pupils mediate such purposes as well as the nature of teacher-pupil tasks" (p. 203) (e.g., Doyle, 1987).

The studies, in this overview, point to the need to investigate, and to describe, processes of schooling in a variety of contexts. In particular, the need for more qualitative research in Third World countries is paramount as researchers move beyond purely quantitative measures. Ben-Peretz and Kremer (1979) pointed to the importance of investigating not only characteristics of a curriculum, but also teacher characteristics that influence decision-making. Avalos (1986), Dunkin and Biddle (1974), and Jones and Bhalwankar (1990) highlighted the additional factors of the teaching context and process, as well as pupil characteristics. Finally, Hurst and Rust (1990) offered a useful guide for the investigation of teacher decision-making in the implementation of an innovation.

It is important to note, however, that until recently most of the theorizing regarding curriculum implementation came from the developed world. Researchers have conducted most of their studies on teacher effectiveness, and on the implementation of curriculum innovations in the developed world. The need to document the different ways that teachers in the developing world conceptualize, and thereafter translate their conceptions into practice, is crucial. As teachers in the developing world operate under different constraints
than those in the developed world, their practices are bound to be different. How these practices are affected and why teachers chose to follow, or not to follow, particular 'policy directives' are key questions that researchers must address. These questions were at the very foundation of my study as I sought to investigate schooling using participant observation, informal interviews, and questionnaire techniques.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study drew on data collected through document analysis, questionnaires, participant observation, and informal interviews. These data represent several sources: policy makers (via rhetoric employed in documents and interviews with Ministry of Education officials), the researcher as participant and observer, and discussions with school administrators and classroom teachers. Using these methods I have constructed an ethnographic account of contemporary schooling practices in The Bahamas.

Documents

It is difficult to conceive of an ethnographic account of schooling where the researcher does not give attention to documentary material. Participants in most educational contexts produce all kinds of documents. Therefore, the investigator must view documents as an integral part of the social setting. Yet, "official documents and statistics should be treated as social products, [and] . . . must be examined not simply used as a resource" [original emphasis] (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1989, p. 137). 'Primary' documents, and documents generally, are therefore to be regarded in the same way as information obtained using other research tools. That is, though valuable in their own right, primary documents have the potential flaws of inaccuracy, bias, hidden agendas in their construction, and incompleteness.

The purpose of the examination of the documents in this study was to search for patterns, common themes or ideas. Ben-Peretz and Kremer (1979) suggested two main distinctions in the content of curricular materials. They are either content oriented or
process oriented. These categories, although referring to curricular materials for use in the
classroom, can serve to differentiate among the general themes that I highlighted in all the
documents that I examined. According to Ben-Peretz and Kremer (1979):

[Content orientation is] an emphasis on subject matter, information, concepts and
principles. The major goals . . . [are] acquisition of knowledge in the context of a
specific discipline or an interdisciplinary approach. Process orientation . . . is
conceived as emphasizing abilities and skills. These may be cognitive skills and
abilities, such as analysis or evaluation, or interpersonal skills and abilities, such as
classroom communication and interpersonal interaction. The major goals . . . [are]
the acquisition of the behaviours related to the selected skills and abilities. (p. 247)

Most of the themes that I highlighted in the initial policy documents of the Bahamian
independence era were of the kind that Ben-Peretz and Kremer (1979) labelled process
oriented. Yet, the framers of these initial documents did make specific references about the
intended content. On the other hand, the curriculum guides and the teachers' schemes of
work were predominantly content oriented, with occasional references to issues of process.

Beside identifying thematic descriptors, whether content or process, I established
whether these were common throughout the documents. Overall, the examination of the
initial policy documents, Focus on the future: White paper on education (1973); Education
for national progress: A development plan for the Commonwealth of The Bahamas for the
period 1976-1981; and the Maraj Report: Educational development in an archipelago nation
(1974), set the framework for the Bahamian government's intended educational policies.
In turn, the 1982 Curriculum Guides represent the articulation of these policies into the
suggested activities for classroom teachers. Finally, I reviewed a further interpretation of
these policies by classroom teachers as they express this in their written schemes of work
that they formulate annually as grade level teaching groups.
Although surveys, or formal questionnaires specifically, are not a defining feature of ethnographic field enquiries, they can be a useful tool in the exploration of social phenomenon. Yet, survey research must be approached with caution:

At one level, the element of quantification in surveying permits increasing reliability, comparability and precision in testing theoretical propositions, as well as providing a rapid and systematic means of acquiring large amounts of information. However, the usefulness of a survey can only be measured against clearly recognized objectives and a sensible assessment of research options. . . . [Still,] not all information can be directly asked, let alone counted; some must be observed or inferred. (Wallman & Dhooge, 1984, p. 258)

Nevertheless, although people cannot be understood as units, but as integral parts of systems of relationships, which cannot be counted, "quantitative survey combined with more qualitative research strategies can provide dimensions of typicality for case material and will anyway enhance or verify the total ethnographic picture" (Wallman & Dhooge, 1984, p. 259).

Formal questionnaires can obtain certain kinds of data, specifically descriptive data, but questionnaires that include questions of 'meaning' pose problems of validity as the researcher is unable to interpret the answers without a thorough knowledge of the respondents' frame of reference. Yet, such questions can be asked usefully if the research integrates field work and survey methods, as I do in this study.

I place the use of the questionnaire instrument of this study within the interpretation of quantification as "the numerical description of empirical situations" (Johnson, 1978, p. 46). Its purpose was to gather information about the characteristics of the teaching population with whom the study was concerned. Secondly, it provided a comparative data source when measured against The Bahamas Ministry of Education's earlier questionnaire (1985) that addressed similar curriculum issues. The data derived from both
questionnaires, therefore, provided a comparison of profiles at two times in Bahamian pedagogical practice, 1985 and 1991.

Instrument

Description

The questionnaire that I constructed is an adaptation of the one used by the "Curriculum Evaluation Project" (1985) sponsored by the Evaluation, Planning, Research and Development Unit of The Bahamas Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education's instrument had 34 forced choice items and 8 open-ended response items. My instrument had 37 forced-choice items and 5 open-ended response items (see Appendix C). In both cases, the questionnaire items sought to obtain teachers' perceptions of the availability and use of the 1982 Curriculum Guides in the primary schools, their format and content, the availability of resource materials for use with the guides, support services, physical facilities, and teacher demographic information. Subjects covered by both instruments were mathematics, social studies, science, religious knowledge, reading, arts and craft, physical education, and language arts. Beside that covered by the Ministry of Education's questionnaire, my instrument sought to estimate teachers' perceptions of the availability of Bahamian resource material, the extent to which teachers follow guidelines in the guides, and the relevance of the guides' goals and objectives.

Sample

Lists of teachers were obtained from the principals of each government primary school on the island of New Providence (n = 24). I mailed the questionnaire to all government employed, upper primary (fifth and sixth grade) teachers on the island. The total number of questionnaires that I administered was 208.
I mailed the questionnaires on September 30, 1991. The teachers were asked to return the completed form to me on October 25, 1991. The cover letter stipulated that participation was voluntary, and that the respondent had the right to withdraw at any time (see Appendix C). I enclosed self-addressed envelopes for the return of completed questionnaires. I ensured the teachers that their replies would be anonymous and confidential as no attempt would be made to link names with responses. By October 28, 1991, of the 208 questionnaires that I sent out, I had received only 25. I sent a follow-up letter at this time. By the end of the term (December 20, 1991), I had received 50% (104) of the total questionnaires distributed.

I did not include the six male respondents of the 104 respondents in my final analysis because the group was so small that it did not form a legitimate group for comparison by gender. Yet, gender might have influenced the responses to the questionnaire items. In addition, as 66 (67%) of the remaining 98 women did not teach arts and craft, and 91 (93%) of them did not teach physical education, I excluded these two subjects, and the ten women who only taught these two subjects, from further analysis. The final sample included 88 women.

Participant observation

Virtually all ethnographers recognize observation as a primary means of investigation in conducting research. This derives directly from the assumption that the constitution of the subject matter that the researcher studies is directly observable. Yet, as social scientists are not simply observing things, but interpreting meaning, they acknowledge the dual role suggested in the term 'participant observer.'

Like observation, a basic assumption underlying participant observation is that the researcher is central to the investigation and that she is the main instrument of research. Yet, observation alone is not enough. Investigators using participant observation as a
research tool assume that the researcher must involve herself in "conscious and systematic sharing, insofar as circumstances permit, in the life-activities and on occasion, in the interests and affects of the group of persons" (Kluckholm, cited in Holy, 1984, p. 22). A third assumption is that the subjective nature of the process dictates that the relationship between the researcher and the researched must be reciprocal as the researcher recognizes the inherent power relations that perpetuate the situation, and that all involved will in some way change because of the experience.

In the particular context of the investigation of schools, the task of the researcher using participant observation as a tool, is to "raise questions about the events and activities that occur so that we get beyond descriptive accounts of 'teaching' and 'learning'" (Burgess, 1988, p. 9). It is the task of "cultural translation from familiar to strange and back again" (Spindler & Spindler, 1982, p. 24).

Informal interviews

Particular assumptions underlie interviewing as a method in the ethnographic process. As it relates to participant observation, the ethnographer envisions interviewing as discussions with the participants about shared experiences. The interview, therefore, is "a joint product of what interviewees and interviewers talk about together and how they talk with each other" (Mishler, 1986, p. vii). Key assumptions are that the interview is a 'speech event' and interviewers and interviewees construct it jointly. Further, the nature of the 'speech event,' as 'talking together' rather than 'behaving as stimulus-senders and response-emitters' (Mishler, 1986), points to particular ways that the 'event' should be conducted and to analytical strategies that the researcher must employ.

Specifically, this calls for a reconceptualization of the 'question' and its part in the interview process. Mishler (1986) has suggested that:
Rather than serving as a stimulus having a predetermined and presumably shared meaning and intended to elicit a response, a question may more usefully be thought of as a circular process through which its meaning and that of its answer are created in the discourse between interviewer and respondent as they try to make continuing sense of what they are saying to each other. (p. 53-54)

Also, responses must be viewed "not simply [as] answers to questions but also [as] a reflection of the interviewer's assessment of whether a respondent has said 'enough' for the purpose at hand" (p. 55).

Despite the advantages of informal interviews, there are issues that the ethnographer must address when using both participant observation and interviews as methods. One such issue is that of the 'informant' and site selection. The ethnographer must be pragmatic in selecting settings and cases. Sampling within a case is also potentially problematic for the ethnographer. She, or he, must make decisions about where to observe and when, who to talk to and what to ask, and about what to record and how. It is perhaps this process that critics of ethnography often attack, for not only must the ethnographer decide what is, and is not, relevant to the case under study, but also which data she, or he, will use. Nevertheless, Burgess (1988) has reminded us that the concern should not be so much with "systematic sampling but rather judgement or opportunistic sampling in an attempt to overcome bias in the study of people, events, time and locations" (p. 15).

Selection of schools for the study

I arrived in The Bahamas during July of 1991. After discussions with The Bahamas Ministry of Education supervisors, the Assistant Director of Education in charge of curriculum, and curriculum officers, I selected three schools for my field work. I visited three Bahamian primary classrooms on the island of New Providence during the fall term of 1991. Officials of The Bahamas Ministry of Education granted me access to the primary school system during this period (see A for access letter).
Initially, I examined The Bahamas Ministry of Education Education Statistics 1985-1986. I was unable to use more recent statistics since the publication for the years 1987-1990 had yet to be released at the time of my initial data collection. However, I was later able to obtain more recent statistics regarding the teaching and student populations for the years 1989, 1990, and 1991. Overall, these statistics suggested that I should consider the following factors in my selection process: enrollment in primary schools by grade and stream, the gender of pupils and teachers in each school, teachers' qualifications, and citizenship of teachers in each school. The physical characteristics of the schools (size and location), and social characteristics (social status and ethnic composition) of the school's population were additional factors for consideration. Therefore, when I met with the curriculum officers during August of 1991, I discussed the framework of my study and indicated that I was seeking their recommendations regarding three government primary schools that were representative, considering the above characteristics.

Immediately a discussion ensued concerning whether my study would be representative at all because I was only interested in looking at three schools. One officer even suggested that perhaps I should be looking at a 'random sample' of a much wider cross section. Further discussion pursued the merits of 'quantitative' versus 'qualitative' research. I presented a case for an ethnographic study, and indicated that the limitations of time (one school term) and personnel (myself as the sole researcher) were key factors in my insistence on concentrating on only three schools. After a rather lengthy debate, I obtained individual rank-ordered selections of three schools from 14 curriculum officers.

I then arranged to meet with the members of the Supervisory Division of the Ministry of Education. Without divulging the results of my meeting with the curriculum officers, I sought their perceptions of schools on the island. Their perceptions are situated differently from those of the curriculum officers who work primarily from the vantage point of workshops with classroom teachers, but more specifically, with subject representatives. Supervisors, on the other hand, spend time in the school context and are
responsible for the annual evaluations of schools and teachers. During my meeting with
the group of supervisors, we were able to discuss, at length, the selection of each school
more thoroughly. Still, in the final analysis, there was a marked similarity between the
recommendations of both the supervisors and the curriculum officers. At this point, I
selected the three schools that received the highest ranking of all the schools.

Then, to ensure that the three schools were representative, I examined the Grade
Level Assessment scores for these three schools for the last four years. I discovered that
they represent 'average' government primary schools on the island of New Providence in
terms of their academic achievement. The three schools in the study have for the last four
years (1988, 1989, 1990 and 1991) maintained 'average' performances on the annual
Grade Level Assessment Test (GLAT). None of the composite performances for these
schools fall in the 'below average' performance category, or the 'above average' category
(categories used in the annual reports of the GLAT) when compared to other groups of
grade six Bahamian students taking the examination during the respective years (Bahamas

Beside the representativeness of the academic profiles of the three schools, a case
can be made based on school size and location, as well as the social status and ethnic
composition of the student population. The three schools represent each geographical
subdivision, western, central, and eastern, that the Ministry of Education uses for
management purposes on the island of New Providence. Although, the three schools did
not cover the range of student population sizes, Grades A-F, the Ministry of Education lists
two of the schools as Grade C schools (student population of 301-700), and the Grade C
schools represent 54% of the government maintained primary schools on the island. Also,
like most of the schools on New Providence, the three schools in this study report that their
student populations are predominantly Bahamian. The Haitian student population in each
school is 2%, 19%, and 7% respectively. (During the 1990-1991 school year, the mean of
the Haitian student population at the primary school level on the island of New Providence
was 13.75%.) The communities in which the three schools are located represent the lower, lower-to-middle, and middle income ranges. As a composite, these features do argue favourably for the representativeness of the three selected schools.

Selection of teachers

I had chosen to work with the upper primary grade levels, grades five and six, because it is a transitional period for students socially, emotionally, mentally, physically, and academically. During this time students prepare for their move to secondary school. It is also the level at which the students' academic future can be decided as they sit an all important Grade Level Assessment (GLAT) examination, recently introduced by the Government of The Bahamas. Additionally, as governments of the Third World re-examine the role of schooling, particularly at the primary level, they have acknowledged the importance of primary education as it may be, for many students, the terminal level of schooling.

After a meeting with supervisors, I met with the principals of the three selected schools. At this stage, I had little control over the choice of teacher with whom I would work. I explained the nature of my study to the principals and the type of teacher with whom I was interested in working. She had to be a fifth or sixth grade teacher and representative of the teaching population at the school. As it turned out, all the teachers with whom I worked were women, all had Bachelor of Arts degrees, and all were Bahamians. Two of them had taught in the Bahamian public school system between 16 and 20 years, while one had taught between 21 and 25 years. All the women fit the average profile suggested by the demographic data discussed later in the questionnaire section, chapter five, of this dissertation.

Principals were very cooperative. When I met with them during the summer of 1991 they indicated that they would set up a meeting with the selected teachers when they
returned from summer vacation. I met with these teachers before the beginning of the fall term of 1991 when I presented them with a letter outlining my study, and asking if they would be willing to participate (see Appendix B for teacher's letter of participation). All teachers agreed to participate.

Data collection

At this point I was prepared to enter the first school when the new school year began. I decided to begin with the school that was the closest distance to my residence, leaving the one farthest away for last. I spent five weeks in each school. Discussions with teachers were tape recorded whenever this was convenient. Beside interviewing the classroom teachers in whose classes I participated and observed, I also interviewed other fifth and sixth grade teachers, specialist teachers, and administrators at the same schools. Later, I arranged interviews with the supervisors responsible for each school, as well as Ministry of Education officials at the Curriculum Section. The total number of interviews was 35. Nine of these (three interviews each) were with the three classroom teachers with whom I worked closely. During all of the interviews I pursued themes and items of interest as they emerged from the participant observations and earlier interviews. Four of the five school days each week were spent conducting my participant observations. One day was spent on formative data analysis.

I took a participant role (by teaching the class) whenever the teacher requested. In addition, I assisted with the marking of student assignments, a task that occupied much of each teacher's time. My note-taking was done when possible during school visits or afterward reconstructed in field notes. These notes were entered on a word processor daily, and indexed using thematic descriptors.
Analysis of questionnaire items

I coded the responses to the forced-choice items of the questionnaire, and tabulated frequency distributions. These frequency distributions were then converted to percentages which then formed the bases of my comparisons with the Ministry of Education's 1985 study. Later in the dissertation I discuss how reflective these findings were of what teachers told me of their classroom practices, of what I observed happening in the classrooms, and of what Ministry of Education officials told me regarding their policy practices. Finally, I examine the impact that these findings have for the larger picture of the government's intended independence plan for educational reform.

Analysis of field notes and interview data

Analysis is an on-going process in the ethnographic approach. The analysis of participant observation, field notes and interviews is both formative and summative. Indeed, the nature of ethnography dictates that there be no boundaries as the investigator moves from participant observations to informal interviews and back in a circular fashion. Informal interviews permit researchers in such situations to pursue themes and items of interest as they emerge from the participant observations.

I analyzed, summarized and indexed the field notes that I took during, and/or after, observations in a similar manner to that used in the examination of my documentary sources. As Burgess (1988) suggested, it is by identifying thematic descriptors or:

conceptual categories that some direction is given to further observations being made and further field notes being established. . . . Often the activities that are observed in one setting are followed up in other settings. In this way, initial ideas are followed through so that patterns and case studies emerge. (pp. 26-27)

The analysis of informal interviews presents a different and more challenging task than that of the field notes. Based upon the assumptions of the nature of the interview
outlined earlier (specifically, Mishler, 1986), and the view of interview responses as narratives (Agar and Hobbs, 1985; Mishler, 1986), I took the view that interview practices are a way of empowering respondents to produce their own narrative accounts. With these theoretical assumptions as guidelines, I undertook the very lengthy process of the analysis of the interview transcripts. Although this process was time consuming, it was insightful. With the assistance of two professional secretaries, I transcribed entire discourses of my interviews (n = 35), and sought to have as many of them as possible read by the interviewees before leaving The Bahamas in January of 1992. This was a very frustrating process as I discovered the participants were not able to match my zeal to obtain feedback in this way. Simply put, the time involved for their reading, reflection, and analysis of the transcripts was not available as they had too many other teaching and personal responsibilities. I eventually abandoned this idea and used earlier interviews to re-focus or extend later ones, and ultimately to confirm or clarify my understanding of what participants had said previously.

After leaving the field, I re-read these transcripts and field notes, this time assigning various portions of each to an analytic category. The task of sorting and reassigning of categories was on-going, as most of the categories were intimately interrelated. As I continued the analysis, I re-sorted, portions of data that I had assigned to various analytic categories, by school. I then composed teacher-school profiles using these analytic categories as guide-posts.

The nature of validation

Ethnography, like all types of scientific inquiry, raises the question of 'validity.' The on-going debate about the conventional views of validity best reflects the concern about the accuracy of research findings. Lincoln and Guba (1985) have used 'credibility,' 'transferability,' 'dependability,' and 'confirmability' in their conceptualization of
'validity.' On the other hand, Wolcott (1990) has argued that validity may not be the appropriate construct for use by ethnographers. Instead he has argued that:

\[U\]nderstanding seems to encapsulate the idea as well as any other everyday term. ... I do not restrict myself to the phenomenologist's sense of understanding social phenomena from the actor's perspective or, especially, from an actor's perspective. ... It is system qualities I seek to describe and understand. [original emphasis] (p. 146)

On the other hand, LeCompte and Goetz (1982) have suggested that 'validity' may be the major strength of ethnographic approaches. They have proposed that:

Attaining absolute validity and reliability is an impossible goal for any research model. ... [But] investigators may approach these objectives by conscientious balancing of the various factors enhancing credibility within the context of their particular research problems and goals. For decades, reputable ethnographers have used a variety of strategies to reduce threats to reliability and validity. This has been a major source for one of the defining characteristics of present-day ethnography — its multimodality. (p. 55)

Placed against the background of this debate, researchers have proposed various guidelines for addressing the issue of validity. Building on the work of Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Lincoln and Guba (1985), Lather (1986) outlined 'triangulation,' 'construct validity,' 'face validity,' and 'catalytic validity' in reconceptualizing the conventional notion of validity as the researcher consciously utilizes designs that allow counterparts as well as convergence so that the data are credible.

Sanjek's (1990) observations have dealt more specifically with subjectivity as it affects validity. Based upon the belief that validity lies at the core of evaluating ethnography, he proposed three canons, 'theoretical candor,' 'the ethnographer's path,' and 'field note evidence,' as the means of deepening the growing appreciation of ethnography's value as a way of 'telling about a society.'

Erickson's (1989) notion of 'critical validity' extended Sanjek's (1990) discussion of subjectivity by including a discussion of the power relations inherent in the social context. That the researcher recognize that power and negotiation are parts of the research process, reinforces Sanjek's (1990) insistence that candor be a driving force. Yet, Erickson pushed this point further by suggesting that the researcher must criticize her
stance as she recognizes the subjective nature of her role, and that she will be changed by the field experience (see also, Clifford and Marcus, 1986).

Generalizations from the data

Generalizability, another issue that rises to the fore in discussions of research findings, is somewhat related to this discussion of validity. As with validity, it is important to clarify the meaning of this construct as it fits into the context of ethnographic research. Some critics have argued that ethnographic studies cannot be generalized to other settings. Yet, Delamont and Hamilton (1984) have argued that:

This criticism refers only to statistical generalization. To the anthropological researcher, the development of generally or universally applicable statements is quite different a task, one that is never achieved merely by carrying out a survey. Despite their diversity, individual classrooms share many characteristics. Through the detailed study of one particular context it is still possible to clarify relationships, pinpoint critical processes and identify common phenomena. (p. 36)

Extending this line of thought, Donmoyer (1990) argued that the notions of random selection and statistical significance, often associated with generalizability, are problematic. He has insisted that:

thinking of generalizability solely in terms of sampling and statistical significance is no longer defensible or functional. ... [T]here is a need to expand the way of talking and thinking about generalizability. ... [T]he traditional, restricted conception [of generalizability] is not only out of sync with contemporary epistemology; it is also dysfunctional because its limits our ability to reconceptualize the role social science might play in applied fields such as education, counselling, and social work. (p. 176)

Practitioners in these fields, he argued, are concerned with "individuals, not aggregates, [therefore] research can never be generalizable in the [traditional] sense. ... Research can only function as heuristic; it can suggest possibilities but never dictate action" (p. 182).

There is much to be gained from Donmoyer's (1990) conceptualization. The assumptions upon which he bases his argument are congruent with the belief that ethnographic truths are "inherently partial – committed and incomplete" (Clifford, 1986, p.
7). It also has direct implications for policy research. In contrast to the rationalist model of research input to policy that assumes that empirical data can be fed in at appropriate stages to guide the course of policy-making, advocates of the incremental model (Lindblom, 1980), have argued that policy-making is not a rational process, but an incremental one that is disjointed. That is, there are seldom specific 'decisions' taken by a clearly defined set of actors choosing between alternatives.

As these arguments apply to the policy related research of this dissertation, it directs the researcher, not simply to finding the answers, but to finding the questions. In contrast to the engineering model which supports a linear relationship, with research feeding into specific 'decisions' by providing the missing facts, the enlightenment model which Finch (1986) has advocated emphasizes "intellectual and conceptual contributions . . . and seeing both the policy-making process itself as diffuse and the relationship of research to policy as usually indirect" (p. 153). The caution that these observations suggest in terms of generalizing results across contexts, in the conventional sense of the term, is what I wish to stress in this study, its findings, interpretations, and the recommendations that I base on these findings and interpretations.

Reliability

The issue of reliability is yet another concern that critics of research often pose. Ethnographers have approached this issue in different ways than have other more positivist researchers. While Sanjek (1990) has argued that ethnographers need not pursue the illusion of 'reliability,' LeCompte and Goetz (1982) have suggested specific guidelines for enhancing this construct, built upon the belief that human behaviour is never static, and that no study can therefore be replicated exactly despite methods and designs employed.

The suggestions of LeCompte and Goetz (1982) regarding both external reliability and internal reliability overlap with the concerns that I emphasized in my earlier discussion
of the nature of validation. In particular, acknowledging the intersubjective nature of the research process is in keeping with my views regarding the selection of, and assumptions underlying, the various methodological approaches that I use in this study. That the researcher exercise clarity and precision in the description of her, or his, role within the research site, in the process for choosing informants, in a description of the informants themselves, in the social situations and conditions where she, or he, collects the data, in choosing analytic constructs and premises, and in the methods of data collection and analysis, are also noteworthy guidelines. These guidelines are in accord with the underlying theoretical assumptions that I referred to in my earlier discussion of the assumptions of the present study, and again in the discussions of the ethnographic tools of research, validation, and generalizability in the present chapter.
CHAPTER 4

THEMATIC EXAMINATION OF DOCUMENTS

Introduction

I included three documentary sources in my analysis. The first sources were those Bahamian educational policy documents formulated during the independence era. These included *Focus on the future: White paper on education* (1973), the government's initial policy statement on education; the report of a commission appointed by the Government of The Bahamas, the *Maraj Report: Educational development in an archipelagic nation* (1974); and the commission's subsequent guide for educational planning for the period 1976-1981, *Education for national progress* (1976). The second source included the various *Curriculum Guides* (1982) that a committee of Ministry of Education officials and teachers developed based on the findings of the 1974 and 1976 commission reports. Finally, I examined a selection of schemes of work that are based on the 1982 *Curriculum Guides*. In all the examinations, I identified thematic descriptors and thereby established whether there were common themes used throughout these documentary sources.

*Focus on the future: White paper on education* (1973)

A major thrust for change in the Bahamian educational system came through the educational platform advocated by the Progressive Liberal Party (PLP). This party won the majority of the seats in the Bahamian Parliament in 1967 when it ousted the colonial white-rule government of previous decades. The PLP retained power until August of 1992 when the major opposition party, the Free National Movement (FNM), secured the majority of
the parliamentary seats. **Focus on the future: White paper on education** was the PLP's first educational policy statement. Released during the wake of independence (1973), it articulated the tenets of the government's independence plan regarding the educational system for the new nation.

A basic premise upon which the document rested is that the colonial system that existed prior to independence (1973) was in need of change. The document clearly stated that:

By now every ex-Colonial territory and countries like ours which have shown signs of growing up must, at the same time as they cope with the problems of a developing country, face the inherent educational drawbacks and impediments of an alien system. At the best, the system introduced is narrow, meagre, ill-suited and irrelevant. (p. 1)

It was the intention of the leaders of the PLP Government to outline the intended structure and purpose of the new national education system. Simultaneously, they were careful to avoid 'rigidities of philosophy and structure' so that the public and private sectors of the community would have the opportunity to offer input regarding the establishment of "truly national processes of education which are responsive to the needs of all citizens" (p. 1).

Yet, it was not the intent of the government to imply that its educational policy statement, the White Paper, was without foundation or direction. Policy makers stated that the national system of education would embrace "a philosophy which is characteristic of the nation's ideals, values, beliefs and customs; and must be prepared both to transmit such characteristics, and to act as an agent for modifying them" (p. 1). The next step, then, was to outline what the nation's ideals, values, beliefs and customs were, and to identify how the educational system would act as an agent in modifying these characteristics.

The drafters of the White Paper outlined eight goals that the new educational system should encourage. Beside the call for equal opportunities for all citizens, the government leaders stressed the importance of the Bahamian heritage, the economy, nationhood, and
teacher education. Their belief and commitment to these goals were evident in the language they chose to incorporate in the document. The education system would encourage:

a knowledgeable appreciation of the physical environment, and the cultural and social heritage of the Bahamas. . . . Every citizen will be urged to assume a personal responsibility for the economic, social, spiritual and political life associated with free nationhood, and the efficient and harmonious management of the Bahamian nation. (p. 3)

Highlighting the importance of primary schools, the government stated that the objectives of the primary level of the educational system would be to help every young citizen:

acquire the knowledge, skills, habits, attitudes, beliefs and values that enhance the human race and give strength and life to Bahamian society. . . . An effort will be made to improve the cultivation of the arts of communication, the learning of skills which are appropriate to the primary level and the strengthening of such areas of the curriculum as mathematics, science, health and citizenship. . . . Every effort will be made to ensure that these learning experiences take place in the proper physical and social contexts and relate in a significant way to the real world of experiences such as the child does know, can know and comprehend. Thus, not only will learning be facilitated, but also a sense of national pride and identity be nourished. (pp. 4 - 5)

The key tenets that the framers of the White Paper outlined in the goals for the new educational system, and their stance on the importance of primary schooling were maintained throughout the remainder of the document. In particular, the importance of Bahamianisation was prominent. Yet, at this stage in the government's articulation of its educational policy, the notion of Bahamianisation focused mainly on the composition of teaching population. The belief that Bahamian nationals, as teachers, by the very nature of their birthright would understand the problems and aspirations of Bahamians, was explicit.

Concurring with the major goals of the educational system as stated in the document, the framers of the White Paper highlighted the importance of support services in enhancing the success of its programmes. Again the focus was on teachers as the government emphasized its priority on the supply, education and training of members of this profession. In addition, they stressed the importance of involving teachers in the "processes of curriculum revision, renewal and enrichment" (p. 5).
Yet, it is interesting that except for this statement concerning the importance of teacher input to curriculum development, the document mentioned little else regarding the teacher's role in this respect. Nor was there a detailed examination of the financing of the proposed programme, other than the recognition that costs would increase as a matter of course. However, the teacher's role in curriculum development did become more focal as the White Paper's goals and objectives were further developed in the later documents. In fact, it was the role of the teacher in the development of the educational system, and the goal of Bahamianisation that occupied much of the rhetoric of these later documents, although there was occasional mention of the availability of financial resources.


Within a year of the release of the White Paper, the government embarked upon the task of translating its educational policy into guidelines for educational practices. Early in 1974 policy makers invited a review team, under the auspices of the Commonwealth Secretariat, to examine its educational plan as articulated in its initial educational policy statement. The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation funded this review team. The members of the team included: Dr. J. A. Maraj (Commonwealth Assistant Secretary-General, Team Leader), Dr. R. O. W. Fletcher (Senior Lecturer in Physics, University of the West Indies), Professor J. W. Greig (University of Toronto, Faculty of Education), and Professor J. D. Turner (University of Manchester, Faculty of Education). The review team's terms of reference were explicit:

1. To review the progress made to date on the implementation of the provisions of the White Paper on Education.
2. To recommend plans and schemes for the full implementation of the provisions of the White Paper.
3. To review the organization, structure and management of the Ministry of Education and Culture and to recommend a plan of re-organization to more
adequately meet the present and future wide and expanded range of responsibilities.

4. To recommend a programme of external assistance to supplement local manpower and financial resources to meet present and anticipated future needs in the areas of education, youth, community development, culture, sports and all other related subjects included in the portfolio of the Ministry of Education and Culture. (pp. 3 - 4)

The report, later widely known as the Maraj Report (named after the team leader, Dr. J. A. Maraj), set out to outline a development plan for educational reform in The Bahamas. The review team was convinced that although the country was making progress, as stipulated in the White Paper, "educational reform is greatly hindered by the absence of a development plan in education which outlines the scope, sequence and time frame of educational changes in the Bahamas school system" (p. 20).

Although the report covered several topics, there were three major areas that were more pronounced. These were the notion of Bahamianisation, the teacher's role in the development plan, and the importance of communication at, and between, all levels of the educational system.

Acknowledging the validity of the government's desire to establish an educational system that was Bahamian in 'philosophy and substance,' the team pursued the government's conceptualization of Bahamianisation and posed several questions. Foremost among these was the assumption that the Bahamianisation of the teaching population would result in a Bahamian system.

The schools of a nation are universally recognized as the most important agency for socializing the citizens of a country and thus the Bahamian educational system must be Bahamian in philosophy and substance. [Still,] the substitution of Bahamian teachers for expatriate teachers . . . is no guarantee that the educational system and the school programme will become ipso facto Bahamian. (p. 8)

This assumption, the commission report argued, was complicated by the fact that the educational system that had been established during the years prior to independence combined both British and American philosophies and practices. The challenge of the country would be, according to the review team, to see "whether an emerging Bahamian educational philosophy can withstand outside influences while at the same time directing
the national school system towards indigenous goals and objectives" (p. 8). In addition, they warned against neglecting the sources of assistance available outside The Bahamas. While they recognized the importance of Bahamianising the educational system, they pointed to the potential resource of expatriate teachers and consultants once policy makers are able to constructively channel these talents and efforts toward the fulfilment of Bahamian goals.

As far as the Bahamianisation of the curriculum was concerned, Maraj and the other members of the Commonwealth Secretariat's commission stressed the importance of considering the distinctive characteristics of the Bahamian society when applying the principles and practices that they outlined in the development plan. Then, in illustrating the importance of incorporating characteristics that are distinctively Bahamian, they spent considerable time drawing particular reference to the science programme. Acknowledging the efforts made toward the Bahamianisation of this programme since the White Paper, they pointed to the untapped potential of the earth and marine sciences.

Extending the notion of Bahamianisation, the team stressed the importance of the government ensuring that their general policy of the diversification of the economy, include diversification of the school programmes.

The practical arts and the applied sciences must now take their places as equals with the 'academic' offerings of the school. Indeed, if independence and self-sufficiency are to be more than mere political chimera, the practical side of education must even overhaul and exceed the traditional emphasis on the 'academic' as the sumnum bonum of educational accomplishment. (p. 10)

The commission team's extended conceptualization of Bahamianisation also included a discussion of assessment and its role in the Bahamian educational system. With particular reference to the primary schools, the team expressed concern about the discontinuance of the Common Entrance Examination (C.E.E.), an examination taken then after the sixth grade by all students wishing to go on to the secondary schools. They suggested that the new curriculum fill the void left by the C.E.E., and that educators monitor the achievements of pupils and the programme so that improvement in basic skills
could be ensured. They also emphasized the importance of maintaining a close relationship between curriculum development work and examinations, so that the curriculum intentions of the government would not be distorted.

The Maraj Report highlighted teachers as key agents in the reform process at two major levels. The first level related to curriculum development. The second related to the evaluation and revision of the curriculum. In fact, Maraj and the review team were clear in stating that the process of curriculum development must include teacher educators, practising teachers, and pupils.

The process [of curriculum development] cannot succeed without the skills and special knowledge of those concerned with teacher education, and without the close coordination and insights of practising teachers, who are in daily contact with pupils. And pupils themselves have a vital part to play, for no new syllabus can be thought worthy of submission to the Ministry [of Education] for possible publication until classroom trials have proved its value, and patient re-writing followed by further school trials have remedied any deficiencies. (pp. 105-106)

In addition, they acknowledged the input of the Bahamian community as a crucial determinant in the success or failure of the educational reform. Specifically, they expressed the importance of consulting the public and keeping them informed about policies so that "genuine participation by the informed public in policy formation" (p. 32) would become a reality.

The Maraj commission members viewed communication at, and between, all levels of the educational system as crucial if success in implementing the educational reform was to be enhanced. Communication was first stressed in the role that the commission team outlined for the Ministry of Education:

First, initiating the process [of curriculum development]
Second, monitoring and servicing the work of committees
Third, approving the completed curriculum
Fourth, disseminating the guides, study outlines, courses of study
Fifth, conducting in-service training programmes related to the new curricula
Sixth, producing appropriate learning materials and evaluative instruments and tests
Seventh, evaluating the curricula in the schools
Eighth, supplying curriculum committees with information about the success of the curriculum with a view to modification and adjustment
Ninth, initiating the process anew. (p. 104)
They extended this concept of communication in further discussions of the structure of the Ministry of Education, its relationship with practicing teachers, and the support systems that should result. They were particularly concerned about the informal system of organization, the lack of involvement in the decision-making process of those directly affected by these decisions, the ill-defined roles and responsibilities of role-incumbents, the slowness of executive action, and the interference of 'momentary political advantage' with established policies. These concerns, according to the commission, would lead to the prevention of goal attainment, morale problems, and a poor public and professional image of the Ministry of Education. Indeed, the free and regular flow of discussion and information was a theme that the commission team believed that the government must keep at the centre of its intentions. As they argued, it was only through such communication that "the development of educational policy will not only be, but seen to be, done within the context of public debate and public interest" (p. 13).

The commission team also alluded to the importance of support systems in this discussion of communication. This was done through the general reference to resources, as well as a specific discussion of the establishment of a Learning Resources Unit (LRU), and the role of the supervisor as support and 'linking' personnel.

The role of the Learning Resources Unit (LRU), according to the team, would be as a support arm for the Bahamian educational system. It would produce approved curriculum guides, courses of study, and other Bahamian learning materials. The necessity of establishing such a unit was based on the team's observation that the embryonic Bahamian curriculum unit had had limited success in its preparation and dissemination of qualitative and substantive educational materials. The priority for the Ministry of Education through the LRU, according to the Maraj Report, was that a "comprehensive programme relevant to the needs of [T]he Bahamas be prepared and disseminated for use in the schools throughout the Commonwealth. No other activity of the Ministry of Education and Culture is more important" (p. 100). The recognition that there were financial constraints, and that
the government needed to reconsider their policies regarding the supply of resources, had a
further impact on their stance regarding the function of the LRU. The commission team
was clear in indicating that priorities among educational programmes and services must be
set, as future increases in the educational budget would be consumed by the conditions of
inflation.

[In times of fiscal stringency everyone in the educational system must learn to
make effective use of conventional resources and more imaginative use of non-
conventional resources. The total environment must become educative and a major
source of learning experiences and learning materials. (p. 14)

They then related the role of the supervisor to their overall discussion of
communication as they stressed the need to keep the channels of communication open
between the Ministry of Education bureaucracy and the classroom teacher.

Experience elsewhere has given us reason to believe that it is possible for the old
stereotype of the 'inspector' to be abandoned. The school supervisor is now a
resource person whose professional assistance is requested by the teacher who is
grappling with difficult problems: [s]he is able, by virtue of [her or] his travel
round the schools, to communicate the way in which teachers in different places are
solving their problems. The supervisor is a change agent, involved constantly with
the in-service education of teachers in the place where such education can best be
carried out — the classroom. . . . Unless supervisory visits are conducted on a
regular basis, it is easy for those working at the [Ministry of Education]
headquarters to lose close touch with the real concerns of the classroom, and in
doing so to lose the confidence of the classroom teacher. (p. 118)

The Maraj Report is more a statement of the conditions that are necessary for
educational reform to occur, than a policy statement of the government's educational plan
for reform. It is the type of policy statement that Ben-Peretz and Kremer (1979) call
process oriented. Yet, it is significant in that it highlighted what Bahamian policy makers
had done to address the goals of the White Paper. Additionally, it addressed that which the
commission team members perceived was still necessary, if the achievement of those goals
was to be facilitated. Indeed, it is interesting that the review team concluded its report with
a section entitled "The Change Process." In this section they stipulated that the intended
curriculum must be understood by all actors involved in the implementation process, that
channels of communication remain open between the classroom teacher and the Ministry
bureaucracy, and that the Bahamian community be fully involved in national policies. These conditions, they maintained, were necessary if change in the Bahamian educational system was to occur.

Yet, despite the focus of the document on the conditions necessary for change to occur, the themes specified in the government's White Paper, notably Bahamianisation, the role of support services, and an educational system that would serve the needs of a Bahamian society, its people and their aspirations, are also stressed in the Maraj Report. The second phase of the mission, again made possible by the Commonwealth Secretariat through the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation, resulted in the production of a development plan. This plan, *Education for national progress: Guide for educational planning for The Commonwealth of The Bahamas for the period 1976-1981*, was written by two members of the Maraj commission team and expounded similar themes as those in both the Maraj Report and the White Paper.

*Education for national progress: Guide for educational planning for The Commonwealth of The Bahamas for the period 1976-1981*

From the onset this second commission team acknowledged that the 1976-1981 educational plan (*Education for national progress*) was unconventional as it deviated from the usual plan that is "replete with details of enrollment projections, building schedules, number of teachers and similar data. . . . [Instead,] we have been principally concerned with action which can be both effective and productive" (p. 3). The commission team presented, then, "an action plan, a working tool, flexible enough to afford manoeurability which those who implement plans must have in a changing society" (p. 3).

By acknowledging the government's earlier articulation of the nation's concerns, the team established a sense of continuity, not only with the Maraj Report, but also with the White Paper.
[T]he quest for greater self-sufficiency, the policy of Bahamianisation, the security of its people, resources and environment, restoring a sense of dignity to labour, the pursuit of social justice for all, national pride and loyalty, self-discipline and integrity and the development of personal attributes based on Christian principles must be clearly and unequivocally reflected in the educational objectives, programme and practices of the school system of this country. (p. 7)

In addition, this acknowledgment was in agreement with the Maraj Report's stipulation that educational objectives relate to national goals, as the plan attempted to relate educational objectives to public policy, particularly concerning social and economic development.

The educational objectives that the team outlined were again in concurrence with the themes evident in the two documents that preceded it. Seven of the fifteen objectives highlighted the importance of teachers, support services, and indigenous materials. In addition, the notion of 'functional literacy and numeracy' was a theme that received attention in this document.

Primary, as did secondary and tertiary, education received more focused attention than it had in the previous documents. Specifically, the commission team outlined five long term and eight short term objectives. Most of these objectives concentrated on the themes of literacy, citizenship, indigenous materials, support services, and the upgrading of the teaching profession. Yet, of all the themes that the review team listed as long term objectives for primary education, that of Bahamianisation was most prominent. In setting the frame for the discussion of the educational plan, the commission team agreed, as they did in the Maraj Report, that the government's Bahamianisation policy was essential in the nation's development plan. By increasing the number of trained Bahamian teachers and making use of more indigenous components in the curriculum, they argued, the country's cultural identity could be strengthened, and there would be more effective use of human and natural resources. In their words:

Unless the average Bahamian believes deeply in [her or] his country and cares intensely about its growth and prosperity, irrespective of how these may now be defined, the citizens of this Commonwealth will respond indifferently to the call to serve in the interest of the nation and not only as this call relates to the service of young people. (p. 7)
In this way, the commission extended the notion of Bahamianisation beyond that of the teaching profession as they had also done in the Maraj Report.

Pursuing the notion of Bahamianisation elsewhere in the document, the team made references to the need to incorporate indigenous elements in the curriculum and to be wary of 'paradigmatic models' used in Western industrialized contexts. Using the school subject, reading, as an example, they argued that not only are indigenous materials feasible, but crucial at the primary level:

Simple, inexpensive materials, especially for the reading programme, ought to be produced for children, particularly in the primary grades. Initial formal learning is more readily accomplished by young children when they can identify with the content of the materials from which they are learning. A small effective production unit involving a competent editor and a production manager could produce a variety of materials which emphasize the Bahamian experience. (p. 26)

Indeed, they stressed the importance of the use of indigenous materials throughout the educational system if the government was to solidify its Bahamianisation policy.

The almost total reliance on non-Bahamian school materials throughout the Commonwealth vitiates the Bahamianisation process and hinders learning for countless numbers of children. The development of a modest, yet effective, production unit for the purpose of producing low cost instructional materials, Bahamian in content and context, is indispensable to the fulfilment of a school programme which meets the social and educational needs of the country. (p. 14)

Finally, the area of assessment was tied to the discussion of Bahamianisation as they stressed the need of interrelating the indigenous curriculum with the testing programme. The development of a national system of education, they argued, would be enhanced by using Bahamian testing instruments and norms.

As in the Maraj Report, the theme of the teacher as a central agent in the curriculum process was again a target of discussion in this five year educational plan. The introduction of this theme entered into the larger discussion of curriculum implementation. In the process of implementation, the drafters of the plan indicated that if commitment and support were to be secured, the most important issues were public information, public education, and the input of the classroom teacher.
Pursuing its recommendation in the Maraj Report that the government establish a Learning Resources Unit, the commission team again highlighted this recommendation, along with the recommendations of a completed primary curriculum, a new emphasis in teacher training, and the formulation a more detailed plan for the College of The Bahamas. These were the four areas of educational development that they stipulated would require major efforts to facilitate the educational plan that they proposed. Yet, it is the Learning Resources Unit that received top priority as they maintained that it would be the "catalyst for meaningful school [resource] units throughout the system" (p. 95). It is noteworthy that, in the discussion about the Learning Resources Unit, again there was a focus on support services, teacher education, and facilities that would be useful in the production of indigenous instructional materials.

Summary

A definite continuity of themes runs throughout the three major educational documents, the White paper (1973), the Maraj Report (1974), and the commission's subsequent educational plan, Education for national progress (1976). The Progressive Liberal Party Government's initial call, in the White paper, for Bahamianisation is expanded to include: (1) its perceived drive for the maintenance of a cultural identity, (2) the honing of civic responsibilities, and (3) a respect for its human and natural resources. To enhance the achievement of this goal, the production and use of indigenous educational materials is highlighted as crucial. The recognition of the classroom teacher as a central agent in the reform process is stressed at every level, and in every document. Finally, the importance of communication within the Ministry of Education, between the Ministry of Education officials and classroom teachers, and the education and involvement of the Bahamian community in policy matters lie at the very foundation of the success of this educational reform.
Considering the above analysis, therefore, it is not unusual that the PLP Government heeded the commission's recommendation to develop a national curriculum. The following section pursues a similar thematic examination of a selection of the 1982 Curriculum Guides. These documents were the Government's attempt to establish guidelines for teaching practices in The Bahamas. They represent the practical application of the government's intended educational policies as articulated through the White Paper and the subsequent commission reports.

Curriculum Policy Documents: The 1982 Curriculum Guides

In preparation for the 1981 National Education Conference the Government appointed a National Education Conference Committee. Also at this time the Government gave this committee the responsibility of guiding the production a national curriculum. Since 1981, this committee, appointed by the Minister of Education, has included representatives from the Primary Principals' Association, Secondary Principals' Association, College of The Bahamas, Chamber of Commerce, and Supply Section of the Ministry of Education. According to the chairperson of the committee in 1981:

[T]hat very first conference really got all the managers, all the administrators, together. There were no regular classroom teachers, just administrators, and it dealt with government policies, understanding what educational policy was all about and what were their roles and functions; it was at that conference in the policy statement that the Minister made the announcement that it had been decided to establish a standardized curriculum throughout the system.

Although there were no classroom teachers on the 1981 Conference Committee, members of the committee made attempts to solicit their input by forming individual subject committees. This involved an extensive search throughout the country as Conference Committee members sought individuals, usually practicing teachers in each subject, to include on these subject committees. The chairperson of the Conference Committee explained the work of the committee in this way:
The committee led the way. We set in motion a kind of movement to get this [the formulation of the curriculum guides] done; that had never been done in the country before and I don't know if it will ever be done again. We put together very large teams and went all over the Family Islands. We took it to every school in this country, private and government... We went to all the larger islands, and then we came back to New Providence; and the whole business was, you know, teaching the whole concept of a standardized curriculum, identifying core groups of people who would be able to do that; we were really supported by the Minister [of Education] himself, by the Director [of Education], who... travelled with us just about everywhere... including the Prime Minister... we had everybody.

Indeed, the effort that the committee and policy makers made to include the input of classroom teachers, and the wider community is noteworthy, particularly as this was a first attempt at writing such guidelines in the new nation. As Darrell E. Rolle, Minister of Education at the time, claimed in the Preface to the 1982 Curriculum Guides:

For the first time in our history, teachers throughout The Bahamas have had an opportunity to develop their own curriculum. This curriculum must therefore be seen and regarded as our own local product, and we must as a consequence accept responsibility for all aspects of it.

Individual subject committees, under the direction of members of the 1981 Conference Committee, produced curriculum guides in all the subject areas taught at the primary, junior and senior high levels at the time. As the present study is concerned with the upper primary level, grades five and six, I concentrated on an examination of a selection of guides for that level. Specifically, I reviewed the social studies, reading, and language arts guides as these subjects, by the very nature of their foci, are responsible for the themes that the earlier policy documents highlight as important.

Ministry of Education 1982 Curriculum for Social Studies

The significance of the 1982 Curriculum for Social Studies relates to the generally accepted objective of social studies programmes in most nations. That is, such programmes, by the nature of their predominantly 'social' content, focus on groups, social institutions, cultures and societies. The intent of the 1982 Bahamian social studies curriculum was not an exception in this regard as the writers of this document stated that
this curriculum was "designed to teach the concepts, skills, and attitudes necessary for effective citizenship in a democratic society in a complex world" (p. 1).

The key concepts upon which the writers based this guide were self-identity, interdependence, socialization, choices, change, power, and diversity. Self-identity was meant to highlight the importance of an individual's unique combination of talents, abilities, interests, and physical characteristics, and the way in which family, friends, and the community affect the formation of this identity. Interdependence stressed the various ways individuals, groups, societies, and nations depend on each other in important ways. The process by which people learn to get along in their society, or learn the ways of their culture was incorporated in socialization. In addition, it was this concept of socialization that related to customs, and the value of culture in societies. The concept of choices emphasized the conflicting demands on time, energy, money and other resources with which individuals, groups and nations are constantly faced. Change focused upon individuals, educators, technological developments and conflicts as agents of change. The fact that people influenced other people, whether individually, as a group or on national levels was addressed by the concept of power. The utilization of 'power' to get things done was envisioned as essential in the teaching of this concept. Finally, diversity centred on the differences among individuals, populations, cultures, and geographic regions, and the idea that differences enrich societies, although conflict develops when individuals, groups, and nations holding different values interact (Overview, p. 2).

Although these seven concepts formed the foundation of the social studies curriculum, it was the content of the social studies lessons and its delimitation for the primary school grade levels that best demonstrated the general thrust of the programme. As the writers of the guide stated:

It is important that a child study the society in his [or her] own country since this is the background of [her or] his own experience which is always a point of reference in social studies. Beside, [s]he is being prepared for life in his [or her] own country even though [s]he may eventually emigrate. It is also important that [s]he
study something of other societies so that his [or her] understandings are about people in general other than members of a specific national group. (p. 9)

The attitudes that the writers wished to encourage were those of an 'effective citizen.' Such a citizen would develop responsible attitudes about her or his role in the community, would appreciate her or his cultural heritage, and would respect different peoples and civilizations.

While the earlier primary school years were to cover the themes, "Who am I," "I live in a community," "People in our nation," and "The Bahamas our home," the intended themes of the upper primary level were "People outside my country" and "Cultures of the world." Yet, despite the intended switch in focus from the internal to the external, there were still constant attempts to tie this external focus to its relationship with The Bahamas. For example, the grade five theme, "The people outside my country," highlighted the historical and cultural links of The Bahamas as they are influenced by the British, American and African peoples. In addition, the guide outlined the following understandings:

That physical and social environments help determine the skills, values and customs of people[,]. . . . [t]hat the culture of a people is passed on through plays, songs and dances [and]. . . . [t]hat people are expected to live according to the parameters set by a culture. (p. 128)

Furthermore, six of the fourteen behavioural objectives referred to The Bahamas in some way:

- Give illustrations and examples of assistance given and received in times of national disaster in The Bahamas.
- Give geographical and social reasons for the links between The Bahamas and other countries of the world.
- Write reports on the Lord Proprietors, Loyalists, Buccaneers and Pirates.
- Compare and contrast The Bahamian Culture with that of another Caribbean country.
- Draw maps of The Bahamas and insert boundaries of neighbouring countries.
- List organizations involved in the improvement of the standard of living in the Caribbean. (p. 130)

In turn, the suggested activities that the guide included drew on Bahamian venues and experiences, including visits to the commercial and business sectors of The Bahamas, the Bahamas Defence Force Base, and villages settled by slaves during the early history of the
country. Explorations of folk tales, food dishes from around the region, and agreements between The Bahamas and other countries were also suggested as activities.

In the same manner, the sixth grade theme, "Cultures of the world," extended the understandings, attitudes, skills, and behavioural objectives that the curriculum writers outlined for grade five. In particular, the concentration was on 'culture.' Respect for other cultures of the world and an appreciation of the Bahamian culture were foremost. Still, while the suggested activities included the exploration of the various cultures of the world, there was always the explicit tie, by way of comparing and contrasting, that the writers stated teachers should draw between these cultures and that of The Bahamas.

Finally, the bibliography that the writers of the curriculum included in the social studies guide listed eight of sixteen references that indigenous or regional firms had published. These include Macmillan Caribbean, Instaprint Bahamas Ltd., Arawak Editors, The Bahamas Government Printing Department, Longman Caribbean, and The Bahamas Public Records Office. Generally, in keeping with the goal of Bahamianisation, and in particular the use of indigenous content, the intended 1982 social studies programme was one that sought to incorporate this basic objective.

Ministry of Education 1982 Curriculum for Language Arts Upper Primary

The potential that language arts has as a vehicle for the transmittal of cultural elements and customs is evident. The framers of the Maraj Report recognized this subject as a 'basic learning area' as they highlighted the importance of literacy and its relationship to national development. Indeed, the importance of communication, and literacy in its general sense places both the language arts and reading programmes at the centre of the primary level curriculum.

The components that the developers of the language arts curriculum for the upper primary level outlined as focal include: listening and speaking skills, handwriting, written
composition, spelling, grammar and usage, and literature. The sections of the guide that addressed listening, speaking, handwriting, grammar and usage, and written composition focused on these components as skills that the student should develop to communicate more effectively. Yet, there were attempts to include indigenous elements as suggested activities included every day experiences of students, and national newspapers, television or radio broadcasts as the content in, for example, the teaching of listening and speaking.

Still, it was the literature component that was more explicit in highlighting indigenous content in both the suggested activities and the objectives of the literature programme. The general objectives for the upper primary level stated that students would:

- enjoy reading for pleasure and information.
- develop an appreciation for Bahamian and West Indian Literature.
- produce their own short stories, poems and plays.
- through literature recognize the universality of human nature.
- display empathy for the human condition portrayed through literature.
- recognize simple figurative devices found in poems, plays and novels. (p. 4)

In suggesting activities that supported the realization of these objectives, the developers of the 1982 Language Arts Curriculum outlined lessons that incorporated the audio-taping of students reading stories or poems, the dramatizing of plays, and the reading of various periodicals and magazines.

However, the appendix for the upper primary level literature programme included few suggestions of indigenous materials for the classroom teacher's use. Except for Sherlock's (1966) West Indian's folk tales, Wallace's (1970, 1973) Bahamian scenes, and Island echoes, and Turner's (1977) Songs of the surrey, the over 100 sources of materials in the appendix ranged from Twain's Adventures of Tom Sawyer, to Norton's (1967) The Borrowers, Stevenson's Treasure Island, and Blume's (1972) Tales of a fourth grade nothing. Books that Bahamians had written at, or before, the time of the production of the 1982 Curriculum Guides such as Tertullien's (1977) Old stories and riddles: Bahamiana culturama #1, Eneas' (1976) Bain Town, and Smith's (1979) Reflections of the sun and soil were not mentioned. Other Caribbean authors such as Anthony (1970), Brodber
Nonetheless, despite the absence of recommended indigenous materials for use in the literature programme, the thrust to develop an appreciation for Bahamian and West Indian literature was one of the programme's objectives. Thus the initial conception of policy makers to Bahamianise the curriculum, though it may not have been supported by the recommended materials in all cases, remained as a constant theme.

The 1982 Language Arts Curriculum set the Bahamianisation of the curriculum as a goal, at least at the preliminary level. How well it developed this concept through its recommendations of teaching materials is questionable. Indeed, the issue of the selection, purchasing and production of indigenous materials is one that surfaces throughout my investigation of the implementation of the intended curriculum policies of the independence era. Later in the dissertation, when I explore the practices of classroom teachers, and the apparent policies of the Ministry of Education bureaucracy regarding the larger issue of indigenous materials, more light is shed on this problem.

Ministry of Education 1982 Suggested Reading Curriculum for Primary Schools

The writers of the reading curriculum envisioned reading as a component that was inter-related with that of the larger language arts programme. At the onset they presented a definition of reading that incorporated the views of the educators who produced the guide and thus served as a guiding post in its formulation:

Reading is regarded as an active, creative process that includes recognition of printed symbols, understanding of information, reaction to that information and integration of attitudes, skills and abilities. It is a life-giving art which enables the individual to function effectively in society. (p. viii)

Stressing that teachers should not view reading as several simple skills that could be taught in a few formal lessons, the developers of the 1982 Reading Curriculum presented a
sequential development of skills from readiness to grade six. The skill areas included: readiness, word recognition, comprehension, and study and research. The specific reading skills for grades five and six that they listed included: sight words, phonetic analysis, structural analysis, vocabulary development, dictionary skills, comprehension skills, and study skills. In turn, the suggested activities concentrated on ways in which teachers could assist in the development of these skills.

While the developers of the 1982 Reading Curriculum did not include a list of suggested materials, other than the use of flash cards and the like, they did state their views regarding the selection of reading materials. In their words, "Since reading is a developmental process, careful thought must be given to the selection of books and materials that would help the child master the desired skills in sequential order" (p. viii). The selection of materials was the responsibility of the classroom teacher who, the developers hoped, would "modify the content and create new and additional material to meet the needs and interests of the students" (p. ii).

Building on a major goal set for Bahamian education, developing well-informed and intelligently active citizens, the developers of the 1982 Reading Curriculum reinforced an initial intention of policy makers of the independence era, the pursuit of literacy. Yet, except for the stated tie to the language arts component, there was little expansion of other themes, at least not as they were evident in both the language arts guidelines and that of social studies. In fact, as mentioned, there was no recommended list of reading materials, indigenous or otherwise, included in the guide. Still, as I discovered through my examination of language arts' teaching practices, the teaching of reading presented an interesting arena for the analysis of the implementation of The Bahamas Government's curriculum policies. I explore the complex nature of reading instruction later in the dissertation.
Summary

The 1982 primary school curriculum guides offered suggested guidelines for teaching practices. It was the intent of the Progressive Liberal Party Government, and the developers of these documents, that classroom teachers would use them as guidelines for their daily practices, and would further develop them in the years that followed their introduction. Indeed, it was the then Minister of Education himself, Darrell E. Rolle, who stated in the Preface to all of the guides that:

We would be mistaken if we regard the new curriculum as an end in itself. It is only a beginning. It is yet to be tested and tried. The final test of its validity will be found in the quality of Bahamian students produced in our schools in the years ahead.

Pursuing this point, the then Director of Education, Marjorie W. T. Davis, highlighted the importance of teacher innovation in further developing the curriculum:

These materials form the basic guidelines and must be adjusted appropriately in terms of teaching methodology and educational strategies. There is much opportunity for teacher innovation which is of course fundamental to curriculum development. Initiative on the part of the users of these materials is to be encouraged and teachers are urged to submit comments and suggestions to the particular subject committee so that the work that has now commenced may continue and quality education may be achieved in all our schools. (Introduction to guides)

The nature of teacher innovation and initiative in respect to the use of these guides can be investigated, at a preliminary level, by examining the schemes of work and lesson plan of teachers. While the schemes of work expand upon the suggested guidelines of the 1982 Curriculum Guides, the lesson plans are purportedly the intended plans for the daily practices of teachers. I include a discussion of lesson plans later in the dissertation, when I investigate the practices of teachers within the classroom setting. At this point, however, I have chosen to examine a selection of schemes of work as they represent extensions of the 1982 Curriculum Guides, and thereby give detailed frameworks of intended teaching practices.
Schemes of work

In contrast to the skeletal frameworks of the 1982 guides, the written schemes of work usually show more detail in terms of notes, activities, and sometimes how much time would be spent on each topic. The schemes that I examined vary from school to school, particularly in the language that the writers chose and the amount of detail that they used. This variation is not surprising as the Ministry of Education does not require that schemes be uniform, but only that teachers use the 1982 Curriculum Guides as guidelines.

As discussions with classroom teachers led me to conclude that they depend more on schemes of work than the 1982 Curriculum Guides, when making choices about teaching content, I saw the need to include this important source in my document examination. The schemes that I used in the following examination are a collection that I obtained from the teachers whom I met during my data collection period. The purpose of this examination was to establish whether there was that continuity of themes that the earlier policy documents, and particularly the 1982 Curriculum Guides, demonstrated.

When the Ministry of Education distributed the 1982 Curriculum Guides, Ministry officials urged teachers to submit comments and suggestions to the appropriate subject committees. These same subject committees, that the National Education Conference Committee had established for the drafting of the curriculum, continued to function even after the Ministry released the curriculum in 1982. It was, and still is today, their function as a standing committee to work with the curriculum officer responsible for each subject area. These committees include heads of departments and classroom teachers through whom, technically, the curriculum officer can relay information to the larger teaching population. Still, in 1982 and the years that followed the initial phase of implementation, the Ministry of Education had not established formal machinery for the collection and dissemination of feedback. However, according to various Ministry of Education officials, school administrators, and classroom teachers, some teachers did complete annual
evaluations and submitted these to the various subject officers. This annual, and sometimes biannual, practice developed into the annual writing of schemes of work. The schemes are, however, only circulated among members of the particular grade level in the particular school, and not among other schools in the country.

Again, as with the preceding discussion of the 1982 Curriculum Guides, I restricted my discussion of written schemes of work to language arts and social studies because the earlier documents highlighted key themes for which these subjects are responsible. In addition, I make topical reference to science as it presented an interesting comparative case. The schemes of work are not meant to be representative as they were collected only from teachers of the three schools in which I conducted my field work. Still, they do raise several interesting questions that I address later in the dissertation.

**Schemes of work for language arts**

As with the 1982 Curriculum Guides, the schemes of work for language arts that I examined included the following topics: listening and speaking, literature, handwriting or penmanship, written composition or creative writing, spelling, and grammar and usage. Again, it was the literature component that dealt more broadly with specifics as it related to the themes that I have discussed so far in this chapter. As with the guides, the schemes of work for listening and speaking, handwriting or penmanship, written composition or creative writing, spelling, and grammar and usage dealt more with actual skills on which the writers asked teachers to concentrate. Yet, it is interesting that the areas of focus (listening and speaking, handwriting or penmanship, etc.) were the same, and that the skills also built on those in the 1982 guide. In fact, in the three schemes, references listed for teacher consultation included the 1982 Curriculum Guide for Primary Language Arts.

There were also distinct similarities in the three literature schemes of work that I examined. Although these schemes varied in terms of the amount of detail and the
suggested activities that teachers included, the general aims were similar to those that the 1982 guide outlined. Echoing the objectives of the 1982 guide, the three schemes stated the importance of: developing an appreciation for Bahamian and West Indian literature; encouraging the reading of literature for pleasure and information; encouraging the student to produce her or his own stories, poems, and plays; and encouraging the recognition of the universality of human nature through the experience of literature. Yet, the three schemes suggested various approaches to achieving these aims. Still, despite the variations in suggested approaches, the similarity, of both the language arts areas generally and literature specifically, supports the observation that classroom teachers incorporate the aims of the 1982 Language Arts Curriculum Guide in their written language arts schemes of work.

Schemes of work for social studies

An examination of the social studies schemes of work revealed more diversity than that of language arts. This diversity revolved around the sequence and emphasis of topics within the curriculum. While the social studies schemes that I examined made attempts to pursue the more general themes outlined in the 1982 guides, "People outside my country" and "Cultures of the world," the starting points varied from scheme to scheme. For example, one sixth grade scheme began by focusing on the "Early settlers to The Bahamas" during the first term, followed by a more detailed analysis of "The Bahamas" during the second term, and ended with an analysis of "Bahamian culture" and "Cultures of the world" during the third term. This sequence did not conform to the 1982 guidelines, at least not in its strictest sense. Instead, there was an obvious overlap with content that the 1982 Social Studies Curriculum Guide included in its grade four curriculum. It was not until the third term that this scheme turned to the content intended for students of the sixth grade, "Cultures of the world."
In contrast, another social studies scheme for a sixth grade followed the format of the *1982 Social Studies Curriculum Guide* more closely. The objectives that this scheme highlighted were similar to those in the 1982 guide, although teachers added more contemporary examples as illustrations such as the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), the Caribbean track and field body, CARIFTA, and the cultural body, CARIFESTA (Caribbean Festival of Arts). This scheme also expanded the 1982 guide’s objective regarding the study of countries, zones, and map drawing/labelling by using six of its seventeen objectives to specify what teachers should cover in this area. Having established this as a foundation during the fall term, the scheme went on for the remainder of the academic year to address the following topics: the United Nations, Culture, the British Commonwealth of Nations, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and the Organization of American States (OAS), Resources, and the Government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

These two very different sixth grade social studies schemes demonstrate that there may be differences in both the content and approaches that teachers take when teaching this subject. While it is perilous to make generalizations based on just two schemes of work, it is plausible that teachers might adjust their focus of teaching for various reasons. What these reasons are, and what the resulting impact might be on the implementation of the 1982 curriculum, are both questions that cannot be addressed through a simple examination of schemes of work. Such an investigation must be pursued within the context of curriculum practice. That is, one must explore the classroom practices of teachers and engage in discourse with the implementors, the teachers, so that such dynamics may be revealed.
Schemes of work for science

Perhaps because there is less leeway in the science curriculum, written schemes of work for science that I examined were more uniform. Three of the schemes of work that I examined conformed to the basic outline of topics not only in grades five and six, but throughout the primary school years. These topics include: scientific method, measurement, matter, living and non-living things, energy, and the earth and the universe. The only thing that varied was the detail that was covered at each grade level.

At the grade five and six levels, according to the supplement to the Primary Science Curriculum (1984), teachers should concentrate on measurement, living and non-living things, the earth and the universe, matter, and energy. The three schemes of work that I examined addressed these topics. Indeed, the uniformity in terms of suggested approaches was astounding. Other than the probable lack of flexibility regarding science topics, another reason there was such a marked similarity might be because the schemes of work that I examined were those of science specialists in the three respective primary schools. Whether the role of the specialist teacher enhances the uniformity of the implementation process is an interesting issue that I address later in the dissertation.

Still, it is sufficient to note, at this point, that the science schemes of work that I examined conformed to the guidelines suggested by policy makers. In addition, it is worth noting that even the "Primary Science Exhibition," held during November 1991, stipulated that students enter projects that fell within the same topics as those outlined by the 1982 curriculum. In addition, the planners of the exhibition, whose theme was "Discover, explore and learn through science," organized it with the Ministry of Education's 'science goal' in mind:

EACH child in The Bahamas should be given the chance to interact with objects and events of the natural world by becoming actively involved in exploring, searching, discovering, measuring, analyzing, theorizing, generalizing, observing, experimenting – thereby acquiring the understandings, knowledge and skills
necessary to survive in this world. (Primary Science Exhibition, Programme Booklet)

Summary

Again, I wish to stress that the schemes of work, that I included in the above examination, were not meant to be taken as representative of those used by teachers throughout The Bahamas. Yet, the examination highlighted various factors that could influence the direction that teachers decide to take in the construction of their written schemes of work, and ultimately their teaching practices.

The similarity in the language arts schemes is noteworthy. It is also worth noting at this point that the language arts programme is further enhanced by an examination system that acts as a 'check and balance.' Evidence of this a 'check and balance' is presented in the Ministry of Education's Circular No: 56, dated October 21, 1987. This circular stated that:

All schools need to give particular attention to and record student progress in writing skills. To help schools meet this objective, the Ministry of Education has decided to add writing components to the Grade Level Assessment Test (GLAT) at the sixth and eight grade levels. ... School administrators should ensure that Written Composition is properly timetables at all grade levels. Teachers should be encouraged to use the Writing Process Teaching Method: Prewriting, Composing, Revising and Publishing in preparing students for the writing component.

Similarly, the same areas that the GLAT examination addresses are listed as separate topics in the schemes of work, and even in the standard 'Progress Report Card' used by all government primary schools.

The social studies programme presents a contrasting situation. Again, I do not mean to suggest that the examples that I used in my examination were representative, but that perhaps this subject is one that receives on-going re-definition. The nature of the subject could explain the incorporation of current topics such as those in the second scheme
of work that I examined. Yet, this does not explain the differences in emphasis demonstrated between the first and the second scheme.

Finally, the science schemes introduced another issue, that of the specialist teacher. Does the specialist teacher enhance the uniformity of the curriculum process? The striking similarity evident in these schemes raises interesting prospects in this regard.

An examination of the schemes of work, and even lesson plans, of teachers can give some insight into the 'initiative' that the Director of Education, in the introduction to the 1982 Curriculum Guides, asked teachers to take. Yet, we must view such an examination with caution. This is particularly so with the examination of the lesson plans, as discussions with classroom teachers and my observations of their practices revealed that for many reasons these plans are not always fulfilled. This may also be the case with the written schemes of work that I have just discussed. Just what happens in practice and why teachers choose to do, or not do, certain things cannot be answered at this stage of my analysis, but when I explore teaching practices later in the dissertation.
CHAPTER 5

RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE INSTRUMENT

Introduction

I have presented the findings of my questionnaire using the following categories: teacher demographic information, availability and use of the 1982 Curriculum Guides in the primary schools, the format and content of the guides, the availability of resource materials for use with the guides, support services, and physical facilities. As these are the same categories that the Ministry of Education used in its 1985 curriculum survey, they facilitate a comparison between both studies.

Demographic data

The description of teachers in the 1991 sample of this study is comparable to that of the Ministry of Education's 1990-1991 classification of the teaching positions (see Appendix D-1). However, the number of university degrees held by the teaching population is not comparable (see Appendix D-2). I have also presented the gender distribution of the initial 1991 sample (n=104) in Table 3 (Appendix D-3) which shows that the initial sample was also comparable to the Ministry's latest statistics on this variable.

Another question included in my 1991 questionnaire addressed teaching experience. Teachers were asked to indicate the number of years that they had taught in the public school system. Of the 85 women who responded to this item, 5 (6%) had taught for less than 6 years; 7 (8%) for both 6 to 10 and 11 to 15 years; 32 (38%) had taught between 16 and 20 years; 14 (16%) between 21 and 25 years; 8 (9%) between 26 and 30 years; and 6
(7%) for both 31 to 35 and 36 to 46 years. The teachers who responded to this 1991 questionnaire represent a very experienced group as 73 (86%) of them have taught for 11 or more years. Furthermore, I assume that they are familiar with the organization and management of the Ministry of Education school system and its curriculum as they have been in the system for 11 years or more. Only 6% of the respondents were not in the public school system when the Ministry conducted its 1985 survey.

Availability and use of 1982 guides

The analysis of the data relating to the availability and use of the guides also uncovered similar findings as those of the Ministry's 1985 study. In response to the item asking whether the 1982 Curriculum Guides were available to them, about 83% of the women in my sample indicated that they were available, while approximately 86% of the Ministry's sample indicated that the guides were available to them.

The two questionnaire items that addressed the issue of the use of the guides concern the extent that respondents follow their guidelines, and whether they felt confident teaching the curriculum. Fifty-five percent of the respondents said that they followed the guidelines 'somewhat closely,' 40% said that followed them 'closely.' The Ministry's instrument did not include this item. In response to whether they felt confident teaching the curriculum, 76% of the respondents on my questionnaire replied 'yes,' as compared to 75% of the Ministry's 1985 sample.

Format and content of guides

A range of items, common to both surveys, addressed the issue of format and content. First, teachers were asked whether the suggested activities included in the guides were sufficient. The analysis of the 1991 data showed that 9% of the respondents agreed
that there were sufficient activities. The Ministry's 1985 survey showed less consensus as 31% disagreed and 56% agreed that there were sufficient suggested activities in the 1982 guides.

Beside the question about the activities included in the guides, there was a series of items relating to the theme of format and content. These items addressed the question of textbooks. The analyses for both surveys are presented in Tables 4-6 (see Appendix D).

An analysis of the questionnaire item concerning the revision of the content of the 1982 Curriculum Guides uncovered different percentages for each year. While the 1985 survey reported that about 60% of the respondents agreed that the content needed revision, my 1991 survey showed that 86% perceived that the guides were in need of revision.

Finally, regarding the content of the guides, the 1991 questionnaire instrument asked teachers to respond to how relevant they perceived the goals and objectives of the guides to be in terms of their (a) meeting the academic needs of students, and (b) preparing students for their lives in society. In response to the item on academic relevance, 49% of the teachers indicated that the content of the guides was 'relevant,' 46% that it was 'somewhat relevant,' and 5% responded that it was 'not at all relevant.' Then, in response to the item on the relevance for the students' lives in society, 61% indicated that it was 'somewhat relevant,' 36% that it was 'relevant,' and 4% that it was 'not at all relevant.'

Resource materials

Data available through both surveys addressed the issue of resource materials, in different ways. When respondents replied in 1985 to the question as to whether the 1982 Curriculum Guides "make adequate use of resource materials," approximately 65% of the respondents agreed that the use was adequate. Yet, when asked in the 1991 survey whether there was sufficient resource material to help teach the curriculum, only 51% of the respondents indicated that there was the case. Then, when asked specifically about
Bahamian resource material, 49% of the respondents indicated that the guides made 'less than adequate' use of Bahamian resource material, 45% indicated that the use was 'adequate,' and 6% indicated 'not at all.' Although there was no similar question on the 1985 instrument, a report summarizing the results of the 1985 study noted that, through the open-ended responses, teachers indicated that "the activities in the curriculum should be more indigenously related to Family Island experiences, things that are readily identifiable by the students" (p. 5). In addition, teachers expressed that the Ministry of Education "should purchase and make available to the school much needed resource materials and equipment. . . [Also, resource material] where feasible should be indigenous in nature" (p. 5).

Tied to the issue of resources is that of physical facilities. The Ministry's 1985 survey reported that 63% of the respondents indicated that 'the instructional area was sufficient to accommodate existing class enrollments in an effective learning situation.' However, only 35% of the respondents of the 1991 survey agreed that there was sufficient space for effective learning to take place.

Support services

The final category of analysis is that of the availability of support services. Both questionnaires addressed this issue by asking whether teachers received any assistance from the Ministry of Education to implement the 1982 guides. The 1985 survey reported that "less than half of the teachers received formal assistance from the Ministry" (p. 3). I present the analysis of the Ministry of Education's assistance to teachers by subject in Table 7 (Appendix D-7).

Closely allied to the issue of Ministry assistance to teachers is the question of the extent that teachers perceive the Ministry of Education to be receptive to their concerns about the curriculum. I posed this question in the 1991 survey. In response, 38% of the
sample indicated that channels of communication were 'somewhat open,' 36% indicated that they were 'not open at all,' and 26% indicate that they are 'open.' Still, 69% of the same respondents indicated that they had not received any updated information from the Ministry concerning revisions to the curriculum since the 1985 survey.

It is important that I contextualize the differences and suggested relationships of these questionnaire responses. I attempt to do this through in-depth interviews and field observations. Before moving to the findings that these two methods revealed I discuss the comparisons between the findings of my study and the Ministry of Education's 1985 curriculum study.

Issues that emerge from the questionnaire data

Teachers' qualifications

In this section I discuss the findings of both the 1991 study and the Ministry of Education's 1985 study. The analytical categories used above are again used to compare the findings. I have refrained from drawing inferences at this point as the findings of both questionnaire instruments introduce additional issues. Therefore, I pose questions that I expand upon when I examine my interview and field note data later in the dissertation.

Except for teacher qualifications, the similarity in demographic data between my sample and the Ministry of Education's latest statistics (1990-91) supports the contention that the sample is comparable to the larger teaching population at the primary level in The Bahamas public school system. Yet, attention is directed to several issues due to the disparity regarding qualifications between the two surveys. These issues concern the impact that the higher percentage of teachers with university degrees, found in my sample, could have on the findings of the 1991 survey; the possibility that there may be a higher concentration of teachers with these degrees at the upper primary as compared to those at middle and lower primary levels; the possibility that those teachers with the higher
qualifications are the ones that responded to my questionnaire; and the possibility that those teachers with higher qualifications could have been more critical in their responses. The following comparison of responses to several of the questionnaire items addresses some of these concerns.

Several responses are comparable across both groups of teachers. Regarding the issue of student access to textbooks, 43% of the higher qualified (university degrees) teachers indicated that each child had adequate access, while 45% of the remaining teachers indicate likewise (see Table 5 for complete sample analysis). While 76% of the higher qualified teachers agreed that the texts corresponded with the 1982 Curriculum Guides, 80% of the other teachers agreed that there was a correspondence (see Table 6 complete sample analysis). The question of Ministry of Education assistance to teachers revealed high percentages (75% and 70% respectively) as both groups indicated that they do receive assistance (see Table 7 complete sample analysis). The perceptions of both groups of teachers regarding the issue of the sufficiency of suggested activities are also comparable: Ninety percent of the more highly qualified teachers and 92% of the less qualified teachers indicated that there were insufficient activities. Both groups concurred regarding the issue of the revision of the guides as 87% of the higher qualified teachers and 83% of the others indicated that revision was necessary.

There was less similarity on issues concerning resources, but the differences were not large. Compared to the 'yes' responses (59%) of the teachers with higher qualifications, 68% of the teachers with lower qualifications indicated that the suggested texts were available (see Appendix D-4 for complete sample analysis). Fifty-three percent of the more qualified teachers indicated that there were sufficient resource materials to help teach the curriculum while 61% of the other teachers indicated that there were sufficient materials. There was also a difference in the responses regarding the use of Bahamian resources materials. Fifty-eight percent of the more qualified teachers indicated that there
was 'less than adequate use of Bahamian materials' while only 48% of the other sample indicated the same.

The issue of communication with the Ministry of Education presented another area of difference. Forty percent of the more highly qualified teachers indicated that the channels of communication were not open at all, 40% indicated that the channels were somewhat open, and 19% indicate that they are open. The percentages for the other teachers are more evenly spread as 31% indicated that the channels were not open at all, 31% indicated that they were somewhat open, and 38% indicated that they were open. Yet, both groups were closer to consensus in their responses to whether they had received updated information from the Ministry of Education since the 1985 survey. Seventy percent of the more qualified teachers indicated that they had yet to receive updated information from the Ministry of Education, while 64% of the other teachers indicated that they had yet to receive the information.

The difference in the responses concerning the issues of resources and communication may indeed point to a bias in the 1991 survey as it is possible that the more qualified teachers may have been more critical of these issues. However, there is little difference in the responses regarding the issues of student access to textbooks, textbook correspondence, Ministry of Education assistance to teachers, the lack of sufficient activities, and the need for revision of the curriculum. The remainder of the discussion that follows addresses the analysis of the responses of both groups of teachers together. The differences between the two groups are not sufficiently large so as to invalidate comparisons.

General observations

Both the 1991 survey and the Ministry of Education's 1985 survey concurred that the 1982 Curriculum Guides were available to most of the teachers. In addition, most of
the teachers in both sample populations expressed their confidence in their teaching of the curriculum. It is unfortunate, however, that the Ministry of Education's instrument did not ask teachers how closely they followed the guidelines of the 1982 guides so that a further comparison could be made as the 1991 data revealed a split in responses on this item. The question that arises from this split, between 'somewhat closely' (55%) and 'closely' (40%), is: what factors influence whether teachers follow the guidelines or not?

The difference in the findings of both surveys concerning the sufficiency of suggested activities in the guides also poses several questions. Considering that the analysis showed that the responses of the teachers were comparable despite qualifications: Why was there a higher percentage of teachers in the 1991 sample who indicated that there were not sufficient activities included in the guides? Does the passage of six years since the 1985 survey explain the difference? Have teachers only recently become dissatisfied with the same material/activities over the six year period? How does this dissatisfaction translate into contemporary classroom practices? What impact does this have upon the intended curriculum?

The issue of the revision of the 1982 Curriculum Guides is noteworthy. In both surveys the majority of the teachers indicated that the guides were in need of revision. As the 1991 analysis showed, the percentage has increased since 1985 from 60% to 86%. Additionally, the majority of both the higher qualified teachers as well as the less qualified ones indicated that the guides were in need of revision (87% and 83% respectively). This is a serious commentary on the perceived state of the guides. The crucial question is two-fold. Why do teachers perceive that revision is necessary? What kinds of revisions would they recommend?

Tied to the preceding issue is that of the availability of resource material. Although each instrument addressed this issue differently, the findings show that there are problems that complicate the ease with which teachers are able to translate the intended curriculum. That is, while 65% of the teachers in the 1985 survey indicated that the guides made
adequate use of resource material, only 51% of the 1991 respondents indicated that there was sufficient material available to help them teach the curriculum. Although the possibility that the higher qualified teachers in the 1991 sample may have been more critical than the other teachers, there are still notable percentages (47% and 39% respectively) of teachers from each group who said that there were not sufficient resource materials available. What does this mean for daily classroom practices? Are teachers expected to find their own resources? Do they find these resources? If so, where do they find them? What demands does this put on the teachers' preparation time, especially when we consider that the primary teacher is often not a specialist, but a generalist?

The issue of textbooks is multifaceted. Several questions arise. Are the suggested textbooks available for use by (a) the teacher, and (b) the students in the translation of the intended curriculum? An examination of the issue of textbook availability in both samples (Appendix D-4) shows that percentages vary from subject to subject. However, the means across respondents of both samples (63% for 1991 and 55% for 1985) show slight improvement. Again, there is a difference in the responses offered by the higher qualified teachers as compared to the other teachers in the 1991 sample. Yet, there are notable percentages of teachers (41% and 32% respectively) who indicated that texts are not available. Still, the larger question is whether students have access to these texts, and the responses in this respect are comparable despite qualifications.

While the general availability of textbooks has improved for most of the subjects, this does not mean that students have access to these textbooks (see Appendix D-5). Although there has been improvement in this area, a comparison of the means shows that since 1985 the mean has not reached fifty percent. Only reading, language arts and mathematics, are above 50 percent. What impact does the lack of student access to textbooks have upon the teachers' ability to translate the intended curriculum? What are the implications for classroom practice, including teacher and student activities?
The analyses done for the item that addressed the correspondence between suggested texts and Curriculum Guides (Appendix D-6) show an increase in percentages. In addition, for both years the higher percentages in all subjects indicate that the textbooks do correspond. While the majority of the responses of teachers in the 1991 sample, despite qualifications, agreed that there was correspondence (76% and 80% respectively), this is an issue that deserves further probing. In particular, it is unclear whether the respondents perceived 'correspondence' as that which included only basic concepts or more general content. This is an important consideration especially when we acknowledge the basic premise upon which the 1982 curriculum guides lie. That is, there was to be the promotion of a more indigenously based curriculum. Yet, as the analysis of the use of Bahamian material showed, 49% of the respondents in the 1991 survey indicated that the guides made 'less than adequate' use of Bahamian resource material, 45% indicated that the use was 'adequate,' and 6% indicated 'not at all.' I probed this issue in my interviews with teachers.

The issue of the adequacy of physical facilities also relates to how, or if, teachers' classroom duties are facilitated. The differences in percentages in the two surveys show that teachers have become dissatisfied with 'instructional spaces.' Yet, it is interesting that in the 1991 survey, the less qualified teachers were more critical of this issue than the more qualified teachers. Still, the majority of both groups of these teachers (70% and 62% respectively) concurred that they were dissatisfied with the 'instructional spaces' currently available. The questions that these percentages raise include: Have 'instructional spaces' deteriorated over the years? Have class sizes increased? Again, what impact do these factors have upon the daily practices of the teacher? I pursued these issues through discussions with teachers as I investigated how the state of the physical facilities affected their daily practices.

The analysis of the availability of support services introduces an important factor in the curriculum translation process. Indeed, if teachers do not have adequate support
services how likely are they to implement the intended curriculum? While there has been improvement in the percentages of teachers receiving assistance over the years (Appendix D-7), there is a disparity in the responses addressing the issue of communication between classroom teachers and the Ministry of Education. This query remains relevant although there are differences in the responses of the higher qualified and less qualified teachers in the 1991 sample. Forty percent of the higher qualified and 31% of the less qualified teachers indicated that channels of communication were 'not open at all.' In addition, there is reason for concern as 69% of the respondents indicated that they have not received any updated information from the Ministry of Education concerning revisions since the 1985 survey. This concern is warranted despite the fact that the higher qualified teachers (70%) were more critical. Sixty-four percent of the less qualified teachers indicated that they had not received updated information. If teachers feel that their concerns are not being addressed, what impact does this have upon their classrooms practices? Are they more, or less likely, to translate the intended curriculum?

Summary

It is important that we acknowledge the possibility of bias in the 1991 survey. The analysis above suggests that the more qualified teachers might have been more critical of some issues. The issue of physical facilities was an exception where the less qualified teachers were more critical than the more qualified teachers. Still, even where there were differences in responses between the more qualified teachers and the less qualified teachers, the magnitude of the percentages in all cases support an argument for concern. These findings, and those of the 1985 survey, present a framework for further investigation. They raise questions that could only be addressed in interactive situations. The informal interview and field observations presented just that opportunity. It is to those findings that I now turn in the following chapter.
CHAPTER 6

TEACHER-SCHOOL PROFILES

Introduction

During the time that the Progressive Liberal Party occupied the majority of the parliamentary seats, from 1967 to August 1992, they maintained that education was one of their major concerns. The gradual increases in the education budget over the years, the party's initial policy statement, *Focus on the future: White paper on education* (1973), and subsequent policy directives did, indeed, demonstrate a rhetoric of commitment to a quality Bahamian educational system. Yet, the following teacher-school profiles raise pressing issues regarding the success of curriculum policy directives lodged at the very heart of the Bahamian educational system. Through discussions and personal contact with classroom teachers and administrators, I investigated how the implementors view curriculum policy. I tried to unravel the complexities of curriculum reform processes, and explored the alternate approaches to curriculum reform as they were revealed by those intimately involved in the translation of policy. It is my hope that, through the following profiles, the reader listens to the voices of the teachers who form the backbone of the complex implementation process.

The names of the teachers and the schools that I use in the following profiles are pseudonyms. Still, as I reflect upon the detail that these 'snapshots' present, I am acutely aware of how easily an individual familiar with the context can identify the schools of which I speak. Yet, it is the similarity of the experiences in many schools of The Bahamas to which the data of this study speaks. My only hope is that the intent will not be to isolate the actors or the schools, but to extract the insight that they reveal.
Before beginning the first teacher-school profile a brief description of the managerial operations within the school would be useful. All public schools on the island of New Providence have an administrative staff responsible for the management of the school. Usually, the staff includes a principal and vice principal. However, the larger schools often have more than one vice principal, and one or more senior master or mistress. The vice principal assists the principal with the daily operation of the school, and she or he, with the principal, maintains contact with the Ministry of Education. The responsibility of the senior master or mistress is usually to attend to student disciplinary matters. Also, occasionally, principals may appoint grade level coordinators to assist with the coordination of the curriculum. Sometimes, these coordinators may be the same members of the administration.

The direction that a school takes rests, for the most part, in the hands of the principals to whom the Ministry of Education gives a certain degree of freedom to manage their schools. For example, principals make decisions regarding the use of the instructional setting (mixed ability or academic streaming), and the allocation of teachers to grade levels within their schools. Also, until recently (1991) even the scheduling of subjects was the principal's responsibility. However, at the beginning of the 1991-1992 school year the curriculum officers, with the Director of Education, decided upon the number of periods to assign to each subject. The Ministry of Education then forwarded this breakdown to the respective schools in the education system, and they now assume that it is the intended practice. Teacher evaluation is another responsibility that the Ministry of Education has allocated to principals who complete the Annual Confidential Report for each teacher on their school's staff. Although principals do get input from the members of the Ministry of Education's Supervisory Division, who visit schools two to three times a year, the annual teacher evaluation rests with the principals.

Generally, principals wield considerable power as they, in essence, can determine the direction in which their school will go. They represent the crucial link between the
Ministry of Education bureaucracy and the classroom teachers as they seek to ensure that they meet their teachers' and students' needs, and that they address teachers' concerns regarding the importance of the curriculum. Through the following teacher-school profiles, we get an idea of just how well principals and the teachers with whom they work cope generally, and specifically concerning curriculum matters.

Ms. June Dean and Western Primary School

Western’s School Prayer
Hear thy children now Lord Jesus
As we fold our hands in prayer
Bless our parents and our teachers
Keep us all in thy care
Help us to be kind to others
Happy in our work and play
Give us each the strength to conquer
All the wrong that comes our way.
Amen.

Western Primary School is in a predominantly middle income community. The Bahamas Ministry of Education classifies it as a Grade C school (301-700 students). At the time of my field work, most the student population was Bahamian, with less than two percentage comprising Haitian and students from other parts of the Caribbean. Teachers at Western Primary School instruct students in a mixed-ability setting.

Western Primary is administered by a principal, vice principal and a senior mistress. The principal has been at this school for the last eight years. There are over 30 teachers on staff. Nineteen classrooms, including a library, a music room, an administrative block (consisting of four rooms), and two blocks in which bathrooms are located form the core of the physical grounds.

Ms. June Dean's classroom is in one of the front blocks on the south-eastern side of the school grounds. She shares this classroom block with a fifth grade class. The only door to Ms. Dean's classroom faces the south. The room has sets of aluminum-paned
windows, about five feet in length, on the southern, eastern, and northern walls. Bulletin boards are attached to sections of the walls where there are no windows. Ms. Dean had elaborately decorated these bulletin boards with subject content from the language arts, mathematics, social studies, health science, and general science curricula.

There is a chalkboard on the western wall. Black stencilled letters, just above the chalkboard, read: "Labour Conquers Everything," while similar stencilled letters on the southern end tell students to: "Listen • Think • Learn." The motto on the eastern wall states that they should: "Strive for Excellence." The desks for Ms. Dean's 32 students are arranged in a U-shape along the southern, eastern, and northern walls facing the chalkboard. Several rows of desks are fitted within this U-shaped arrangement. Mrs. Dean's desk is east of the door, and close to the southern wall.

When I first met with the principal of Western Primary School during August of 1991, she indicated that she would prefer that I work with a sixth grade teacher, as the fifth grade teachers would all be new to that level. There are three sixth and three fifth grades at Western Primary. During our interview after my five week period, however, the principal was much more forthcoming with her rationale behind her selection of Ms. Dean.

She has been with that level a bit longer than the others. She is very strong. . . . In every level, I say at the moment, at every level we have two strong and one weaker teacher, which is quite a difference from when I first came here.

I first met June Dean during the week before the students were due to return after the summer break. Ms. Dean is a young, vibrant woman in her early thirties. She has taught for sixteen years, both in New Providence and on the Family Islands. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree, and is a single parent of a daughter.

Our first meeting was tense. Uncertain of how I would be received, and what teachers would think of my study, I approached Ms. Dean with great caution. Perhaps, we both had similar anxieties, although we did not express them openly at this time. Yet, as my field notes for that meeting indicated, there was some apprehension in the air.
Met with 'Ms. [D.].' A very uncomfortable meeting; 'Ms. [D.]' appears to be somewhat uncertain about being involved in the study, although she says otherwise; she stated that she was 'accustomed to working by herself and not with anyone else'... suggesting that our working together might prove to be difficult/problematic. She indicated that she was willing to give it a try; she did warm up as our discussion developed and by the end (about 45 minutes later) she did seem more receptive (Field notes: August 29, 1991).

Yet, although Ms. Dean did appear to be more receptive to the idea of participating in the study after our initial discussion, she did not neglect to relay her concern about the power relation that would exist: "You are a college lecturer; I am just a sixth grade teacher, so I would always be thinking that in the back of my mind." I was constantly plagued by these very words. I was indeed a lecturer at The College of The Bahamas and my status as such would raise power relations issues. Still, I was determined to make the necessary efforts to ensure Ms. Dean, and the other teachers with whom I worked and spoke, that I was not there to evaluate the performance of teachers, but rather to learn what lies behind their daily classroom practices. My first two weeks with Ms. Dean were difficult ones. Even by the end of our five week period, although we had the opportunity to talk many times, I always felt as though the openness that I established with the two other teachers at Central and Eastern was missing from our relationship.

A disciplinarian, Ms. Dean takes the business of teaching very seriously. She avows that her students are her main concern, and that often other teachers consider her style of teaching unorthodox. As she explained:

The main point is for you to get across to the children what you want to get across and that's it. And like me I might use several unorthodox methods, but I guess every teacher does what she or he has to do to get a point across. A lot of people say I'm tough, I'm hard... 'Cause a lot of teachers are, I don't want to use the word 'easy,' I'll just use lenient. If the kids do it, like for homework, like how I say I'm gonna check and count books, they don't do that. If the kids feel like putting their homework on the desk they put it, but I'll probably come around and just spank them and say: 'You know you're supposed to have your book on there.' So then that gets – that makes them know they have to do certain things. Yeah, I do whatever I have to do to get them to do what I want.

Indeed, as I was to find out, once students were in Ms. Dean's classroom they were there to work. If they had come to waste time, she did not hesitate to tell them to do that at
home. This philosophy was evident throughout her classroom practices, and the views that she expressed, throughout this profile, regarding curriculum issues.

**Resources**

The issue of resources at Western Primary School was one that dominated both my interview and field note data. The lack of available resources, specifically textbooks for student use and references for the classroom teachers' use, was problematic. At Western Primary, except for mathematics and reading, teachers stressed continually that the textbooks suggested in the curriculum guides or schemes of work were not available. As Ms. Dean explained:

[Another teacher is] doing that. But even when I did [teach] it [social studies], I never used a set text. Like I said it is the same as ... it's only for the math and language that we use the set text ... but like subjects like science, we just go to the library and dig up the topic we are doing. We just use that [process].

Even when textbooks were available, there were limited copies. As a result, student access to these textbooks was limited. Often Ms. Dean's students had to share sets of textbooks with the other sixth grade classes. For reading, this was further complicated as some of her students were not reading at the grade six level, and had to use readers used by the lower grade levels in the school.

As you know, [the] Ministry [of Education] never sends sufficient books. You know when you go to do comprehension, we have to share the pink books. Then, if like how there's three grade sixes, they have everything almost simultaneously. So in order to compensate, you have to like, ah, say, instead of me doing maths now, I would do my maths after, so I could use the books. I don't think it should be like that. A shortage ... we have a definite shortage in supplies, books, whatever. We have to make do with what we have; then the children suffer.

Not only do the teacher and children 'suffer,' but indications were that there were also consequences for the intended curriculum. For example, students must often copy extensive notes from the chalkboard. Not only is this time consuming, but teachers feel that often students misplace the notes anyway.
Even when teachers tried to save classroom time by photocopying, this presented problems as the one photocopier was not operational several times during my stay at the school. As another teacher at Western Primary told Ms. Dean's students: "I had a handout, but the copier is not working." Her only alternative, therefore, was to write four paragraphs of notes on the chalkboard for the students to copy in their notebooks. Ms. Dean also used the option of writing on the chalkboard, especially for health science, general science, and additional exercises for mathematics and language arts. Highlighting this fact was my experience one morning when I arrived before the bell had gone.

Ms. Dean's students are frantically trying to copy general science notes off the chalkboard before the morning bell sounds. [The] bell goes at nine and there is the usual first/second ringing. [Students stand still at first ringing, then move toward classrooms at second ringing]. Today however 'Ms. [D]'s' class remains inside. 'Ms. [D]' had told them to come to school early enough to write the notes off the board. [At] 9:05 am students finally get up after being prompted by 'Ms. [D]' that it was 'after nine.' Those who did not complete this [note copying] task before the morning bell spent their morning break doing so (Field notes: September 17, 1991).

Classroom teachers could use the companion workbooks of the supplied textbooks instead of writing on the chalkboard, but here again there were complications. First, the expense of workbooks is that of the parents or guardians of the students. In the event that students did not purchase these workbooks, as was true of several of Ms. Dean's students, she warned them that: "If you don't have books you will have to write whole exercises out of books... You will spend time after school, borrow someone's book and stay until four or five writing the homework exercise."

To be fair, however, I must mention that Western Primary School had implemented a plan by which parents or guardians could purchase books and materials that the school purchased directly from the publishers. As the principal explained, however, this does not always resolve the problem.

'The books that are given by the Ministry [of Education]... we don't have sufficient so what we do, we encourage the parents to purchase [them]. And to make it easier on them, what I have done is to try to purchase directly from the company and sell them practically at cost price. Last year I also devised a plan whereby I said, let's charge a fee. I had a meeting with the parents, PTA, and they
suggested sixty dollars per parent. Then you would order the books and if any change was left, we return it... so $60.00 per parent. I wrote them [parents] a note saying to them that it breaks down to about $6.00 per week. They said to have a payment plan to make it easier on them to pay the $60.00. Well you know how some of us are. Some people embrace the opportunity, others didn't. So by the new school year a number of students had their books and others didn't because the parents said that they could not come up with the $60.00. I said, well you had a whole term to do that.

When we combine the limited availability of textbooks with the fact that there is a preponderance of foreign textbooks, the picture is even more troublesome. That writers of the 1982 curriculum designed it with the intent that more indigenous content would be incorporated, is negated because teachers at Western Primary School use few indigenous materials.

During my stay at Western, there was little evidence that Bahamian or Caribbean materials were readily available. Most texts that Ms. Dean used were those Ministry of Education supplied textbooks used by the other sixth grades for mathematics, reading and language arts. Additional resources were, as she indicated, obtained in the library, or by other means. But, as the teacher-librarian explained, the library book percentage in terms of foreign versus indigenous materials is far from balanced.

Davis: How large is your Caribbean/Bahamian holdings?
Teacher-Librarian: Um, maybe twenty-five percent.
Davis: Twenty five percent?
Teacher-Librarian: We don't have many books on The Bahamas.
Davis: Or the Caribbean generally?
Teacher-Librarian: The Caribbean would be more.
Davis: Okay, on The Bahamas you would say twenty-five percent. On the Caribbean, as in the Caribbean Region including The Bahamas, what would you say?
Teacher-Librarian: About forty.
There is little wonder, then, that the resources that Ms. Dean used most often were those of foreign origin. Two of her mainstays were: Houseman's (1965) *40 Lessons and Exercises in Grammar and Language*, and Poehler, Sullivan, Tessier and Utter's (1983) *HBJ Health*.

This is not to say, however, that she did not incorporate indigenous material in her teaching. Several times during my stay Ms. Dean used the 'pink books,' *Language arts for primary schools* a Caribbean published text, that she referred to in one of her earlier quotations. She used this text when no other class was using it, primarily during language arts, for comprehension and vocabulary. During my stay, Ms. Dean also read a story to her class from a Caribbean reader, Walmsley's (1968) *The sun's eye: West Indian writing for young readers*. In addition, she included words in spelling lists, for example, that students would readily encounter in their immediate environments:

1. teacher
2. September
3. school
4. library
5. vacation
6. summer
7. beach
8. breeze
9. breakfast
10. Junkanoo [Bahamian festival]
11. hundred
12. yesterday
13. lunch
14. tourist
15. family
16. church
17. jitney [public transportation]
18. conch [Bahamian delicacy]
19. crab [Bahamian delicacy]
20. Tuesday

Likewise, when substituting for Ms. Dean another teacher at Western gave the following comprehension passage to Ms. Dean's students:

William Bell, aged fifteen, was knocked down and seriously injured by a bus on Monday afternoon. The accident took place within a few yards of C.R. Walker High School [school on the island of New Providence] which he began attending only a couple of weeks ago. William lives with his aunt, because his mother is at present in the Princess Margaret Hospital [The Bahamas' major hospital], and his father, a sailor, is in Trinidad, Cuba [Caribbean island].

Still, for the most part, the texts and resources that I witnessed Western Primary School's teachers using were foreign. Even the books supplied through the school's 'purchase plan' were predominantly foreign. The list, given to students moving into grade six, included: Abbott and Wells' (1985) *Mathematics Today*; Best's (1983) *The student's companion (Caribbean Edition)*; Elwell and Kucia Modern Curriculum Press' (1988) *Word*
Yet, the reading coordinator at Western Primary School did not feel that this
preponderance of foreign texts was an obstacle to the implementation of the intended
indigenous curriculum. As she explained:

I feel as if, since we are near to the U.S., our children, I don't think, we are at a
disadvantage, in some instances, because some of our children travel to the U.S.
and a lot of things they watch on television. So they would have a basic idea of
some of the things that they would see in the textbooks. I would still prefer if we
had a more— even if I say, West Indian, you would still have things foreign to
them. Because we have things in The Bahamas... the ackee... even though we
have Jamaicans here, some of the children don't know what an ackee is so even if
you have a West Indian reader we would have problems... I don't think we
should have all Bahamian readers because it sort of narrows it too much. I feel as if
they should be exposed to a wider range. I think they have advantages and
disadvantages of the U.S. Sometimes with the pictures, but I think that it is a
learning experience, because a lot of things they can identify with, and our children
can travel a lot so they see some of the things in real life.

On the other hand, Western Primary School's principal sees a greater need for a balance.

I feel that we should, well, we are not as they say, "No man is an island," so I feel
that the American texts or what have you should be supplemented by Bahamian
materials... indigenous to The Bahamas. It should have something that relates to
us. Well unfortunately, for us to some extent our students don't find it very, very
difficult because a number of them travel. Some of them would have seen a train
... and snow, I think, this is one of the hardest things, not many of them travel
beyond Florida. But, that's, ah, there are subways and things like that so we might
have to explain those kinds of things... Well, at the moment, there are social
studies and health and family life texts that are being done [written]. But, they have
not been completed. Gradually, we are getting there. But what I would like to see
these books, but not to the exclusion of the others, because we need them all—
British, U.S., Caribbean, as well as Bahamian... What needs to be done, I
think, is you need to sort of encourage and promote... like how they have the
Music Awards, some incentive to motivate a group to produce Bahamian songs
like King Eric... If we could get more people like him and others who could do
that sort of thing... because we need that with our language arts... we need to
have our books with our dialect and everything, and also the others [subjects] as
well.

The principal's comments above introduce the interesting element of dialect usage in
the classroom, as this, too, relates to indigenous content, and ultimately the intended
curriculum. During my five weeks at Western Primary School I made several notations of
Ms. Dean's reaction to the use of dialect by her students. During one of our discussions I addressed the issue of dialect use in the classroom. Ms. Dean responded in this way:

I try and discourage them even though, you know, if I'm in a serious mood I won't use it, right; but if I'm just kidding around or just mocking somebody, I'll use it. But I try to discourage it because what I want to do eventually is show them the difference, separate one from the other and tell them why. So I try and, you know, if they say anything out of line, I let them correct themselves or I just correct them. I try and discourage it but I don't mind a little bit of it. . . . Dialect is a part of the Bahamian culture. We can't really run away from it, right? But like I say we have to know when to use it. We have a subject, grammar which is supposed to like teach them proper English and I don't mind it if kids use it, but like I say, when we're finish I explain to them when and where not to use it; they should be able to apply it where possible. Maybe they may be going over some poetry or something with dialect and I tell them it's okay to use dialect; you just have to know, but I try to instil that in them throughout the course of the year. I don't just dump it on them right away.

In addition, the politics of textbook selection and purchasing exposes the fact that the chain of communication within, and among, all levels of the education system is somewhat stifled. This introduces the whole notion of support services including not only those services available through the Ministry of Education for classroom teachers, but also communication among teachers at a particular school, as well as, communication between administration and classroom teachers, and finally classroom teachers and the Ministry of Education. The principal expressed her concern that the lines of communication are not as open as they should be.

I feel that sometimes we are not consulted enough. We have just put forward a proposal asking that a committee be set up for this purpose so that they would take some suggestions from us. So it really has been set up to make recommendations. . . . Principals, Ministry of Education officials . . . principals from the primary and secondary schools, a supervisor or two from the schools and one or two from the Ministry [of Education]. They are to look into . . . I forgot the terms of reference, but they were to explore fully the suggestions about us having an officer in place . . . we have suggested also for the quality of cleaning materials and any other things that are needed in the schools.

Then, as she explained, the input of the classroom teacher regarding textbook selection is 'indirect.'

That [the selection of textbooks] was done mostly by subject officers. Like the person who is responsible for language arts, they make up the selections, math, they make up their selections . . . Now what has happened up until now, the subject officers sort of sponsored or encouraged some companies, book companies
to come out like the Silver Burdett [Ginn] Company, the Merrill Company and other companies, a variety of companies that deal with language arts, math, science, etc. They come out and they sort of peddle their wares. We had workshops using these particular texts and as a result of that the subject officers they sort of tended to make the selection of texts at that time. Well, we piloted, in the case of reading, certain books and we were asked for some feedback on the books and some of the selections are based on that. But indirectly the classroom teachers were involved because we [administrators] gave our feedback according to what we got from the classes. They [the Ministry of Education] wanted to find out how these texts, like the ones we piloted, were and then we would let them know... any of the other books which the teachers liked so they brought up the idea and they gave their views. So indirectly [classroom teachers gave their input].

Still, I wonder about the impact that this 'indirect input' has on the, formal or informal, policies of textbook selection, and whether regular communication with classroom teachers is a reality. As one teacher at Western Primary revealed:

She's [curriculum officer] been okay. She comes by once a year or so. But she, I hear some people say she don't bother much. But, any time I like, I think if you are a good teacher, they [curriculum officers] wouldn't check for you, but if you are not they would go back. She pops by, but hardly anything much to give you. Since she's been in office, she has had very good workshops. Her workshops are very good; they give you good ideas on motivational things you can do in the classrooms. . . . [The workshops are held] once per year, maybe twice. She had a good one in the summer. Perhaps maybe next term she would have another.

Then, as the teacher-librarian explained, even within Western Primary School itself, the lines of communication are not as open as she, as librarian and person responsible for resources, would like to see them. In addition, according to the same teacher-librarian, because there is little or no communication between teacher-librarians and the Ministry of Education's support services most of the materials that the Ministry sends are useless. As a result, much of the responsibility for purchasing resources rests with each school.

Western's teacher-librarian explained the situation this way:

The teachers, I feel don't use the library the way I want them to. I would like for them to send me materials or copies of books and materials they need. You know everyday I want to see that. Then I know that I am involved in their teaching. But so far very seldom [have they done this]. When they need a book right away that's when they would remember to send me the book. That kind of thing sort of throws me off. You have to go to the bookstores and purchase them or go to LRU [the Learning Resources Unit] and borrow them for teachers. But when I get short notices I can't do that. . . . [The] the dollar that the children pay each term . . . the money that is collected is spent on the library, buying resources for teachers, or to buy new books for the [library's] shelves. . . . And, during library week which is in April of each year. I usually have a fund-raising event and I raise funds. [The
Ministry's support is] through LRU . . . Ah, some reference materials, not much. Mostly the Scholastic [Books, Ltd.]. I don't know if they have an agreement. I don't know what it is, but every year they give you like twelve cases of books between the lower and upper primary school and you have like two to three copies of the same title. They don't come to you and ask the teacher-librarian to write a list of what you need. They just divide the books as they come and send them. So I have copies and copies of the same book, the same thing. To me that doesn't make much sense. If you look over there, I have more books that I can't use.

Support services

Reading instruction presents a further illustration of the frustration that teachers at Western Primary School feel concerning support services to assist them in their implementation of the intended curriculum. Generally, classroom teachers expressed a feeling of helplessness regarding the teaching of 'remedial students' as they often feel that they lack the skills required to deal with such groups. Reading was the only subject that principal streamed at Western Primary; all other subjects, as mentioned earlier, had groups of mixed-ability. The reading coordinator, acknowledging that she was not a reading specialist, felt that Western could benefit from some support from the Ministry of Education in this respect.

I feel that we can benefit from the help of a reading specialist in the school. We have a lot of problems that need to be identified and worked on, even though the teachers are working. I have 'cause, what I was doing last year, was just pulling out like two children from the grade and I would have them in my office. I would work with them at their level. I did lots of picture words, pictures you know, like language experience and things like that. But then still, as I said, we need a specialist and like a reading lab so you can set up and have the children come in. I am responsible for the reading, but then I am not able to work as I would like to. I take a reading group myself, so I don't really get the opportunity to really, really get into the classroom and see what's really happening as I would like to. While reading is going on I have my reading group.

And, as Ms. Dean stated, she has wondered about the fair distribution of 'support service personnel' throughout the educational system.

So, what do you think determines the Ministry's criteria for selection? Who, who, who goes where? . . . Because like, even then, they should have them [reading specialists] in rotation. You see, you can't have like . . . 'cause like [the visiting reading specialist], she's good and we try to get her every chance we can.
We try and get her like when its Language Arts Week and that sort of stuff and she comes in and she would do whatever we ask her whether it is a Drama Competition or putting on reading workshops or whatever. She has been doing this for quite sometime. And here it is we have her sometimes, but then there are other schools who don't have any.

Considering the situation of support services, I wanted to find out how the teachers felt about policy directives that came from the Ministry of Education bureaucracy, or for that matter from the members of administration at Western Primary. I was particularly interested in how policy directives, relating to curriculum issues, influenced the classroom teacher's implementation of the intended curriculum. Ms. Dean summed up her approach to Ministry of Education policy directives.

Well, if they say, if the Ministry [of Education] says to do it, if I have a difference of opinion I still voice it, but if they say to do something if it comes from Headquarters I'm going to do it . . . I don't always agree with everything they say, but I try to do everything within reason.

On the other hand, Western Primary School's principal described relations at her school as 'taxing,' but 'cooperative.' She has found that policy directives from her administration are generally well received by the teachers at Western. The principal summarized the teacher-administration relations in the following way:

I find sometimes it [relations between administration and staff] is a bit taxing. You have to know when to let up, and to know when to press. What I find is that basically, they are very cooperative. I try to operate a what you would call a 'light reign.' I do not dictate. I would ask for cooperation and I usually get it; and very seldom are there problems because they know that if they come to me and say there's a problem, I don't say well go back and attend to your class. I know that if your mind is not at rest, you're not going to function properly. So go and get those little things out and I have found that I have teachers who when they're not well would go that extra mile and come in; so I try to go that extra mile with them. It's the same thing with the rest of the administration, we try to strike that same kind of rapport with each other and cooperate. You know, I say to them that we all have our differences of opinion, but we are really a family.

Indeed, I must concur with this view, as I found that the teachers at Western Primary were cooperative, and the principal very receptive to input of the teachers.
Internal dynamics

Within each school there are nuances that have an impact upon its operation and in turn can have an impact upon the implementation of the intended curriculum. I refer to these nuances as the 'internal dynamics' of the school context. At Western Primary School the practice of the mixed-ability setting raises several dilemmas for the classroom teacher. As I witnessed during my stay there, it was not always possible for classroom teachers to relay the content of the curriculum so that all the students had equal opportunities for grasping the key concepts. Questions concerning this dilemma appeared frequently in my field notes.

There are six reading groups in Ms. [D's] class. The sixth group (two students) is the 'bottom' group. I take these two outside under a tree and we work together reading from the point in the book that they had stopped. I discover that the 'remedial' readers really need specialized help; no wonder their comprehension skills are so weak; they are not recognizing basic words and are guessing with words they do not know. How does the teacher ensure that all levels of readers/students are satisfied? What of the frustration level of the teacher who may not be a reading specialist? Are all teachers suited to teach 'lower and upper levels'? The question of mixed ability and the implementation of the curriculum is a big one! Are the concepts etc. included in the reading curriculum guide being followed in the lower grades? It seems that there are some, especially remedial groups, who need help in such basics. Are [classroom] teachers, other than reading specialists equipped to deal with these skills? (Field notes: September 12, 1991)

Besides the problems regarding the instruction of reading, there were often cases when students in other subject areas had trouble grasping the basic concepts. This coupled with the fact that there was an average class size of 33, made it impossible for individualized instruction to take place. According to Ms. Dean, this has serious implications for the implementation of the curriculum.

But truthfully I prefer streaming because with the mixed-ability classrooms whereas you have your advantages you still have your disadvantages too because like take for instance this setting right here, where I have, I could fit . . . I could get about five groups out of this easily. I think the advantages, a lot of teachers seem to feel kinda like depressed if they get a whole class of 'backward' children so I guess the brighter ones would – I've even heard this remark among teachers that they have something to look forward to because they have one or two good children in the classroom so that gives them the incentive to come to school to work. But, with a
mixed-ability, I think it sort of pulls me back, I don't know. Because you know, you have to spend more time; if you really look at it you would have to give a lot of one on one and I think with this you don't have time to give one on one. . . . [Also,] you won't be able to . . . you would have a shallow scope, your sequence wouldn't be – like you have certain things, every teacher maps out like what they hope to achieve by say at the end of term one or whatever. I think if you have slower kids, not even say slower kids, let's say if you have like mixed-ability there's no way – at least we have experienced we don't hardly ever reach where we say we want to be at that time. We map out our work, but at the time that time rolls around we're not there and I think that if we, say if I had a class of bright children maybe we would've reached and had more time to spare. Even with the like I say the medium kids, I can bring them up, I have the ability to do that, and I would do that; and I think I can reach my goal, but when you have 'backward' children or what we call 'slower' children, I think they need to be pulled out of the classes. . . . pull those slower ones out and let someone work with them; just put them in a small class; I think we would do better then.

The reading coordinator concurred with Ms. Dean's view regarding the mixed-ability setting. She explained how she ran the reading programme at Western Primary.

Well, with the 'mixed-ability,' what we try to do is to get them all on their own level. With the teachers having, three or four reading groups within the class – some teachers felt that it is a bit too much to deal with, to give of their best to the four or five groups within the contained classroom. So with mixing them what we did, we got all the children who are on the same level. They might not be in the same grade, but they are on the same reading book and they get the maximum benefit from the teacher rather than her having to deal with four or five groups. They can deal with just that one group. I think that our children benefit, to a certain degree more than by separate classroom [within a mixed classroom]. . . . I feel as if we have to pull the students out; we are thinking of the students receiving the maximum benefits from the curriculum. Even though they are pulled out from the class, I think they still benefit from what instructions they are given. Because the instruction is to really bring them up to the class standard. So I feel as if they have benefited from that.

Still, Western Primary School's principal has very definitive views about the mixed-ability setting and justified her decision to use this setting at her school in the following way:

There are strengths [of the mixed-ability setting]. You could never have a class with everyone at the same level even within the class . . . if you were to stream the class, you are going to have various abilities within the class. Yes, and so with the mixed abilities, you end up with about three groups and sometimes of course there may be more. . . . I don't see a big problem because if you have all of the plans and a little extra work on the part of the teacher . . . all it requires is some planning. . . . I feel that the biggest problem with the mixed-ability is that sometimes you [teachers] don't want to go that extra mile.
Yet, despite what some teachers at Western revealed concerning their dissatisfaction with the mixed-ability setting, the principal insisted that many were reluctant to take the 'slower' groups. As she explained:

[I suggested that] maybe what we should do is stream the children. We should have one stream for the very bright, one for the average and one stream for the very slow which would be the smallest group. I said that some of you would have to have instead of thirty-five, maybe forty in a class, thirty-five in the smaller groups. Then in addition to that, I would like a volunteer for the slower group. Nobody volunteered. . . . I have worked with both situations, the streaming and non-streaming, and to my way of thinking the non-streamed is better. I find that with the streamed, if the child starts school in the bottom stream, it is more than likely that the child will finish school in the bottom stream. I've found that you have to really manipulate that skillfully for it not to happen. There has to be a concerted effort on the part of administrators and teachers for it not to happen.

The issue of timetables is another dynamic that has an impact upon curriculum implementation. Despite the subject periods' breakdown that the Ministry of Education distributed in 1991, as Western's principal revealed, there were certain decisions that she reserved for herself as 'the person in charge' of Western Primary School.

Well up until we got that breakdown we were left with carte blanche. We were able to do it as we saw fit, and I think that I will continue to do that because I feel that I am in the school and I'm supposed to be in charge; I should know what my students' greatest needs are. So no way would I give seven periods to say reading and four to science if I know that they need about two more periods, or whatever, you know? That's an example . . . So what I propose to do is, and I would respectfully let them [Ministry of Education officials] know, I propose to put emphasis where I feel it is needed. And at the moment it is needed in math and language arts. I feel that if they cannot read and do things like that, they cannot read the social studies book, they cannot read the science and all of that.

Then, there is the examination system and its impact upon the implementation of the intended curriculum. The ever-looming spectre of assessment is one that affects not only the content of the curriculum, but the manner in which classroom teachers relay it. This is a particular issue at the upper primary level where students prepare to take the Grade Level Assessment Test (GLAT) after the sixth grade year. Interestingly this assessment test, administered near the end of the third, sixth, and eight grade years, is a series that is a 'result of a collaborative effort between The Bahamas Ministry of Education and The
Ms. Dean explained that, for her, the bottom line was accountability and assessment.

Davis: What would be the guiding force determining what you decide to do? What you teach? Or how you teach?

Ms. Dean: ... Even if the kids are my primary concern there's no point in me saying [to the principal] ... I think I'm just going to do a certain book and then I'm the only class doing it when it is supposed to be an inter-school thing, you see. So I have to look at the consequences for both me and my students.

Davis: Consequences for you in terms of accountability to the Ministry?

Ms. Dean: Right. Right.

Davis: Consequences for the students in terms of?

Ms. Dean: Academic outcomes.

Davis: Via standardization or assessment?

Ms. Dean: Right.

Davis: That assessment then is . . .

Ms. Dean: Assessment pretty much sums it up.

Summary

Ms. Dean and the other classroom teachers at Western Primary School must deal with several factors when translating the intended curriculum. The one that stood out above all, in my discussions with classroom teachers and in my observations, was the lack of teaching resources. Indeed, teachers at Western Primary School have been very innovative, but I wonder how often teachers draw the line as frustration sets in and the energies are no longer there. This is difficult to determine as I was at Western Primary during the first term, and have not witnessed or talked to teachers about what their
particular experiences are later in the school year. Yet, if Ms. Dean's remark about her
marking responsibilities was any indication, I am inclined to conclude that little time
remains for 'extras.'

Now when this pace really sets in I won't have time to sit down like this and mark.
Because at least if these set of kids are any indication, if the ones gone [last year's
group] are any indication, because they work just like that, as soon as you think
you're finish something, it's something else to do. You have to keep on working
so that's why I had a lot of them ... I had a lot of peer marking because no way
could one teacher keep up with that. So, sometimes I'll mark a little during music
or when [they go to science] ... or if they go to p.e. [physical education] I'll just
gen that time to mark whatever I could mark.

The teachers of Western Primary School enjoy an amicable relationship with their
administrators that enhances a cooperative environment at the school. Yet, although
teachers may be willing to facilitate the curriculum implementation process there were other
impediments that surfaced. The issue of resources was prominent and presented a
challenge. Western has met this challenge, primarily through the cooperation of some
parents and guardians of students who purchase books and donate funds to the library.
Still, most of the resources that Western used were foreign and this would obviously have
an impact upon the implementation of the intended, indigenously focused curriculum.

Mrs. Carol Sweeting and Central Primary School

We believe that no barrier should separate a child
From the best education a school can offer.
That neither race nor sex nor ethnic heritage nor geography
Nor social or economic status
May be used to deny a child the opportunity to acquire
A solid foundation
In reading, writing and mathematics
In critical thinking and in the values of friendship,
Compassion, honesty, and self-esteem. (Excerpt from Central Primary School's
Mission Statement, 1991)

Central Primary School is situated in a lower to middle income community. It is a
Grade C school (301-700 students). At the time of my stay Central had a Haitian student
population of 19%, while the remainder of the students was Bahamian. Teachers instruct
students in an academically-streamed setting.

There are more than 30 teachers at Central Primary School. The administrative staff
has a principal, vice principal, and a senior mistress. Central Primary shares its school's
grounds with a Grade B primary school (701-1,000 students). They are both located in
buildings that the government once used to house a junior and senior school during the
years before independence. Identical in physical structure, they are near mirror images of
each other. There are four blocks of classrooms at Central Primary School, and a fifth one
that is shared with the neighbouring school. There is also a library, that during the time of
my visit functioned as a science lab, a music room, and four rooms at the front of the
school used by the administrative staff. Central Primary has three fifth, and three sixth
grades. Carol Sweeting's group was the top fifth grade.

Mrs. Sweeting's classroom is at the back of the school's grounds. She shares this
block with the other two fifth grade classes. The only entrance to her classroom faces the
south. Sets of aluminum-paned windows, about five feet in length are located along the
northern, and southern walls. The chalkboard hangs on the western wall. The 30 students
in Mrs. Sweeting's class sit at desks arranged in groups of five or six. At the beginning of
my stay, the teacher's desk was located along the south-western wall, but later Mrs.
Sweeting moved it to the north east end of the classroom.

The bulletin boards and walls in Mrs. Sweeting's classroom are attractively
decorated with subject matter from the language arts, mathematics, social studies, science,
and health curricula. The national symbols of The Bahamas hang above the social studies
bulletin board on the western wall. At the far northern end of her classroom there is a
cupboard on whose door the class duty roster hangs. Above this door, Mrs. Sweeting has
placed the school's motto, "Hard work is the essence of success."

When I finally arranged a meeting with the principal of Central Primary School, it
was during the week that teachers returned to school after their summer break. She and I
had spoken on the phone, but she suggested that since staff rosters were still being finalized, we would meet during the last week of August when teachers were due to return after their summer vacation. The principal, a middle-aged woman who has been in the public school system for about thirty years, was anxious to hear about the details of my study. Our first meeting was cordial. Given the specifications of the type of teacher that I was interested in working with, she recommended Mrs. Sweeting.

I first met Mrs. Sweeting at the time of my first meeting with the principal. Unfortunately this meeting was in the principal's office. I was reluctant to discuss the details of Mrs. Sweeting's possible participation in the study at this venue. But, as it appeared that the principal was not going to leave, I was explicit in expressing that the final decision rested with her, although her principal had recommended her. In addition, I left the teacher's letter of participation with her, and suggested that I contact her later to confirm that she would be willing to participate.

During one of our later discussions, Mrs. Sweeting and I spoke about the principal's recommendation of her as the teacher with whom I could work. Indeed, it was obvious from the onset that the principal held Mrs. Sweeting in very high esteem, and that this had played a part in her decision. As Mrs. Sweeting revealed:

She was not going to give you a lazy teacher. She was not going to give you a teacher who's late and doesn't do her work. I do my work. ... I'm serious about teaching. I do my work and try to get on where I can. I'm not looking for recognition or pushing myself. Wherever I can help I'm gonna, and these are the things that they [administrators] recognize. These are things that go on the ACR [Annual Confidential Report] under my personal characteristics.

Mrs. Sweeting certainly 'did her work' and often pushed herself beyond that which might be required. A woman in her thirties, Carol Sweeting is a mother of two boys, has taught for 18 years, and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree. Her soft spoken and gentle approach of relating to her students was evident at every level of her teaching practices. When introducing me to her class I could detect her sense of pride as she said: "I won't say
anything else as Miss Davis will see for herself what 'gems' I have." She shared her love and enthusiasm for teaching, with her students, at almost every opportunity.

I am not sorry that I became a teacher. I do not regret becoming a teacher because I love teaching boys and girls. I love sharing what I know . . . and you know sometimes I learn things from you. Sometimes you say things that I have not heard so I learn from you as well.

Despite the long hours required for lesson preparation, marking, and family and church responsibilities, she remains highly motivated. She based her sense of motivation not on Annual Confidential Reports or Ministry of Education recognition, but on the successes of her 'gems.'

I love to teach. I love children and at the end of the year, or at the end of the day, I feel good. I know that something I did, something I encountered to help in the development of Tom, of Susan, it made some good in his or her life and seeing them go in the Junior High School . . . students coming up to me who are now in the Defense Force and who have really made something out of their life; [this] makes me feel good . . . they would say, 'I remember the little things that you taught me; it makes me the type person that I am today.' That makes you feel good. That's my motivation. It doesn't have to come from the Ministry in black print. It's the children. Seeing them make something of themselves is my reward.

Teacher's subject preference: A case for subject specialists?

As Western's social studies representative (appointed by the principal), Mrs. Sweeting has strong opinions about the state of the current primary school curriculum. Her immediate interest and involvement in the recent writing of social studies textbooks for use in the primary schools of The Bahamas, served as a springboard into our discussions of other topics. Yet, to begin with, I was interested in finding out if her particular interest in social studies, or for that matter any teacher's interest and preference for a particular subject, created a conflict as far as the implementation of the curriculum is concerned. Furthermore, I felt that Mrs. Sweeting might offer an added perspective in this regard as she has taught at both the junior high and primary levels.

I think they [classroom teachers] put emphasis in the particular areas of strengths and I think the reason why they are shying away from some subjects is because
they are not confident; probably themselves they're not certain of how to teach a
particular subject. It's not in the curriculum; we do not have it in the curriculum,
how it should be done. You know, you just get a skeleton in the curriculum... [And]
because we've been taught to teach all the subjects and we didn't go in depth
with any one subject, like a p.e. [physical education] teacher was trained to teach
just p.e. – You know I didn't know vowels sounds and word recognition... I
learned that after I came out of college... And seeing something like that might
make you shy away; even if it comes up in the curriculum, it's still not specifically
laid out how to go about teaching it.

To deal with the problems that the generalist teacher might encounter in the
implementation of the curriculum, sometimes principals in the primary schools assign
classroom teachers to teach a certain subject to one or more grade levels. During my stay at
Central Primary School, there were six such 'specialists.' There were specialists for
science, music, arts and craft, and physical education. In addition, there were also a
reading coordinator and 'remedial teacher' on staff. Yet, as the science specialist explained
there are pitfalls in this situation as well.

[N]ow that I have taken over the science programme it's more, I guess, it's more
helpful, but [the curriculum officer]... she doesn't like this sort of specializing in
primary schools. As she puts it, when you have someone specializing, most
teachers tend to forget about that particular subject because they don't have to do it,
and if the person is removed from the school then the programme would most likely
collapse. So when [the principal]... asked me to specialize in science I told her of
the concerns of [the curriculum officer]... I told her that I would do it and that's
why you see the teachers actually coming with their classes. I told her that I would
do it as an on-going workshop thing; so I set up for a year. The teachers are
actually there. They could take notes; they could bring their marking or whatever to
do at that time. They could also be taking notes and listening. So whenever I am
not teaching science, or assigned to a class, or at a new school, the science
programme could still go on.

Still, whether teachers feel confident or not has some effect upon the success of such
programmes. In addition, we must consider whether time for extra preparation or research
is available. Mrs. Sweeting explained the dilemma in this way.

[P]rimary school teachers are not certain about how much content to teach and they
would have to go and research information and if that's a lazy teacher, she's not
gonna go into the library and search. In the primary school we've been told to
scratch the surface or tell them about it, but just the bare skeleton. Once they get
into the secondary schools, they will go more in depth because then you would
have the specialist; so then you find some teachers saying things like I can't find the
information for the particular topic that I need. I'm not certain how much content to
teach, or things like that.
Even if teachers are inclined to put in that extra effort, there are other factors that influence just how much time is available. As this teacher of 40 years' experience explained:

You would find some [teachers] who would really do that... Just go along with whatever is there. Others again — again it takes the effort or the concern... to push forward. If, what I — how I have them working now, I have them already set up. I would work on next week's lesson; I would start something new. In order to, if I depend on work for one day or say wait for a weekend at home I wouldn't be able to because I have home work... I say home work... I just can't leave it for Saturday or Sunday. Those days are full for me at all times with church activities, so I would seek a time to do that here at school. When I leave from school I leave that here, school work. So that's an effort... If I do leave any [for] over the weekend, maybe very short ones that I am just planning for a Monday, before I send this [lesson plan] book in, I would draw lines and quickly run over it to see if there are any mistakes.

The issue of the specialist teacher and the implementation of the intended curriculum was further highlighted during my stay at Central Primary School when the principal suspended the class periods of several specialist subjects (physical education, arts and craft, and music) for six weeks. The principal made the decision to suspend these classes as she wanted to enter the school in the annual Junkanoo (a traditional Bahamian festival where costumed revellers dance to the sound of cowbells, whistles and goat-skin drums) competition during December, and the expertise of the specialist teachers was needed. Time for preparations was limited and she wanted to ensure that they would make the deadline. As a result, there was a possibility that students might not have the benefit of instruction in these subjects during that time if teachers decided not to use the time for the suspended subject. Additionally, classroom teachers often used these periods to mark assignments, prepare lessons, and complete other teaching responsibilities. Many teachers were annoyed that the principal had not consulted them about the suspension, and suggested that situations like these contribute to the already low morale that exists among the teaching population in The Bahamas today. As another fifth grade teacher at Central Primary explained, actions like the suspension have a negative impact upon teaching practices:

It does not make a very positive — to me, it's a negative impact on the child. These kids were prepared. They got prepared... and without any indication, they didn't
inform you on Friday. . . . they could have informed you on Friday, so then I
could have geared my work towards helping to teach the subject or teach another
subject and go to her [the specialist teacher] and say probably get her scheme, let
me know how you're gonna do it. Let me know so I can help with that. . . . I
don't see the need for that many [teachers], even two being pulled into that
[preparation for Junior Junkanoo]. Six periods extra with no consideration. No
one to assist with the class. No one comes out if the office. Nothing changes. No
one comes out of the office to say things have changed for the classroom teacher;
they remain at their post. . . . The thing about it is there are so few teachers who
take this thing seriously, that it would not bother them. Because teachers are afraid
of— they are intimidated. They are afraid to speak out and say this should not be.
They would get into little groups and whisper, but when the principal is about to,
maybe if she's approaching, 'sh sh,' rather than going and saying 'well we think
that this is wrong'; we don't have enough backbone.

Still, I question whether the issue is one of 'backbone' or one tied to the teacher
evaluation practices of the Ministry of Education bureaucracy. Indeed, there are several
factors that present themselves when we consider these teacher evaluation practices. In
particular, it is important to explore the perceptions that Bahamian policy makers have of
these practices, and the impact of these perceptions upon curriculum implementation. This
issue relates to the wider one of support services. Through my discussions with the
teachers at Central Primary School, I sought their perceptions of the scope and nature of the
support they get from the Ministry of Education, as well as from their immediate school
administration, in assisting them to implement the intended curriculum. In turn, I was
interested in determining whether channels of communication were bilateral. These
perceptions were best sought by discussing the issue of resources.

Resources

Resource materials at Central Primary School are limited. Classroom teachers
revealed that as far as resources were concerned, except for mathematics, reading, and
language arts textbooks, as well as a science kit, they were on their own. What then do
they use? As the grade five and six coordinator at Central Primary disclosed:

The spelling text, the math text, the language arts text, they have been put in the
schools by the Ministry. Reading, I mustn't leave out reading. Now they might
not bring in everything that we need at once; it's a gradual process. They may start at the grade one and two levels and work themselves up year after year, but they make a great effort, and then they come in to remind us about LRU [the Learning Resources Unit]; we know that we can go there and use whatever they have to offer, especially when it comes to science. Science is stressed quite a bit. . . .

[But,] when I came back after working on the family life and health curriculum, I found that we did not have appropriate texts to help us to teach health or family life. I went and looked through the secretary's office where we have most of the texts, and I was not pleased with my findings. . . . I remember going around; I would ask a teacher from every [grade] level what they had to work from and the response was not good. You would find that they had to borrow from this person or borrow from another person, and I feel as if we should have had some resources in the school to help us. . . . Therefore, the [implementation] process will have to be slow because teachers will have to work with what they could find. But many of our teachers though, they have friends in other schools, and so they usually use those people. They borrow [resources].

The question that still lingers in my mind is: Does it take experiences, like the one that the coordinator described above, for administrators, and ultimately the Ministry of Education bureaucracy, to appreciate the situation that the classroom teacher faces regarding the shortage of resources? What type of feedback does the Ministry of Education officials and the school's administration offer regarding resources, or any other matter related to the daily practices of teachers? How do teachers at Central Primary School perceive this feedback, and what impact does this have upon their teaching practices? What implications does this have for the intended curriculum? Mrs. Sweeting stated that:

For information coming down from Ministry, I would say it has some effect on us. Too, I believe, I don't want to be wrong by saying this, but I believe there are times when things do come from the Ministry and it's here and we ought to know about it, but maybe not until some problem comes up that these things are prolonged and then here, this is what Ministry of Education stipulates . . . this is what should be done; and [the principal] of course, she tries to get into us whatever, and I find that sometimes it's here and it just sits there and we need to know the different codes of ethics, whatever we need to know. So when it comes to that, the average teacher who does not want to ask, I don't know if I want to say to that teacher she just doesn't care. If the attitude is one that it doesn't matter, [the teacher would say] 'Well I didn't hear anything, I don't know so I'll do my own thing.' You will have those teachers who, or you will have us not obeying what rules that we should. . . . [I]f you're not aware of certain things how can you follow them?

Also, concerns exist regarding liaisons between the classroom teacher and curriculum officers. As Mrs. Sweeting continued:

We need to periodically, yearly or every school year send out just a book list maybe of books that we as the teachers can use to get more information from. We're
looking at Carifta, Caricom and subjects like that . . . they change so very often; and even information on the Quincentennial, that should have been ready from sometime, some circular [sent] into the schools. That's what we're looking at that not only from Headquarters but within the school itself, as well as at the Ministry of Education. Persons who are in charge of certain areas, like the various subject officers, I sometimes wonder what they're doing; because as head of a particular department, I think you should be abreast of what goes on, and you should send out circulars into the primary schools or the secondary schools. That's your department and that's all you have to deal with.

To complicate matters, the extent of networking among teachers in the education system is questionable. Are there truly opportunities available for effective teacher-teacher networking? Does the structure of the educational system allow for these kinds of sharing and learning opportunities to occur? The situation that exists between two schools that share a common campus is illustrative of this point. Mrs. Sweeting explained just how close, and yet so far, Central Primary School and its neighbouring school are.

I don't think we are as close as we should be . . . Yeah, but I am not talking about the school where we teach together, I am talking about teachers and even students. . . . The Ministry of Education needs to do something about this. Either make it one complex . . . But you know, I would like to see, like Professional Days. We did it once . . . when we came in the first week of school. That's the week before the children came in which is in August. We would come in and have resource persons and teachers from here and teachers from there would join together and we would pool ideas and share ideas. It could be a grade six teacher from here, or a grade six teacher from there and we would come together. We are just so separate.

Even the nature of the resources that classroom teachers at Central Primary School used raises further concerns regarding the implementation of the intended curriculum. Most resources supplied by both the Ministry of Education and through the school’s fund raising efforts were not indigenous. But, as I discovered from Mrs. Sweeting, this was a recent development.

No, we don't have much Bahamian material at all. There are some English books that we used one time, and I'll show you another one that's in the classroom that we used at one time that's Caribbean; but that has since been passed over, over the years. . . . We just did not stick to it. Originally that's what the '82 curriculum intended to do and we did bring in Caribbean books, pictures of the Caribbean, pictures that we could apply here to The Bahamas. It had coloured children. It had the market setting. The bananas and fruits. I'm thinking of an English book now where it is really more Caribbean. But we moved away from them; I don't know why; I don't know if it is cheaper getting it from America or what's the reason for them. . . . Yeah I'm looking at '85 and onward. That's when I realized these HBJs
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., Silver Burndett and they moved away from the 'Caribbean Math.' I remember we had the 'Caribbean Math,' 'Caribbean English.' We just moved to those. Those [the Caribbean texts] just were books starting to collect dust in the closets.

It is not clear why policy makers supported this move to the American texts, but as Mrs. Sweeting suggested, perhaps it was a matter of economics. The availability of indigenous materials in Central Primary's library was no more encouraging for the prospects of the implementation of the intended curriculum. As the former teacher in charge of the library stated:

My biggest quest was to, I wish that I could have gotten more Bahamian books in the library. It's about 95% foreign... 85, not to exaggerate. Most recently we've been getting into the library biographies of Bill Cosby, Michael Jackson, E.T.... which to my mind is not indigenous to us. What I had in the library was Telcine Turner's literature, Bush Medicine by Mrs. Leslie Higgs and that was about it. You would get one or two items coming out of what you would call the West Indies, and I think that would probably be Jamaican... what we did get Caribbean-wise would be out of Jamaica.

Through my discussions with Central Primary's teachers and administrators, I tried to determine what the general attitude was about the use of primarily foreign materials to implement a Bahamian curriculum. Indeed, this was an issue that continued to perplex me throughout my time in the Bahamian primary school classrooms. Although several administrators felt that teachers were not too concerned, many classroom teachers told me otherwise. One teacher put it this way:

[Teachers] realize that to teach Bahamian children we have to really think Bahamian and implement as much as possible, change where we can in the textbooks, so our children can understand better what it is we are called upon to do.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Sweeting expressed the hope that more Bahamian books would become available:

Well, I would hope to see the day when we have our own books... I find that these [foreign] books are okay, but there are some things in the books that are just not adapted to our situation; of course you have to change it around... we can use them, I have no problems with that, other than I would like to see more Bahamian materials available. Not so much the maths books, but the social studies and even language.
It is crucial to recognize at this point that the classroom teacher is evidently a key agent in the implementation process. If she is not prepared to incorporate indigenous content, then that void remains. Two teachers at Central confirmed this very dilemma in various ways.

Teacher A

The teacher has to have a good bit of methodology so she can use various methods to implement her own thing thus making it seem that she is gearing toward what they [policy makers] suggest is Bahamianisation. . . . For example, this exercise that my class is doing now talks about an election every four years — ours is once every five years. So, we have to change it and tell the children it's not. . . . let them know that that is one [textbook] that has been printed in the U.S. And then they talk about various animals, birds that are just not indigenous to The Bahamas . . . This morning we were reading about a basset, the children started to call it basket. . . . [It] takes away from your ability [to implement the curriculum] because if you were to go along with it as it is, then I feel that the children still would not be getting all that's due them as far as Bahamianisation is concerned.

Teacher B

It's up to the teacher to relate that and break in our indigenous materials here or wherever they feel a concept is presented in a very Americanized way so that the children can identify it. It's up to the teacher to relate that to our indigenous formation, our indigenous materials. When they are talking about the tundra and forest and different ecosystems, that's all well and good. That comes into 'Ecology and Conservation.' Different ecosystems, you do that from the book or even as a prerequisite to that unit in the book. We could actually take children into the swamps, the mangrove swamp and say let's examine, this is a Bahamian ecosystem and we are going to talk next week about ecosystems as it relates to the world and the survival of different organisms. So let's go into the mangrove swamp, this week and examine our Bahamian ecosystem, so when we do it in the book we can see which place our ecosystem is because in an American book they won't have anything on the mangrove swamps. They are going to talk about the tundra, the desert and forest and woods. So it is up to the [classroom] teachers.

Literature, a component of the language arts curriculum, introduces another aspect of resource availability and its impact upon the implementation of the intended curriculum at Central Primary School. That is, many teachers felt that they needed a minimum number of books with which to conduct their lessons effectively, and so that students could have access to subject content more readily. The situation with the instruction of literature was particularly illustrative, as there were not sufficient copies of one book, indigenous or
foreign, for classes to read together. This fact was made evident to me as I observed Mrs. Sweeting conducting her weekly literature lesson as a read-aloud session.

[Mrs. S] then prepares for literature (read aloud). They are reading, [Mrs. S] is doing the reading, Charlotte's Web. Why was this book chosen? Used by all grade 5's? What about copies for the entire class? How does the lack of copies impact upon the implementation of the curriculum? She reviews by asking for names of the characters and their characteristics. All this students must remember from the last reading session? I see no evidence of notes. [Mrs. S] tells class to write the following in their 'all subjects book.'

Grade 5C  
Monday 7th October, 1991  
Literature  
Charlotte's Web

1. What was the title of chapter four in our book 'Charlotte's Web'?  
2. Describe Wilbur's mood.  
3. Which animal in the chapter was described as being crafty?  
4. How did Wilbur feel at the end of the chapter?  
The word, 'Templeton' is written on the board. This spelling is placed on board at request of one student who wanted the spelling. Certainly the availability of books would address this kind of problem? (Field notes: October 7, 1991)

When I questioned Mrs. Sweeting about the way she conducted her literature lessons she responded in the following manner:

They should get more so each class in the whole school could get a few. . . . One [copy of Charlotte's Web] came in the group. . . . I think, we should have a [literature] book just like we have an English book. We have one for maths and I think that we should also have a literature book. A set copy of books that we can use for literature, so we can get the full benefit of the skills that are involved in the teaching of literature. Right now, there's no books for that. . . . I have to go out and find the poems and then I have to make up my questions from it according from what I have learnt from the courses that I have done on, how to ask certain questions . . . how to bring out of children different feelings, emotions when they read these poems, or even listen to some of the stories. . . . [And,] they don't keep them [stencilled notes]. They lose them; they step on them and eventually they end up in the garbage. But if they had a book and having a book or text to go by and just putting it into their own writing books it would be much better.

Still, even further, what I learnt about 'textbook politics' leads me to question the consistency and seriousness of the efforts of policy makers as they go about the business of curriculum implementation. The following comments of Mrs. Sweeting cast this doubt:

Just look at our records. Just look at our social studies book. I was told in the summer that they were trying to get the teacher's manual on the way. But the Ministry [of Education] hasn't got the approval yet. This is Caribbean, this is
Longman Caribbean and yet the Ministry hasn't got the go ahead yet for the books. These books were supposed to be in the classroom. So we [social studies teachers] toiled over these books and getting them ready and Books 1, 2 and 3 should have been in the bookstores. We have completed them. We completed 4, 5 and 6 as well. 4, 5 and 6 were promised to us for 1992.

Even when the time comes to consider the purchasing of new textbooks, apparently, the decision does not favour those of an indigenous nature. In the following quotation, the vice principal, who was also the reading coordinator at Central, explained how the Ministry of Education has selected the reading texts in previous years.

Well from time to time, the Ministry [of Education] changes the material, okay? And I think some schools were piloting some books from Scott, Foresman [Co.] and they in turn let the Ministry know the material was really good for The Bahamas and so we started using Scott, Foresman [Co.]. Now the Ministry is about to change . . . to, well we have been looking at a series from Silver Burdett [Ginn], one from Houghton Mifflin and one from H.B.J. [Harcourt Brace Jovanovich]. . . . They're all American material. . . . I don't know what the hang up is on the Caribbean material. I don't know, because I'm from the Caribbean and I know there are materials suitable for all Caribbean areas, and I was a bit disappointed that no Caribbean material was selected, which would be, I think, more in scope with what the Bahamian children would need. However, the skills and the components in these books are quite good. . . . but the content, some of the content is far fetched. I think the Caribbean material would be more at home with Bahamian students. [In reading for example,] they could relate more to the children, lands and the homes and what have you. This is my feeling mind you. [Yet,] I still think that if a child is going to learn to read, a child could read; but any material relating to their specific needs and area would be an asset.

Is the purchasing of foreign texts a matter of economics? Or, is it a matter of competition that exists between publishing houses? Should Caribbean publishers have to compete with the foreign firms? After all, should it not also be a matter of which textbook content is most suitable? Central Primary School's science specialist addressed the issue of textbook selection in this way:

When the '82 curriculum was implemented, we got a whole series of Science Step by Step. I wonder if it was Heinemann, I can't say right off hand, but it is in the library. We have a whole set of materials, Science Step by Step and they are in the cupboard. How they are set up is that teachers and children activities are like a booklet, a workbook form. But the teachers and children don't really use them because of the way it is presented. They feel that it is not, the teachers don't like how it is presented. . . . [T]hey don't like the set up. It's that, first of all; they don't think it is presented attractively enough. That's the feedback that I've gotten; because everything is in black and white. Then the pages themselves are not the pages that could stand the wear and tear. It is more sort of newsprint paper. So they don't like the actual, the way each chapter is presented. The presentation of
the chapters they weren't pleased with it. . . . The concepts are quite clear and the activities are quite clear, but I think the main thing is they don't feel that it is for children to look at and to keep their interest. The way it is presented is very dull. That's what [but] the concepts are quite clear. . . . [There's] everything on bush medicine, anything at all. It may not make as much use as I'd like, but many teachers, they do not make use of them.

Whether the choice of foreign materials is a question of economics is not clear.

Yet, what is clear is that these foreign, specifically American, firms market their products well. They entice many schools with sets of free textbooks that they offer under the guise of pilot programmes. In addition, these firms sponsor workshops for teachers from time to time. When I collected my data, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. held a series of workshops for primary school teachers. Using the analysis of the last Grade Level Assessment (GLAT) results, the facilitator demonstrated ways that teachers could improve the weaker skills of students, obviously by using texts published by this firm.

However, the intended curriculum suffers when schools have various publishing firms offering to pilot programmes. Those schools that are offered pilot programmes end up using different books and following different programmes than those used by the other schools. This has an impact upon the intended curriculum in ways that policy makers and administrators may not acknowledge, particularly in the light of the attractiveness of the 'free' resources. As Central Primary School's principal explained, the Ministry of Education's policies regarding textbook selection are not consistent or uniformly implemented:

You see this is what happens; this is what happens over the years with the reading program. [The] Ministry [of Education] gave us Scott, Foresman [Co.] right, and over the years people decided that they'd just change and switch. . . . I must say principals or schools decided that they would change the reading program; I brought this question up with [the Director of Education] when we went to him a few months ago in September. I asked him were we supposed to change those reading programs that were placed in the schools. He said no you were not. Yet, a lot of people went and asked other companies to pilot different programs and that's how over the years it isn't standardized any more. . . . In the language arts [also], because we find a lot of people have been piloting different books. You see, the Ministry has given us, first we had Language Arts in the Primary Schools and then they changed to Silver Burdett [Ginn]. . . . I don't mind having two sets of language arts books to use; but the point is the Ministry has supplied both. So we had two sets of books for language arts. With the reading, the Ministry supplied
the first set of books; we had Scott, Foresman [Co.] and then they didn't supply any more. So the school has to buy their own workbooks. So the schools just took it upon themselves and just bought what they wanted or what they felt like.

In seeking to find materials that are 'presented attractively enough,' this translates into expense, both for the classroom teacher and the student. At Central Primary School, there was a book fee that the administrators earmarked to cover the purchase of student workbooks and basic supplies. In addition, if teachers needed materials to assist in their daily classroom activities, they often purchased them themselves. Several teachers at Central Primary expressed their concern about this practice.

Teacher A

Teacher: Parents have to pay for the child's reading book and the child's math book and the child's study book also. We have a basic book fee required here as well.

Davis: So what happens if they are not able to purchase their own books?

Teacher: I would take one [student's book] and use for so many.

Teacher B

Very little [resources come from the Ministry]. Last week we were given a [note] book, one for each child. If I'm not mistaken, I think that over the years ... I don't make demands on the principal ... things that I need I buy ... I think that they take this fact for granted because when they're issuing paper and all of this, they never give me any. I go out and buy my own.

Teacher C

From the Ministry [we get] very little. The most, I bought them; and you get a few sheets of paper, charts to fix your [bulletin] board up. They give you a few sheets. I don't think that's from the Ministry. I think the school buys and they share and each teacher gets three or four of whatever different colours. But I am not an artist. I am not good in drawing. So what I don't get from coloured pictures, I would just give the children time to do it or ask somebody to just do it for me [rather] than to do without ... whatever I have I put up.

Teacher D

I find my own [materials] ... I order books, I use Drago [an American firm] for charts ... that punctuation chart and the health science charts at the back, I got from there ... The [United] States ... sometimes I buy them here [in The Bahamas], but they are more expensive here ... 'expensive,' key word.
Still, when teachers tried to avoid the expense by using the chalkboard, this was not without its own implementation dynamic. This sixth grade teacher at Central explained her approach to chalkboard work.

Sometimes you have the kind of workers up front [in the office] who don't give you what you want, what you need. You send a stencil up there and if you don't go yourself or keep behind them, you don't get it . . . I use the board a lot. I don't mind it, but I am getting older. My shoulders get tired. I don't bother much with the stencil. But, if it is something that I really need I would stencil it, other than that I use the board . . . Drawbacks, the drawback is when you have the slow learners. With the slow learners who have to take a longer time to take it [notes] down [from the chalkboard], but the positive part is helping with the handwriting and such . . . That's the positive part . . . That's the positive part of it. I would say the negative part is the slow ones . . . If we had the materials you would say – well then I could say page so and so and you write this . . . But even the questions I have to write it on the [chalk] board and whatever examples, I have to do it on the [chalk]board.

Learning environment

Tied to this issue of resources and its impact upon the intended curriculum, is that of the general learning environment. This was a particular concern for Mrs. Sweeting. In fact, my impression of Central Primary School, seen through the lens of her classroom, with its uneven floors and extreme heat, raised several questions. As Mrs. Sweeting put it:

I wish my classroom . . . I don't know I seem to have a problem with the correct setting of the classroom. I seem to be switching all the time. Right now I changed it again thinking that I'm doing the best, and I'm looking at it yesterday and I could hardly move around comfortably. I want to change it again. Probably if I had good furniture I wouldn't have this problem. . . . I felt I was giving myself more space [when I rearranged my classroom], and then I had some children who were having problems with seeing the [chalk]board, and I wanted to bring them closer to the [chalk]board, and to alleviate me having always having to close the windows.

Addressing the wider question of the learning environment beyond her classroom, she continued:

Well you know it's always been my belief that learning takes place in an environment that is conducive to learning, and it must be a comfortable environment. If you're in classroom where the desks are falling down, hitting the floor with a noise, it's going to annoy the children. The children are going to be annoyed when they are writing and the desk is rocking and moving . . . Right now
we're doing the best; learning is taking place; but why is the Ministry taking so long? [The Director of Education] said that they're going to finish furnishing out the new school . . . and until that is done we won't get anything. He also feels the children have not taken care of the furniture . . . vandalism, the children are just not taking care . . . I don't know what school that was, but it surely was not [Central] Primary . . . Terrible floors. Do you see the floors? The holes and the dents going down. I think it's just wear and tear. Those [pieces of] furniture were with us for some time. I have wooden desks that are termite-ridden. So I don't think it's mishandling of furniture when it comes to us [Central Primary].

Mrs. Sweeting was not the only teacher at Central Primary School who had concerns about the conditions under which classroom teachers and students must work.

The following field note entry relayed my observation that even the school's administrators had similar concerns.

I walk over to the front by the principal's office and we greet each other. She talks of the mosquitoes and foul smell in the classroom area where I am. I indicate that the heat is the biggest thing for me [as it must be for the students and the teachers] especially yesterday. She indicated that she would check into the [electrical] switches as they are faulty in most of the classrooms in the block where I am (Field notes: October 8, 1991).

Attributing poor working conditions as one of the reasons why the morale of teachers in the country was so low, this classroom teacher at Central explained that:

Some are not satisfied with their working conditions . . . Those who were here a long time ago, they are now settled in this. They're satisfied. Those that were here a long time ago and watched the place deteriorate, they are looking back at the good old days when it wasn't so bad. But, if you just come into it, you look around and you're appalled. So you say 'This is where these children have to be all day? This is what these teachers are working with?' But, for those who were here, teachers who were here long ago when things were better, buildings were better, they had not deteriorated to this extent, they just look back and say, 'Well it wasn't always like this.' [But,] they're [teachers] not inclined to do anything. They're satisfied; it's a place to work and at the end of the day, it's where my bread is buttered. Old desks, old chairs . . . these were here forever more. For a long long time these old things were here.

Internal dynamics

Like all schools, Central Primary has internal dynamics that have an impact upon the way it functions as an organization, how teachers function within it, and thereby translate the intended curriculum. The greatest dynamic centres around the fact that the
classes were academically-streamed. What influence does the academically-streamed setting have upon the translation of the intended curriculum? The frustration of teachers in this setting, particularly those of the lower groups, became evident to me during my first days at Central Primary. I reflected upon the extent of this frustration in my field notes following my attendance at a school's staff meeting:

[Mrs. Sweeting] says that as far as the curriculum is concerned, she often finds, when with a top stream, that she is always ahead. So where do the two other streams find themselves? Is it important to these teachers that they complete the requirements of the curriculum at all costs? I recall the frustration of one classroom teacher in the staff meeting on Wednesday re: her children not 'getting concepts' and that they were having parents do their homework for them as a result. How do teachers address these dilemmas? (Field notes: October 8, 1991).

An interview with a classroom teacher of a third stream shed light on the subject of streaming and its impact upon the implementation of the intended curriculum.

[I]t causes me to push a lot. It causes me to push much harder. That's one [thing]. Seeing that the children of this stream are not able to do it as quickly or even as good as ... the top stream or even the middle stream. I wouldn't say the middle stream ... because there are some children in that stream I would put them up against this group. Because number one, when my children come to read, I am one of those olden teachers, I would sit and talk with them and I will say 'Now look here, the reason why you are here is because you are not working. You don't do what the teacher says.' I point out to them that, 'You are the same age as [those in the top] and the [middle] groups. What they can do you can do also.' I make them understand 'What they are doing, you have to [do].' This is what I bring up to them. We have to be on the same level with them. I just push them.

Then, Mrs. Sweeting presented the perspective of the teacher of a top stream.

Well I think too it's all to do with the teacher and the flexibility of the curriculum because where I would be ahead, [a lower group] probably is just behind me. [The bottom group] of course they're going at a slower pace. We try to get in everything; the only subjects I would be more ahead of the others would be grammar and math, but for the other subjects when you're looking at science and social studies, we teach the same topics. We give the same information. . . . We go at the same pace. . . . The only thing is that I would give more information because I am one, I love to talk and I tell the children more. But when you're putting together the end of the year comprehensive test, I would write certain questions down and they would say well 'Oh I didn't tell them about this I didn't give them that.' So I'm saying to them, 'Well I did, so I would put some of yours and some of mine.' We just pool our questions.
Still, there was the added notion of the 'streaming within streaming' that posed particular problems regarding the implementation of the intended curriculum, especially when we consider the case of reading instruction. As Mrs. Sweeting continued:

Yeah it is a problem. You could have a group on Step Right Up. You have a group of kids coming to you on Step Right Up. They are my two books: Step Right and Flying Hoops. Flying Hoops is Grade 4 and Step Right Up is Grade 3 . . . So you've gotta deal with two reading groups. At least [the principal] tries her best not give us more than two different groups. If you find yourself with one or two children who are probably on a book that is higher or lower, she would say to you 'Find a teacher who is on that same book with a lot of kids on the same book and let those children go over [to that teacher's class] during the reading period.'

Later, the principal addressed the debate concerning how the students fared in this kind of setting, and what that meant for the implementation process.

You know all of us say we don't like to stream, but it ends up that way. We decide to say, put them in groups where they could work better together. They put them in working groups where they work well together, I guess. . . . It just depends on how you [the principal] want to operate. . . . I mean sometimes it [academic streaming] makes it easier for the teacher, but then again I say, all it takes is good teachers. And you know our teachers are realistic. They teach to that middle. They don't teach for the gifted, and they don't for the very, very slow. They go right down the middle, and so that too could be a problem. Maybe that could be the reason why we have, in the schools we're seeing so many children who are slow because of that ['teaching down the middle'], but we can't get to teach that [lower level].

Teachers also had a fear of labelling students. As Mrs. Sweeting phrased it: "I don't want to put them [two slower students] close together, 'cause the other kids will pick up and point them out as the 'dumb' ones."

Another dynamic tied to this issue of streaming is that of class size. Besides the large amount of marking of students' assignments that teachers complained about, class size posed further problems for the teacher of the lower streams, even if the numbers fall below the average. As this teacher of the third group put it: "I'm overworked. Even though my number is not say full 35. . . . [It's] 27, what the administrators must recognize is it is a slow group and no matter, you need a help. You need help somewhere along."
The structure of the timetable is an additional internal dynamic that has an impact upon curriculum implementation. Several times I observed Mrs. Sweeting making changes in her schedule. But, as she explained, she found that this was unavoidable.

We try to stick to the timetable as closely as possible especially when we have the periods when the children go out to the specialist teachers; so we stick to it. There are times, however, when I find that I go over and you keep hearing me say, 'You're causing me to work on another subject's time.' But my principal is really not rigid in that you must stick to it, I must say. She wants us to get our sections in; she wants us to stick to the timetable as closely as possible; but you as a teacher in the classroom, you know where your kids are at, and so you can exercise that bit of flexibility there. . . . Math, I love to do math and grammar. I find the children need this; they need a lot of math and grammar 'cause they're much slower than the other group, so I dedicate even though it's a single period, I find if they're not grasping that concept, I would spend some extra time. If I find where they're still not getting it, I would put it down and I would go on and I would go back to it. So that's what I'd do. I get in most of the subjects though. But it's hardly ever at the end of the week I would say I did not get in what was forecasted or set out in my [lesson plan] book.

Yet, Mrs. Sweeting speaks from the perspective of a teacher of the top stream. The situation at the lower levels is potentially more problematic as this teacher revealed:

I told them [administrators] again and again. 'When we have to go over the curriculum,' I said, 'as a slow group they should allow us to move at our own pace.' You know, my timetable is full right out, and this half hour is not sufficient. You can't get through what you want to get through in half an hour time for certain things. Like if you are teaching concepts in math, don't let them move until you know they get that. It is not so. . . . Take reading, you have some children who really are not able to read. . . . They need extra time and I am not able to that. I am only one person here [but], when the time says move I got to move whether they can do it or not. So this is the disadvantage. You see, we have to move along with the others.

Extracurricular activities also have an impact upon the translation of the curriculum. At Central Primary School, I observed this dynamic at work in several contexts. The situation when the principal suspended the classes of the specialist teachers (arts and craft, physical education, and music) because of the Junkanoo competition was one instance. Another involved a science exhibition held during November. Then there were several events that the school's choir was preparing for, as well as the interruptions when the school's sports teams travelled for games. Although, many teachers expressed that they
were not against extracurricular activities, they felt that they often impinged upon the instructional time for other subjects. Mrs. Sweeting disclosed:

Well, I have no control. I don't want to say no you can't have them and then I create a problem between the p.e. [physical education] teacher and myself. Then the children they love going to p.e. and they love taking part... I just don't have any control because these seasons come up, and the school seasons are basketball, volleyball and like right now it's softball season, and these kids are chosen to represent the school. So I think I would create a problem not only between [the physical education teacher] and myself, but also the office. ... [Yet,] during school hours... you find how they lose out, hey? Important things... you see how it is; [the physical education teacher] calls them and they are gone from lunch time, after lunch until a few minutes before three. The same with music, you know. When the music festival comes up next year, it's the same thing.

The question of assessment also plagues teachers, and influences their teaching practices in certain directions. In fact, assessment is a primary concern. Teachers of the upper primary levels (Grades 5 and 6) feel the pressure to ensure that students are prepared to take the Grade Level Assessment Test (GLAT) during their sixth year of primary school. This is cause for anxiety not only for the students, but for classroom teachers as Ministry officials and parents often hold them accountable, although administrators and Ministry of Education officials state otherwise. As this teacher from Central revealed:

I think all of them are under pressure. All those teachers are under pressure.... All the sixth grade teachers. I think... because the GLAT, because their teaching is geared towards that in getting those children ready for that examination and that's a national examination.... In a sense the examination helps them to stream the children when they go to junior high school. So they use the GLAT exam to put those children in the different grade levels. I don't know, but the way I felt, boy I tell you, 'If these children don't get a certain grade they're gonna look down on me as not doing my job'; even thinking, 'Lord what am I going to do? What am I going to do with these children. What I'm going to do next?' All this sort of thing.

Teachers avoid the phrase 'teaching for the examination,' yet, that most classroom teachers do this came through clearly in most of my discussions with Mrs. Sweeting, and other teachers at Central Primary School. Assessment is undoubtedly a primary cause for concern and thereby affects the implementation of the curriculum. As Mrs. Sweeting put it:

[When] it comes to the GLAT... I don't want to say 'teaching for the GLAT,' but you have to cover as much as you can, so that the child when he sits the exam, he won't be lost! I find that it is very much important because... I test because I want to see what I've been doing, if the children have grasped it, if they have learnt it. I want to know: 'What are these children doing?' 'Where do I go from
here?' and 'Where do I need to go back?' So for the GLAT, I want to make sure I cover the material, because that is a big exam. I've never seen the GLAT exam, but I've spoken to the grade three and the grade six teachers, and they are concerned and I say, 'Why not start here, at grade five; why not start gearing from here?'

Later, Mrs. Sweeting pursued this idea of 'teaching for the examination' and explained how teachers adjust the content of the curriculum to meet the requirements of the GLAT.

I wish they [teachers] honestly would ['teach for the examination']. . . . At least if you would, the children would be more prepared. I am not saying that they are not prepared for the exam, but the curriculum you go by, just as it is set out, you try not to divert from the curriculum. But I have never seen the grade three or the grade six's exam, the GLAT exam; but hearing from teachers' meetings, the subjects, the content that comes up in the GLAT is what the children are doing. I know in grade six, they teach a particular subject in maths, that's gonna come up. If you go according to the curriculum, when the GLAT comes out, the grade six students would not have touched that area yet; so they would bring up some, you know, like percentages or bring it up a bit so that they would have some knowledge of that particular area in math to be able to do the GLAT. As far as the English for both grades three and six, they do a lot of essay writing. And then you know, we do a lot of the objective-type questioning where they read the questions and there are three or four answers. . . . Do you think it is wrong, very wrong to teach for the exams? I mean, if we can teach and get [students] prepared for the different things that are coming up on the GLAT? You don't want to just present a paper to the children.

Beyond the content of the curriculum, another teacher explained how classroom teachers changed the structure of subjects, and even the time allocated to subjects in the timetable, in preparation for the GLAT.

We really were concentrating on – the former principal she told us that we must really – we used to cut down on some of it, some of the subjects, just to get in those things . . . grammar, vocabulary, spelling all of these are subjects that we had to do separately. Even though they come under the banner of language arts. . . . Yeah, they separated it [language arts]. They come under the banner of language arts, but then we had to do them like that because in the GLAT there is a subject of spelling; we had to do spelling – that's one subject. We come back and do word study and there's vocabulary and then there's this writing; I think an essay or creative writing. And all these are separate. We have to do each of these separately . . . . I think it [the GLAT] took away from the other subjects. . . . It took away from the other subjects because, like I say, everybody was just concentrating on this GLAT and the other subjects 'just what buck up goes.' With r.k. [religious knowledge] we just tell the stories and ask questions because we have to get down to those GLAT subjects to get them in if you want your children to do well. Social studies I think you have to do three [periods], but then you couldn't take away from the social studies because the social studies is included in the maths examination; so things like for health I used to cut down. I think we had two periods and I use to make it like one because I needed the extra time to get in those language arts and maths.
Teachers also expressed their concern that the assessment of the students also included an evaluation of them as teachers. This serves as a further impetus for teachers to 'teach for the examination.' Mrs. Sweeting talked about this concern and the importance of curriculum revisions taking the content of the GLAT examination into account:

That's why I wanted to know if you think it's bad that we teach for the exam; 'cause they point to schools where the results are being... where the results are poor and schools where the results are good. They know... These [curriculum guides] are in dire need though... the curriculum is in dire need of being reassessed. I think, with the GLAT and everything else they need to reassess the curriculum so that we can enter these exams [content] into them... because the GLAT is done, I think in March, and I would hope when they do reassess them that by March the children would have covered 'x' amount of topics. These topics are going to be the same topics that would be on the GLAT.

The academically-streamed setting at Central Primary School makes the issue of assessment and the implementation of the intended curriculum even more complicated. Besides the pressures that the teachers stressed about examinations generally, there were particular anxieties that teachers of the lower streams revealed.

Teacher A

It's a push for them [lower streams] and I think it's a lot of pressure on them too. Those poor children; because the top stream, the children they are really bright and catch on very quickly. But for those poor children, you have to keep pushing them, pushing them whether they get it or not, you have to go on which I think you know is unfair for them. But they have to know it because that's what coming in the GLAT. But we were saying, we had a discussion one time just among the grade six teachers, the three of us. We said 'These children aren't ready why let them do the exam?' But then the Ministry [of Education] says every child, all the children that are in grade six in The Bahamas must do the GLAT. So that if the children were ready or not, we have to let them do the exam; and so you try to expose them to like all the aspects of it. You have to teach them everything whether they get it or not.

Teacher B

It is important that I know the format and the topics that would be covered [on the GLAT] so that you could gear [lessons]. The children of this [lower] level, if you don't tell them exactly what is going to happen, when they get to that [GLAT] they are lost. You must prepare. You got to prepare them for that. You can't, not today, Ms. Davis. It is not like your time, or my time or maybe other children's time, to say all they have to do is hear, or they read to have that understanding and confidence. These children you can't do that. If you don't give them the exact thing they go contrary. They would come and say 'Teacher, you say so and so, Teacher we had this.' If they go there and see a different word, they would be lost.
Summary

Mrs. Sweeting, the teachers, and setting of Central Primary School presented complex dilemmas concerning the state of the intended curriculum in The Bahamas, and the nature of the implementation process. It became evident through my discussions with, and observations of, teachers at Central Primary, that curriculum policy has had an impact upon the practices of these classroom teachers. Yet, simultaneously, their practices have also influenced curriculum policy in many ways. The availability of resources, academic streaming, the examination system, and support services were key issues in the curriculum equation for the teachers of Central Primary School. Still, several questions loom in the background. How can teachers implement the objectives of the government's 'independence plan,' and its 1982 Curriculum Guides, when most of the resources that they have available for use are foreign? Are the politics of textbook purchasing deliberate? If so, how sincere are policy makers about their curriculum policies? Are policy makers doing everything possible to facilitate the implementation of the intended curriculum? The internal dynamics of individual schools are crucial! Are policy makers aware of the concerns of teachers? And, do they plan to incorporate these concerns in future revisions of the curriculum? Have researchers investigated the role of the specialist teacher, specifically that role that she plays in curriculum processes? These questions re-surface in the next profile. Then, later in the dissertation, when I try to draw implications based on the data of this study, I propose answers to these questions.

Mrs. Mary Albury and Eastern Primary School

It's an institution that, to me — [Eastern] is multiple — a social institution with an autocratic principal. What else . . . Oh boy. What a . . . I think that sums it up. . . . I think the teachers want to do something, but sometimes they are — it's like a rebellious thing, you know, because sometimes they can do better. . . . But it's because of — [the attitude that] there's no use me doing this, you know. The principal wouldn't let us do this, or she wouldn't tell us, or she wouldn't let us do
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This opening statement reflects much of what teachers and administrators revealed to me about Eastern Primary School. Indeed, Eastern's principal was a dominating force and the cause of much of the tension that I witnessed at her school.

Situated in a predominantly lower income community, Eastern Primary School is a Grade A school (over 1,000 students). At the time of my data collection, 7% of the students were from the Haitian community while the remainder was Bahamian. The teachers of Eastern Primary instruct their students within a team teaching setting. There are more than 60 teachers at Eastern, and an administrative staff comprising of a principal, two vice principals and three senior mistresses.

The grade levels at Eastern Primary School are divided into centres. These centres consist of smaller groups of approximately 30 students. On the average, about four to five groups of 30 students are in each centre. There may be, depending on the number of students in a given academic year, more than one centre per grade level. The teaching teams include the team leader, who is responsible for the immediate supervision of her centre, and the members of the team. The principal has divided the general supervision of the school among the members of the administrative staff who have the responsibility of checking lesson plan books, and dealing with other matters that team leaders refer to them. The groups are academically-streamed. I worked in the only sixth grade centre that year, with Mrs. Mary Albury who had the top group. The four other groups in the centre had an average of 30 students per group.

The sixth grade centre is on the top floor of the three floor, pentagon shaped school building. Although one can enter this centre by walking through the main southern entrance at the front of the building, teachers and students of the sixth grade centre usually enter through the back northern stairwell. Upon entering this back entrance, one walks into a smaller area that is divided into two sections, separated by a bookcase and shelves, and
used by two of the 30 student groupings. Chalkboards, one in each of these two areas, are on the northern wall. Student desks face these chalkboards. This area, apparently one section in the original design of the building and intended for small group sessions, can be separated from the rest of the centre by sliding glass doors.

Beyond the sliding doors the centre opens into the main section of the centre where the teaching team holds large group or input lessons for the whole centre. This section was also used by one of the five groups of 30 students, and was where the team leader set up her working area. A chalkboard faces the sliding doors and hangs on a wall partition, beyond which the reading specialist held her group sessions. East of this middle section, another teacher set up her 30 student grouping, and 'established her territory' by similarly separating her area using cabinets and shelves. A door leads from this area into one of the fifth grade centres. One set of student bathrooms is at the back of this teacher's area.

Mrs. Albury's group occupied the western section of the centre. Her area is divided by a movable bulletin board and chalkboard. She has a second chalkboard that hangs on the western wall of her area. A door leads from her area into the second fifth grade centre. The second set of student bathrooms is in the northern section of Mrs. Albury's area. The walls of Mrs. Albury's area, as well as those throughout the centre, are decorated with various displays. These displays ranged in subject content from language arts (grammar rules) to mathematical tables, topical newspaper clippings, and students' social studies and art projects.

I first met Mrs. Mary Albury when the principal introduced us during August of 1991. The teachers had returned to prepare for the beginning of the fall term. The principal, an opinionated, middle-aged woman of about thirty years teaching experience, had recommended Mrs. Albury. Gaining access to Eastern Primary School was more formal a process than the other two schools. The principal informed me that before visiting the sixth grade centre, I would have to notify both the team leader and the administrator responsible for the sixth grade.
Mary Albury, a divorcée, is a mother of three. She has had 22 years of teaching experience, and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree. During our first meeting, we discussed my study and her possible participation. She was cordial, outspoken, and very cooperative. I looked forward to speaking and working with her, as our first encounter was promising. She was very frank, forthcoming with her views. The principal's choice of Mrs. Albury was not indiscriminate. As she confirmed in our closing discussion, her choice of Mrs. Albury was based on several criteria:

Her personality, the way she handles herself in the classroom, and how she is overall. I thought — I needed you to have a person, she'd be here. Her attendance is good. She'd be with her students always, and that's the group one, too. I knew she was going to have them [group one]; and I thought that would have been the best. . . She stands out . . . [She's] above average. Her performance, yes . . . [her] sincerity . . . She's a genuine person. She's not, you know, she's working all day — if I'm on the floor or not . . . And she has the interest of the students at heart — unlike other areas within the group, you will not get it, you know. I know my people. I know who works for me, who works when I come and who will bull skate. And it disturbs, although I don't say it. But not all of them are as serious as [Mrs. Albury] and probably one or two others.

Mrs. Albury's commitment was noteworthy. A revision of my field notes revealed that several entries commented on her presence in the centre as early as eight-thirty in the morning and during both morning and afternoon breaks. The following entry noted her conscientiousness:

8:55 am: I arrive to find students [the whole centre] lined up on stairs preparing to go down to an assembly. [Mrs. Albury] is the only teacher present. [Another teacher] arrives shortly after she and I settle the students. [Mrs. A] remarks that the other teachers of the centre do not come early in the morning as they hate having to constantly talk to [discipline] the students. She does come early despite this however (Field notes: December 2, 1991).

Mrs. Albury had great pride in her organized approach to her teaching practices and her unwavering nature. Her students were important to her, despite her dissatisfaction with the general state of the teaching profession in the country.

Only thing I would leave teaching for is a better salary. That's the only problem I have is that my salary is very poor for the amount of years I've been teaching; but other than that I like it, and I love working with children. If I was to go into a job now at the office to get off five o'clock just not being around those children I would be lost.
A big point of contention at Eastern Primary was that of the excessive 'teaching responsibilities' that the school's administration required. Many teachers felt that the time entailed for those responsibilities infringed upon time that they could use for more pressing tasks such as preparation and marking. The 'responsibilities' that came up most often during my discussions with Mrs. Albury and the other teachers at Eastern included: patrol duty, morning and afternoon duties, and the detailed lesson plan and mark books. During one of our interviews Mrs. Albury talked about the 'duty days':

Duty days, when you have your duty day, to me that doesn't make sense because like for example when you are on duty and you have to take the children downstairs at the end of the day, take them through the gate, out of the gate, and to the crossing and see them across the road – and you know that's the most foolish part of it in a way to me because they walk here to school in the morning. Who walks with them? Who's on duty with them coming here? So why should when they're leaving in the evening you have to see them across the road? See them out of the gate? That doesn't make any sense. No sense whatsoever; and then only some teachers do it anyway. Only some teachers do it. So no matter how much she [the principal] rows and carries on, you never seem to get all teachers to do that. Never, never. I do part of it, but I don't do all of it because the part where you're supposed to go out with them break time I stay in here and do something. I don't always go outside.

Teachers' feelings concerning such duties relate directly to the larger picture of curriculum implementation. The school administration's insistence that teachers perform these duties, in turn, influenced the general disposition and attitude of the classroom teachers at Eastern Primary. The Ministry of Education's policy concerning lesson plan books was another source of frustration and disgust that many classroom teachers developed. As this Eastern teacher explained:

There are times when you have to change certain things . . . 'Oh, I'm not going to do it that way this time, I'm going to do it another way,' Ok? But then everything is there, so why in the world do I have to keep writing up [lesson plans] over and over and over? You know? To me that just does not make sense. I have a feeling the Ministry [of Education] just wants us to do something. The detailed lesson, it's only one. When I write that lesson, and I pass that in on a Monday, if I want to teach that lesson on a Monday, my senior mistress is going to have my book. Pm teaching that out of my head anyway. You know, to me that just don't make any sense. It's too detailed; it's too much work. And the thing is that you don't find the time. Most of us sit down on a Sunday afternoon to sit down and write down our lesson plans, and believe me, I am complaining. Because I am saying, 'You know, give and take another six years, eight years, when I reach 30 years, the
Ministry [of Education] will have no more use for me. They're not going to consider the extra time that I'm putting in, planning on Wednesday afternoon until four [o'clock when team members are supposed to plan together], which they don't pay me for. They're not going to take into consideration the time I'm spending home making charts and writing lesson plans, which they don't pay me for...'. But I have learned over the years to plan my work to suit me, you know. So then, in those non-teaching periods, I get as much done as I could; because on weekends I don't really have time. There's really too much work. The Ministry [of Education] needs to do something about it.

The low morale that the preceding quotation relays is indicative of the wider teaching population, and not only of those teachers at Eastern Primary School. Besides the issues of salary, working conditions, and the lack of materials, the belief that this low morale has resulted because teachers are no longer respected by the Ministry of Education bureaucracy and the general community, was prevalent. A classroom teacher at Eastern expressed her concern about the general attitude of the public toward teachers in the following way:

On the Family Islands where I grew up, the teacher, you know, he [the teacher] was held in high esteem in the community, in those small communities. But here in New Providence it doesn't happen that way. There are some of us who don't conduct ourselves, you know, in a professional manner. But then I don't think all of us should be branded because of that. But I think in a way the leaders of the country need to change their attitude towards us as teachers. We're professionals, no matter how they look at it. We're professionals. You know, treat us as such and let the public know. Because they [the leaders of the country] know better! That's what annoys me, they know better. They are in those positions now because of people, somebody like us, along the way. You know? I think their attitude needs to be changed.

Resources

Placed against this team teaching, administrative-pressured background, Eastern Primary School presents a challenge for the implementors of the intended curriculum, particularly because of its size and the resulting dynamics that reveal themselves. To begin, the availability of resources at Eastern Primary was a prime concern. Classroom teachers must often find materials for use in their lessons wherever and however they could. The groups within centres shared the mathematics, language arts and reading textbooks that
were available. This called for a scheduling of subjects, that would facilitate this sharing. With the integral component of the 'lead' or 'input' lesson that the whole centre participated in, this scheduling detered from the very flexibility that advocates say the team teaching situation should promote. The availability of materials was a good starting place for my discussions with Mrs. Albury about the impact of the team teaching context upon the implementation of the intended curriculum. As she stated:

Most of the times they're [the textbooks] not available in the first place. You'd see them listed in the scheme [of work] as books that you should use but they're not here. . . . Well, we usually get some books from the Ministry. [The principal] orders books as well and teachers buy their own books or use their own children's [sons' or daughters'] books sometimes. I've used my own children's [sons' or daughter's] books.

At Eastern Primary School, the onus on teachers to buy, or acquire however they could, their own materials was a practice that I pursued, as it surfaced several times during my stay. Perhaps because a Ministry of Education supervisor was visiting the school at the time, teachers discussed such matters more frequently. Indeed, the presence of the supervisor was itself an interesting topic of discussion, as it has implications for how policy makers use supervisors' perceptions of curriculum processes. Do they take these perceptions to represent the status of policy implementation? I reflected upon this issue in my field notes, as it paralleled questions that I continued to have about my presence in the classroom and my dual role as participant and observer.

The discussion that [Mrs. A] and I (day #1) have centres around . . . how hectic and busy things have been with the [Ministry's] supervisor present, violin practices, Junior Junkanoo, marking of student books, family commitments, softball games. How does [Mrs. A] feel about the presence of the supervisor in the centre? Does the supervisor get a 'true' picture of what is going on? What of my presence in the centre? Do I get a different picture? (Field notes: November 11, 1991)

The question of teaching supplies did surface during our discussions of the supervisor's presence at the school, and I took the opportunity to pursue the connection between supplies and teacher evaluation with Mrs. Albury.

Well it puts me under pressure, because there are lots of things I would like to do for my class, and I just don't have the money. . . . And I did not want to ask the
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students to bring the money because you know there's a lot of red tape around here. If you want the children to bring anything, you have to write letters home and all that; then the parent might ask what does the teacher want this money for and all that. So I don't want to go through that. But these are things I would like to have in my class, but I just can't afford them. There are only certain things that we are given. Sometimes I even need markers. Well, this term we got some markers. But usually you have to buy those things yourself. . . . [Y]ou have like chart paper; all those things come from the Ministry [of Education]. They would send like a large roll of [masking] tape that [the team leader] sends [to us when we need it]; and then we have like four markers, just four different colours. That's for all of us [five teachers], the whole centre . . . . those things are for us to share. We have been given a ruler. We get some supplies at the beginning of the school year—chalk; and that's all that they give us. We don't get much variety in chart paper. There's not much variety at all; basic colours. Most of the time white; the white ones. . . . Well, we got a few coloured ones this time. But anything you don't get, you purchase. . . . [B]ecause they [supervisors and administration] grade you a lot on how your classroom looks and what you have in your classroom.

This practice of teacher evaluation, based on classroom appearance, annoyed many

teachers. Mrs. Albury addressed the practice of placing so much credence on the visits of

Ministry of Education supervisors, and described the 'shows' that some teachers put on for their benefit:

It doesn't make any sense. It's just a show. See, I don't believe in a show—an anything being put on for a show. I believe in real living, what's actually happening. I don't believe in a show, because [for example] that agriculture [period] was just put on [the schedule] when the supervisor came in, because we were supposed to be doing it. It just stops after she leaves, and I don't believe in putting on a show. I deal with real life. I don't put on any extras. Whatever I've been doing before she came, I don't do anything different; I just do the same thing that I'm doing all the time. But then for the person who's going out to buy $50 worth of things for the walls and stuff like that, or just write up a special lesson when they hear that she's coming—that's a different situation.

The content of textbooks is another area that shed interesting perspectives on curriculum processes at Eastern Primary School. The use of predominantly foreign textbooks to translate the Bahamian curriculum was a dilemma that teachers at Eastern Primary found problematic at several levels. In the following statement, Mrs. Albury reflected upon the use of Bahamian and foreign materials in the classroom teacher's lessons:

Well, I feel as though it is very, very important that as much as possible to get as much Bahamian materials as we can. The most I've seen in Bahamian material here in school is literature. For example, we have books in the library. You haven't
seen me using them because I used some before you came when I did Bahamian stories – stories like Telcine Turner, and I had Derek Burrows and Kayla Edwards; and like when I do poetry again I would get like Susan Wallace and all those, and James Catalyn. He has been here to speak to the children and we're planning on getting him again. So you know I would say in literature we have more Bahamian books in literature than we had in any other subject. . . . I don't teach social studies, but the topics now are more Bahamianised than before; because now you're doing agriculture and, you know, you do fishing and farming, and all that sort of things that the children never did before, and tourism. But as for textbooks you know, I haven't seen any actual Bahamian textbooks; we have the Bahamas handbook [and businessman's annual], but to say the actual textbooks on tourism, or actual textbooks on agriculture I've never seen it. But I've seen the teachers using their own resources.

Indeed, the central role of the teacher as implementor in the translation of the intended curriculum, particularly when it comes to the incorporation of Bahamian content, surfaced repeatedly. As the sixth grade coordinator at Eastern Primary School acknowledged:

The need [of incorporating Bahamian content] is being – it's coming into the schools, filtering – especially in social studies, but in math and many areas in the health science, some of them in the new programs like the family life programs, the teachers can use their initiative to bring in Bahamianised ideas. But it's not enough of it in the curriculum. . . . The teachers have to use their initiative to break down all these [foreign] ideas and the vocabulary, so that the children can understand the language. But I think if we had Bahamian writers who were writing for our children, it would be much much better for all of us.

Still, despite the attitude that there was a need for more Bahamian resources, most resources that the classroom teachers at Eastern Primary School used were foreign.

Reading, language arts, and mathematics series by the American firms, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. and Silver Burdett, Ginn Co., were mainstays. I was anxious to find out just what the policy was concerning the selection and purchase of textbooks for use in the schools. Eastern's principal explained one reason why there were so many American textbooks at her school.

They [American firms] are aggressive and they're on the spot. Oh, and they're very generous. Their lunches, their dinners, their promotions – first class! And they just sell it. Now when this other company, another reading company, Houghton Mifflin wanted us to adopt their books, they brought in a man from, with no education background, a good speaker, from Chicago. . . . He worked with a civil rights group; and to promote their book, they had him talk. But he knew nothing about the book, you know . . . You see, so it's just style and they just sell it . . . And our curriculum people buy that, you know? Just like anything else, it's the way you sell your product. And I think America . . . the Americans are selling their product more than the Caribbean [firms]. Not to say that their texts are better.
I think both of them [American and Caribbean firms] have something to offer, [but] I think we should be associated more closely with the Caribbean.

Despite this state of affairs regarding resource materials at Eastern Primary School, I was curious whether classroom teachers tried, generally, to coordinate their use of resources in the team teaching setting. Was there a sense of uniformity that the team teaching situation generated, and could thereby potentially enhance the implementation of the intended curriculum? I was to discover that teachers were left pretty much on their own as they sought to cater to the various ability levels of their groups. Mrs. Albury explained her rationale behind the selection of the resource materials that she used with her top group:

No we don't really decide as a team you know. Each one of us uses - sometimes we'll be doing a particular topic and [one of the teachers] might use one book. I might use another one. It depends on the level of your group as well. But what I do is if I know we're doing proper nouns next week, I would go through all the books on proper nouns, all the textbooks, and I would look in all the [table of] contents for proper nouns. I'll have them opened up in front of me and would say look at them and think about my class and look at the format of the exercises, and then I would decide if I will use this book, and the students do an oral exercise in their books. That's what I do.

The implications for the translation of the intended curriculum, when such coordination is lacking, are similar to those found in self-contained classrooms where teachers have even fewer opportunities for networking with other teachers.

Mrs. Albury's preceding comment regarding the use of 'oral exercises in students' books' introduces the dynamic of students having to do extensive writing from the chalkboard. As I observed, very often students had to copy exercises or notes from the chalkboard. The team teaching setting of Eastern Primary School magnified the practice of extensive note taking from the chalkboard. During input sessions, five of the groups in the sixth grade centre, 153 students, sat in one section of the centre. Team teachers became visibly irritated as they waited for students to copy notes from the chalkboard. Comments like: "You must learn to write more quickly," and "It's a lot of writing, I know; but that's what happens when you get in Grade 6. You need notes to study for exams," were not
uncommon. Yet, teachers readily admitted, as the following teacher did, that it was
difficult for those at the back of the room to see what was going on:

Because of the size of the children, you know, they have to extend so far back to
the back of the room. Those at the back can hardly see what's going on up there [in
the front by the chalkboard]. We've tried to get the classes smaller, but to no avail.

Support services, including those that the Ministry of Education and Eastern
Primary School's administrative staff offer, relate directly to the larger picture of resource
availability, and ultimately to curriculum processes. My experience at Eastern Primary
leads me to conclude that, generally, the availability of resources was a problem that has a
negative impact upon the classroom teacher's daily implementation of the intended
curriculum. I addressed this issue with the principal, as I was curious about how Eastern
Primary School filled the obvious void that existed.

Each [Ministry of Education] subject officer tries to get books into the schools for
their subject, based on the ratio of the school, the population of the school. What
happens though, because of the amount of money they have to spend per year, they
cannot bring in all the grade levels, so they introduce grade levels [one or two] at a
time . . . sometimes they start at the bottom and sometimes they start at the top. But
once the subject officer sends you the book, and you know the book is available,
you can purchase on your own, out of your own school funds, and it doesn't have
to be a problem . . . Right now I am owing over $15,000 for language and reading
programs. It's on the school. You see, they [the Ministry of Education] will give
you the initial set to start with, but no way can the Ministry [of Education] supply
all; so we get it from the school. Some people [students] can purchase them and
own the books, and others will have to borrow from the school. So it's on the
school. So if you want to be around and crying and say the Ministry [of Education]
didn't do this and that, it's entirely up to you; but once I know that that's what
they're using I will try to get them.

Yet, Eastern Primary School's principal did not feel that the Ministry of Education should
be held accountable for this negligence. It is the school, or more specifically the principal,
who must spearhead whatever fund raising was necessary. Indeed, parents must be told
that education is not free at all. As she put it:

It's impossible. Although this is what we say, 'Education is free, everything is
free,' but it's impossible for them [the Ministry of Education] to supply everything
for every child. The cost of education is just too costly for any country to take that
on . . . And I wish they [policy makers] would come out and say to the parents,
because the parents have the wrong concept that education is free; and when we
send, or have books for sale, they want to know why they have to buy. So they
have the wrong concept of what's happening. But it's impossible for the Ministry.
So we have to supplement Ministry supplies in all areas; but they do give us the basics – an initial supply, I shouldn't say basics. . . I can't see any principal sitting in a school and not coming up with something for the school. That's your [the principal's] purpose for supplying it for your school, you know? So you suffer 'cause you want to suffer. You have to make a way to make it happen. That is why you have [a principal] . . . [But,] you're fund raising all the time, [and] if you don't mind, if you don't be careful, you'll be fund raising and not teaching.

The tense atmosphere that existed between the classroom teachers and the school's administration, and among administrators at Eastern Primary School, clouded the issue of support services, especially in the way that the principal would like to see it evolve. It was questionable whether the classroom teachers were willing to participate in the type of fund raising that the principal referred to above; or, for that matter, whether they were inclined to participate in anything that they considered to be outside regular teaching responsibilities. This, in turn, must affect the nature of the relationship between Eastern Primary's teachers and the Ministry of Education bureaucracy. Most of the teachers at Eastern were reluctant to discuss the nature of the teacher-administration relationship at the school. Despite this, I obtained several comments concerning the general state of communication at all levels of the educational system, and the implications for the decisions that teachers made about their daily teaching practices at Eastern.

Teacher A

Some things I wouldn't go by. See, no matter what administration says as much as I want to do what we are told to do, I also think about the children. I'm also thinking about their welfare as well. So if they were to say to me something, and I feel as if well the welfare of the children. . . no matter what they say, I still think about the welfare of the children . . . Yes that's the bottom line.

Teacher B

I think it [the unruliness of the students] stems from the lack of unity between the [teaching] staff and administration. They don't show the concern that they used to for the students. It's so hard to say. Sometimes teachers tend to take things out on the wrong person or persons, you know, because they don't feel that they are being treated fairly; so they are not going to do the best that they can; they are only going to do what — just the basics, and they're not doing anything extra. Sometimes I think that the teachers lack the — they don't lack the ability. We have very few teachers here who lack the ability to control these children if a concerted effort was being made to discipline these children. But sometimes you may say something, and [the principal] would come and would say something else. There is no unity. It seems like we are not all working for the same goal.
Teacher C

There are days when, you know you just can't be bothered because of their [administrators] attitude. They come to you, they knock you off, right off the top, and they try to treat you as if you were the child... There was an incident... when she [the principal] got up and she blasted out the entire staff in front of the kids. I don't remember what was said, and I don't remember why it was said; I wish I did you know, but when I got home, you know... all of us were annoyed about it because I think it was unprofessional. You know, if you wanted to say something to me, you want to blast me, take me in the room, close the door, we can have a good session in there, and both of us are going to come out smiling. That's the way I see it, you know; say what you have to say, but not in front of the kids. And I told somebody afterwards, I said, 'The very next time she does that, I am going to be the one to get out and walk out the auditorium, because she's not speaking to me. You know? You want to talk? Talk to me as a professional on a professional level... If they're not going to respect me, I'm not going to respect them either.

Without exception, each day I could expect to witness, in the sixth grade centre, at least one visit, often several visits, from members of Eastern's administrative staff. This, according to many classroom teachers at the school, although perhaps not intentionally, had the effect of alienating them from the members of the administration. Coupled with the attitude that several administrative members expressed about the lack of unity or coordination among administrators regarding the school's purposes or goals, the obvious impact on the intended curriculum within such an environment was not encouraging.

Learning environment: A case of complex dimensions

A school the size of Eastern Primary is bound to have problems related to the maintenance and upkeep of its physical facilities. Yet, it was somewhat disconcerting, when I learnt that at the time of its establishment, policy makers outfitted Eastern Primary School with 'state of the art' equipment, most of which has now disappeared. In addition, because the school building is without windows, and therefore air-conditioned, at least sometimes, presented additional problems for teachers and students in this context. During my time at Eastern Primary, I experienced a learning environment that ranged from extreme cold to extreme heat. Utter darkness and that which bordered on short bouts of
pandemonium resulted when the electricity was disrupted. The plumbing system, in dire need of attention, made it unhealthy whether inside or outside the school building. During the last weeks of my stay, the sewerage system, at the back of the building, had been overflowing into an area where the students sometimes played. Just how do teachers and students function in such an environment, and what are the implications for the translation of the intended curriculum? It is difficult to appreciate what one must endure in such a situation unless one experiences it. As this teacher explained:

I have had other teachers, I have had a family member who teaches at another school, she and I were annoyed with each other for about a week, because she felt that we get special privileges. The air conditioning's shut off and it's really disgusting in here. You know that. And she is saying, 'How come the Ministry [of Education] is allowing you all to be home when the air conditioning is shut off? Just because it's [Eastern]?' And I said, 'It's not so! You have to be in there! It's unhealthy!' But she is thinking it's [Eastern], you know, and every other thing, you know; it's [Eastern]. But it's not so. I don't feel, you know, as if I'm at any advantage because I work in this building.

Right up to the end of my five weeks at Eastern Primary school, the sewerage problem had yet to be resolved, and the air conditioning system was not functioning properly. This Eastern teacher summarized the problem:

That problem [repair and maintenance] has been in this . . . talking about this particular school now, for years. We, every year when we write a school report, we mention all of these problems, and we ask that something is done about it. But very seldom is anything done. . . . Sometimes the [air conditioning] unit breaks down and sometimes when the unit breaks down, teachers are required to stay here — long hours. Yeah, you know, just sweating it out. And that's not good. It isn't healthy, breathing in the stale air and all that. It's not healthy. . . . That's one of the reasons why the morale is so low in teaching, you know.

Eastern Primary School principal's comments regarding the physical facilities were no more encouraging. When I suggested that the idea of the open classroom might have been a mistake, she defended its continued existence.

Now these schools initially were equipped with emergency generators, but the last ten years the emergency generator at [Eastern] has not been working, and nobody could give me answer as to why. I've just addressed it with an estate officer in late December, and they say something may happen, but . . . It has to be worth it. We have the buildings; we can't close down, and they [the Ministry of Education] don't want to relocate. So it has to be worth it because so many children are being educated; because if you close them down, you'll be closing the door on so many
thousands of children. . . . And they have no plans for relocating, or coming out of these two type of buildings and building other schools. I think they prefer paying the enormous bills and leaving the frustration to principals who would like to take it, you know, instead of them having to relocate. . . . Yeah, but if you come out of [these schools] you'll have to build another school anyway. What are you going to do with these structures? It might have been a mistake that we went and followed the Americans with these buildings; but my concept of it is, you have them now. Just try to make the best out of it. Let's make them work. That is why I take the punishment [emphasis added], because that's what I believe.

Internal dynamics

Some aspects of the impact of the internal dynamics at Eastern Primary School upon the implementation of the intended curriculum have already become evident, particularly through the earlier discussions of resource availability, support services, the learning environment, and teacher evaluation. Still, there are additional aspects that deserve consideration. First, there is the impact of extracurricular activities on the daily practices of classroom teachers at Eastern Primary. The administration's stance, specifically the principal's, toward extracurricular activities was a perpetual issue for many of Eastern's teachers as they fought to complete the curriculum and maintain a sense of continuity in their instructional practices.

During my visit to Eastern, I was dismayed by the number of interruptions for either Junior Junkanoo, choir practice, violin practice, or softball games. Despite what one considers to be the 'aim' of education, it became obvious that the balance between the academic and social was far from equal at Eastern Primary School. How do teachers address this imbalance? Mrs. Albury responded:

[L]ike I was telling you that with the lesson plan books, she [the coordinator] would ask, 'Well how come you didn't teach this? How come you didn't get to teach that?' And I would say 'I don't have any control over children going up and down because the principal has said she wants the children to be well-rounded and let them go.' I've seen teachers get in trouble when someone sends for the children and they didn't let them go. That's right. The first time I saw that happen was . . . when we were in the centre over there; a girl in her [a teacher's] class was sent for dance practice during class time . . . and she told the child 'No you're behind in your work you can't go.' And it was reported to [the principal] and the mother
came in and the teacher . . . was really reprimanded about not letting the child go. I always remember that incident; that was the first time I saw something like that happen. And she [the principal] has told us over and over that the children must be well-rounded and she wants the children exposed to these things; so when the teacher sends for the children, let them go. But, if the children don't catch up with the work, don't do well, you are blamed. Parents will blame you and the administration will blame you, and the Ministry [of Education] will blame you. That's the way it is.

Similarly, the following classroom teacher, stated that although she was not completely against the notion of extracurricular activities, she would prefer if these activities would not interfere with the instructional time of the other subjects.

The majority of those kids cannot cope with academics and this extracurricular activity . . . . I think they should get involved in things, but not when I have to teach my math lesson, and I'm finding out that three of my children are having to go, and I have to teach that thing, that topic, over again, because those kids were not here. You know, I'm really not to blame, I'm here! . . . They're going too often. I know my principal wouldn't want me to say that, but that's the way I feel. . . . Anything extra you want to do, do it after three [o'clock]. Because in the long run what happens is, when those GLAT [Grade Level Assessment Test] results come back, nobody's going to remember that they were in Junior Junkanoo; nobody's going to remember they were missing for music. They'll come and look at me and say, 'Oh, that's [this teacher's] name on the top there. These are her kids. She didn't do anything with those kids, because they scored low.' So I'm really going to take the blame, you know? And it's really not fair.

Often, I witnessed this frustration and a sense of helplessness of the classroom teacher because of this situation with the extracurricular activities. Teachers complained about being in a never-ending struggle to perform their daily teaching of the curriculum. I wanted to find out how the principal would defend the philosophy concerning extracurricular activities that she upheld at Eastern Primary School, and so I asked her at the conclusion of my stay. She explained:

You know, we do our post school hours activities. We have stressed, yes and no, with music. We do impose a bit on the academics for music activities if we are performing. [But,] I see a jealousy. When it's time for music, you see people say one thing; they want their school involved, and then when they see the school involved and they're getting — a person is getting recognition, then they start getting jealous or getting upset. Then they try to hinder the progress. . . . They hold on to the children; they hold the children hostage, and they don't let them go, or they threaten to give them marks and all sorts of things. It's a bit of jealousy, and it's terrible. . . . But I know it's happening and I just try to ignore them [these teachers]. But it's a bit of jealousy between the extracurricular people and the others; and they could do the same thing; if [the music teacher] could get them to do it and [the Junkanoo Coordinator], she could get them to do . . . you [the classroom
teachers] who have them a longer time, you could do with them, but you can't just sit and give orders and no—they won't be successful. They [teachers] need to put more into their lessons.

The principal's perception differed from that of most of the classroom teachers with whom I spoke. And, if teachers are dissatisfied with this arrangement, it is obvious that there are going to be implications for the implementation of the intended curriculum.

The team teaming setting is another internal dynamic that influences the implementation of the intended curriculum at Eastern Primary School. The practice of team teaching at Eastern, at least in the centre that I spent most of my time, is what many teachers there would prefer calling 'turn teaching.' As this teacher explained:

If team teaching was being done as it had been when I first started in the team teaching school, in the team teaching situation, I think then it was much much more effective than it is now. . . . Because all of the teachers participated in planning all of the lessons, so each teacher knew what he or she had to do for any given input [or 'lead' lesson]. We're talking about an input lesson now. And all of them had graded activities for their levels of students, whatever they were doing. It's not as effective now, because many times one teacher is left to plan the entire lesson, and that one teacher will make up the activities. And you know that teacher is going to make up activities for her grade, for her class, for the level of her students, totally ignoring those who may be above hers or below hers. So, and I find that the other teachers, they don't usually plan [follow-up] activities. They try to use the same [follow-up] activities for their class, instead of creating new activities or . . . a variety of activities.

In addition, the inputs or 'lead lessons,' given to the centre as a group, were of particular concern as many classroom teachers questioned the suitability of these contexts for effective student learning. I asked another teacher at Eastern about her perception of the inputs and the impact that they have upon the translation of the curriculum.

[They] inputs could be better if the individual teacher worked with a smaller group. Now [as they are presently practiced] they could be, you know, if all of the teachers were prepared to work in that setting [to help with ] whatever the teacher who's at the chalkboard or in front of the class, whatever he or she misses, and to assist with the general discipline in the centre, seeing to it that the children who are at the back or those who are missing the point pay attention. You know, if they do that, get all of those children, if they surround those children and have their attention focussed on whatever is going on at the front, it'll be much better. But then we find that when one person is teaching, when one person is teaching, the others find something else to do, and that shouldn't be.
This practice of 'turn teaching' and the organization of the inputs were not, however, the only objections. Mrs. Albury told me of her disillusionment with the open classroom setting generally, and her preference for the self-contained classroom.

Well see if I was to stay in with my class I could perhaps go to the reading room and find enough copies of one particular one [book] like the Scholastic paperback books you know. But then it's an input; we're doing that as an input, you're talking about 153 children. So I would never be able to have books for all of them. That's what makes it different you know; if you were dealing with just your individual classroom, like I say being an input . . . because you know if I was in my own classroom in my own self-contained classroom, I could move at my own pace. I could overlap subjects as I see fit. I could eliminate this subject; I feel that I could leave it out that day and put something else in that's more important. All the activities I would like to do with my class I can do. Because lots of activities I would like to do here, but I'm always worried about my children disturbing the other class. That sort of thing. So I am suppressed. My ideas are suppressed. Many times you know I can't do what I want to do because I'm in this open setting.

Despite the claim by advocates that the team teaching setting promotes flexibility in time-tabling, the general problems relating to timetables were not negated as a dynamic at Eastern Primary School because of its setting. In fact, these problems were even more complex because of the team teaching setting. Many teachers at Eastern Primary expressed the attitude that, because of the team teaching setting, they felt even more pressured to complete subject instruction within the allotted time, and because of this the intended curriculum suffered. Mrs. Albury explained:

We're rushing, rushing all the time. And then, well, I guess you find it more of a rush because of our setting – being in the centre, open centre like this where you're moving with a lot of children. You know if you were in an enclosed classroom and they didn't have to move anywhere you know, you could switch the subjects when you like. Whereas you can't do that here. . . . I don't think you do it [implement the curriculum] as effectively as you should, because you're under a lot of pressure all the time. You know I'm under pressure all the time trying to get the work done in time for this group to finish off this, and that group to finish off that. You know that's how I am all the time. You're under that pressure to get the work done. Because I'm a very responsible person, I always want to know that I've done my best for my children, for my students. So that causes me to be under pressure.

What are administrative perspectives about the timetable? Is this issue complicated by the setting at Eastern Primary School? An administrator at Eastern gave me her opinion:

To be honest with you, in my opinion I think there are too many subjects in this curriculum to begin with, for children at this level. They have too many subjects; our timetables are too crammed for an elementary school; primary school, as we call
it. And no, a lot of them [teachers] don't get through with the lessons they have planned. Sometimes the classes are interrupted for numerous reasons. Some of them are justified, some of them are unjustified.... sometimes you are teaching a lesson, and it's going well. And the time comes for it to end, but you just can't cut off your lesson just like that. You've got to go over into the next time, into the next subject, so you're borrowing some time from there, and that subject is left out. Ok? So next week I might, if it's not scheduled again on the timetable, I might see that appearing [in lesson plans] as we did not complete this lesson because of such and such.... It is, I mean, it's frustrating sometimes when you can't get what you have planned accomplished.

A final internal dynamic, academic streaming, also complicates the implementation process. Classroom teachers do not elude this issue, whether they use academic streaming or the mixed-ability setting. As Mrs. Albury explained:

[Even when you have academic streaming, you still have mixed-ability in your group, but that's enough to deal with. But if you didn't have academic setting what happens, the children you know who are below the level of other children, they get left behind because then you know you're catering to the entire class and especially with your timetable how it's hectic and rushed, there's no time to give those children the individual attention that they need. So if I was to have some of my children now, some from group four and five – some children in groups four and five are way behind these children [in my group]. There's no way I can give all of them the same work. It wouldn't be fair. Either I will be frustrating some and the others I will be boring them because the work is below their level; they wouldn't be able to work together. I could only do that if I had 10 to 12 children, and you know work individually with them.

What happens to that student in group four or five? How does the classroom teacher address the dilemma of varying ability levels while trying to implement the curriculum?

One teacher at Eastern offered her analysis:

It [academic streaming] puts undue pressure on the teachers who are teaching at the lower levels, especially, because they try to keep up with the people who can move at a faster pace. When they see that their children are not achieving, they get frustrated. The child gets lost. [S]he loses [her or] his desire to learn; so a lot of them [students] go home. They quit coming to school, or they become disciplinary problems. They just get turned off.

Examinations

The examination system interrelates with the practice of streaming, and has a further impact upon the implementation of the intended curriculum. Many dilemmas expressed by
classroom teachers of the lower groups, concerning the practice of streaming, were based on the pressures surrounding assessment. How then, do teachers address the challenge of completing set curricula for an examination, when students may be experiencing problems with concepts? Mrs. Albury expressed her opinion about this dilemma:

Well we’re always told that although they’re in the academic groups that they’re supposed to be doing the same work and they’re supposed to be doing the same test. But still you know sometimes the other groups would be ahead. . . . but we’re supposed to be working on the same level, because at the end of the term, all of the children are doing the same test. . . . [Yet,] it doesn’t make sense to say that you’ve covered the curriculum, and the children haven’t really grasped what you’ve been teaching. At the same time, I don’t think you should drag, drag, drag along because these basic subjects the children have done them before. . . . [Still,] it depends too on the persons in charge of us. . . . some persons who are in charge would say to you, you have to get it finished, and then another person would come another school year and they wouldn’t say that. . . . But my personal opinion is that I’m not rushing to complete my curriculum. I move the children as fast as they could go, and I push my class you know. I work them hard, but then I don’t rush to say I’m rushing to finish any particular curriculum. I don’t think that makes sense.

The sixth grade Grade Level Assessment Test (GLAT) adds to this complex implementation picture. Indeed, the format and content of the curriculum, particularly at the sixth grade level, is admittedly driven by the format and content of the GLAT, as this classroom teacher explained:

Well you wouldn’t see much catering towards that now because it’s [the GLAT] down in next term. But coming towards the time for the exams, then we do emphasize exercises that are similar to the GLAT exercises. We do that. . . . because the children should, they should have been exposed to the format that they use in the GLAT. But then I use the format throughout the year as well. But then getting closer to the test we emphasize the format even more.

Then, the question of the GLAT results was a sore spot with classroom teachers who felt that they were held accountable for the performances of their students. Mrs. Albury revealed that:

Yes in a lot of cases [teachers are evaluated according to how their students perform] which I think is very unfair. Because, ok, for example, this is group one; these children are brighter. It means that I can come here now, and if I want to I can sit down and read a book all day because these children are brighter. [While a teacher of a lower group] may kill herself over there working. And because she has the bottom group, when the children do the same test, my children score higher. Then they can say well [Mrs. Albury] has been working and [the other teacher] hasn’t been working. So, you know you can’t go by that. . . . and then
you have children in some groups who they have parental assistance and some children don't. You have got to think about all of that, because the child who's assisted at home and whose parents see that they sit down and do work and all of that, that child will do far better than other children. And that has nothing to do with the teacher. That has nothing whatsoever to do with the teacher.

Still, it is the classroom teacher’s name that appears on the student's GLAT answer and results sheets, and it is the classroom teacher who must defend the results. Many classroom teachers viewed this practice as unfair, particularly to those teachers of the slower groups. A member of administration disclosed that:

They say so in no uncertain terms, 'My name is going to appear on this'; and that's why you find a lot of teachers they are hesitant in accepting slower learners. You know, they don’t want this to appear badly on their file. It seems as if they're failing in some way, and I don't think they're failing. Not if they have slower learners. If they have done the best that they could with those children, if they ... even if they have achieved whatever objective that they have in their lesson plans, if they achieve that for their children, even though they don't score well on the GLAT, I don't depreciate them for that.

But, what about other school administrators, the Ministry of Education bureaucracy, parents, and the public? In the end, who is really held accountable? This emphasis on assessment and assessment results has an impact in very definitive ways upon the implementation process. It influences the daily practices of classroom teachers and what they include in the content of their lessons at Eastern Primary School. Many of Eastern's teachers used testing as the final arbitrator of learning achievement. Almost invariably, teachers built in a test or quiz as a part of the lesson or unit. I reflected upon this practice in my field notes:

[The] science teacher writes brief notes on board after some discussion (2 types of circuits - series and parallel). She then asks students to put [note] books away and she erases [the chalk] board and gives out [a] short quiz on [the] notes. There seems to be a heavy concentration on the idea of testing. The part that testing or examinations play in the teacher's daily planning of [the] curriculum and [her] daily practice is considerable (Field notes: November 12, 1991).

The reasons teachers gave for this practice most often centred around their perceived need to practice for the examination situation, and to obtain the required number of student grades in their mark books. Teachers constantly threatened students with the possibility of
having a low grade entered in these mark books if they did not perform, as they prepared them for the ultimate assessment, the GLAT, at the end of the sixth grade year.

Summary

Mrs. Albury, other classroom teachers, and administrators of Eastern Primary School function in a very tense atmosphere, and far from conducive physical learning environment. Several issues come to the fore when I consider the implications for the intended curriculum in such a context. The key issue, though, involved the limited channels and opportunities available for the classroom teacher to communicate with members of the school's administration and ultimately the Ministry of Education bureaucracy. The importance of teacher input at various level of the curriculum is crucial for the implementation process. In addition, that many classroom teachers in this team teaching setting were dissatisfied with the effectiveness of team teaching as a vehicle for the implementation of the intended curriculum points to the need for an investigation of this practice in the schools of The Bahamas. Such an investigation must be immediate if the effects of team teaching, in whatever form, on curriculum processes, that the teachers at Eastern revealed, are widespread. Also, policy makers cannot afford to ignore the dependence on foreign resources to translate an indigenous curriculum. Finally, the question of the balance between the academic and the social in the school setting needs to be considered, especially as it influences the implementation of the curriculum.

Nonetheless, despite these issues, evidently, just as curriculum policy influences the practices of the teachers at Eastern Primary School, their practices, too, have an impact upon curriculum policy in many ways. It is the classroom teacher who must find most of the resources; it is the classroom teacher who decides what she does and does not teach; and it is the classroom teacher who, by the very nature of the teacher evaluation system, reacts to the pressures of the system in ways that policy makers may or may not envision.
Crucial questions remain. Are policy makers aware of the concerns of classroom teachers, especially those that directly affect their implementation of the intended curriculum? In turn, are policy makers doing everything possible to facilitate the implementation of the intended curriculum?

Chapter synthesis

Although different in some ways, Western, Central and Eastern Primary Schools intersected at key points, especially with matters that pertain to the implementation of the intended curriculum. The issue of resources was foremost. This included textbook availability, indigenous content, and student access to textbooks. The nature of the support services was also similar in the three schools as there was the sense that there were too few attempts at on-going communication, especially between the Ministry of Education bureaucracy and classroom teachers. The learning environment of two of the schools, Central and Eastern, pointed to complications that could result because of poor physical facilities. Many teachers expressed concern about the pressures of assessment practices and the impact that they have upon the implementation of the curriculum. Then, linked to the issue of assessment, there was the mixed-ability or academic setting and its impact. Teachers in two of the schools, Central and Eastern, were also concerned about impositions on their instructional time, particularly by extracurricular activities, although the larger issue of overtaxed timetables entered many of our discussions. Finally, the team teaching situation at Eastern presented a unique situation in which many of the preceding issues met.

In the next chapter, I explore the meaning of the descriptive profiles of this chapter for a country such as The Bahamas. Indeed, although one might also find elements of these profiles in contexts of the developed world, the meaning and the explanation of these activities for curriculum implementation are different for developing countries because of
the very particular sociohistorical context in which they are located.
CHAPTER 7

INDIGENOUS MATERIALS AND A MORE COLLABORATIVE SUPPORT NETWORK: TOWARDS THE REALIZATION OF THE INTENDED CURRICULUM

Introduction

Findings presented in the development literature, the teacher effectiveness literature and studies of the implementation of curriculum innovations, point to the need to investigate and to describe teaching processes in a wider range of contexts. The questionnaire data used in this dissertation, and the teacher-school profiles of Eastern, Central and Western Primary Schools have offered glimpses into the classrooms of The Bahamian Primary School System.

Based upon the premise that teachers may be a main determinant in curriculum innovations (e.g., Doyle & Ponder, 1977; McConnellogue, 1975), and that they are important agents in the process of innovation implementation in the school (e.g., Spaulding, 1975), I am interested in decisions that teachers make when acting upon innovations within the educational setting, and what influences their decision making processes. Doyle and Ponder (1977) proposed that teachers use three major criteria in deciding how, or whether, to implement an innovation: its instrumentality in terms of classroom contingencies; its congruence with current conditions; and the costs involved in using the innovation. Hurst and Rust (1990) extended this model and suggested that in choosing to adopt an innovation teachers use one or more of the following criteria: information, relevance and desirability, effectiveness and reliability, feasibility, trialability, and adaptability. Finally, the teacher effectiveness literature has identified four research concerns that underlie the concept of teacher effectiveness: teacher skills and behaviours;
teacher patterns of decision-making at both the instructional and managerial levels; teachers' modes of thinking and how they interpret teaching situations; the interrelationship between teaching purposes and pupils' interpretation of these purposes; and teacher-pupil tasks.

Drawing upon these insights, I now turn to a theoretical analysis of the questionnaire data of the present study, the teacher-school profiles of Western, Central and Eastern Primary Schools, and what light these data shed on the state of the intended curriculum in The Bahamas. Through my discussions with teachers and my observations of these contexts, issues that relate to the state of curriculum policy and the implementation of the intended curriculum became evident. Despite the nuances in each school, there are common features. These revolve around the issues of resources, support services, the internal dynamics of the school context, assessment practices, and the personal backgrounds and professional experiences of teachers.

**Resources**

Educators consider textbooks, and resources generally, as important instruments in the daily practices of teachers. The Bahamas Ministry of Education's 1982 Curriculum Guides were the government's attempt to provide national curriculum guidelines for its educational system. As Cohen and Ball (1990) argued, in such nations where the school system offers prescriptive guidance for content coverage, "textbooks and curriculum guides can offer extensive and focused guidance about instructional content. . . . [As a result,] textbooks might be quite a potent agent of policy in school systems of this sort" (p. 332). Similarly, Psacharopoulos (1990) argued that textbooks and writing materials are particularly crucial in the educational systems of developing nations. While I find Psacharopoulos' concentration on output, as 'the superior way of measuring school quality' disconcerting, I must agree with his argument that:
Aside from hardware (classrooms), school inputs, such as textbooks and writing materials, contribute to student learning. In a developing country, the student has to rely more on school rather than family to provide learning, and the evidence shows that this translates into increased learning. (p. 374)

Yet, this must not suggest that classroom teachers do not exercise a certain degree of agency in their daily implementation practices. Indeed, as Cohen and Ball (1990) warned, some research has supported the contention that "even when teachers use the same required texts, the content that they cover varies considerably from one teacher to the next" (p. 332). Still, this does not deny the importance of instructional materials if policy makers wish to enhance the conditions under which policy implementation takes place.

The data of the present study highlight resources as a key issue. In particular, the foreign content of textbooks and their limited availability make it difficult for teachers to better meet the requirements of the intended curriculum. Teachers cited in the teacher-school profiles report, and my observations concur that, the content of most of the textbooks that they use is foreign. Agreement with this finding echoed through the analysis of the 1991 questionnaire responses, as 49% of the respondents indicated that there was less than adequate use of Bahamian resources material, and 6% indicated that there was no use of Bahamian materials.

The opinion of the respondents of the 1991 questionnaire, as well as the teachers and administrators whom I interviewed, that there was a shortage of Bahamian resource materials was in agreement with that of the Ministry of Education 1985 study. During the 1985 study teachers requested more indigenously related activities and materials to use in their teaching. Furthermore, while the general availability of textbooks has improved over the years, according to the findings of both the 1991 questionnaire and the Ministry of Education's 1985 study, as well as from what teachers told me in our discussions, there has not been a satisfactory improvement in student access to textbooks.

The availability of textbooks, and resources generally, is crucial as classroom teachers with whom I spoke revealed that they must scramble daily to get what they need to
assist them in the translation of the curriculum. The 1991 questionnaire data and my interview and field note data concur with the observation that except for mathematics, reading, and language arts, there are insufficient books to ensure that students have access to individual, or shared, copies. The case of literature instruction in three of the schools that I visited demonstrated most clearly the negative impact upon the implementation of the intended curriculum when students do not have this access. A most important consequence is that teachers make the decision whether they will incorporate indigenous aspects. Indeed, this situation serves to highlight the importance of the classroom teacher in the translation of curriculum policy, particularly in Third World contexts (see also, Kapansa, 1990; Okou, 1990; Okpala, 1990; Vicars, 1990).

The absence of sufficient textbooks, reference books and other teaching aids also results in the reduction of instructional time as teachers spend much of their time writing material on chalkboards. In turn, as I observed several times, students spend even more time copying this material into their note books. In addition, the onus on the teacher to purchase general supplies that she needs to enhance the teaching of her lessons is troublesome. Many of these teachers have families and struggle to maintain a comfortable standard of living on salaries that are comparatively lower than their contemporaries in other professions.

The question of whose responsibility it is to provide the materials for the daily educational practices is one that policy makers need to address as it relates not only to the implementation of the intended curriculum, but directly to the larger question of providing a quality education. The question of quality, one that governments world-wide are asking, is further complicated when we acknowledge that most countries of the world find themselves under financial constraints. As Psacharopoulos (1990) reported: "though a free education policy was sustainable during the first half of this century, the increased social demand for education has created strains on the public financing systems of both developing and advanced countries" (p. 377). Although the detailed examination of priorities set by the
Government of The Bahamas falls out of the domain of the present study, it seems imperative that I note the need for such an examination. This examination should be one of first tasks of the newly elected Free National Movement Government as they ready themselves to assume the management of the country in the late summer of 1992.

**Production of indigenous materials: The issue of textbook content**

The almost total reliance on non-Bahamian school materials throughout the Commonwealth vitiates the Bahamianisation process and hinders learning for countless numbers of children. The development of a modest, yet effective, production unit for the purpose of producing low cost instructional materials, Bahamian in content and context, is indispensable to the fulfilment of a school programme which meets the social and educational needs of the country. (Education for national progress, 1976, p. 14)

Little has changed since the commission team wrote the above in 1976. Yet, while the availability of indigenous material is crucial to the translation of an indigenous curriculum, I would be remiss if I did not place the issue of the production of indigenous materials within the larger issue of what Altbach (1984) termed 'the distribution of knowledge in the Third World.'

Altbach (1984) claimed that the Third World imports more 'knowledge products' than it exports, and that it is dependent upon industrialized nations for "books and journals and also for much of the knowledge in the major scientific and technical fields, for applied findings, and often for the results about the Third World itself" (p. 230). This argument relates specifically to the production of indigenous materials for use in The Bahamian educational setting, as publishing is a key element in the distribution machinery. The establishment and support of indigenous publishing houses is therefore crucial if the distribution of knowledge in the Third World is to be challenged. As stated by two other Third World researchers (Dodson and Dodson, 1972):

To establish an indigenous publishing house is an act of liberation, and therefore, a necessity because it breaks the control, indeed the monopoly, which the white races have had over world literature, for which reason they have controlled the mind of the African. (cited in Altbach, 1984, p. 231)
Still, despite the attractiveness of such arrangements, we must consider the cost effectiveness of ventures like these. The issue goes beyond a simple shortage of books for educational programmes. There is a limited market for indigenously produced books, small library systems in Third World contexts, a reliance on the oral tradition for certain kinds of communication, and infrastructural factors. In addition, the costs of publishing are high and as governments or private firms are unlikely to consider publishing as a viable industry, loans are unlikely to be forthcoming. Simultaneously, one cannot ignore the argument that, in Third World nations such as The Bahamas, importing foreign books costs valuable foreign-exchange earnings and, in turn, limit the potential for growth of an indigenous publishing industry (see for e.g., Mshama, 1992).

The goal for Third World nations to establish viable means of book distribution among themselves has particular relevancy and feasibility for the Caribbean Region in which The Bahamas is located. This is particularly noteworthy when we acknowledge that other researchers (e.g., Howell, 1984) have reported that similar shortages of indigenous materials exist in other parts of the Caribbean and that the interests and intentions of many countries in the region are common (see Miller, 1990). Indeed, The Bahamas Ministry of Education's policies regarding the selection, purchase and production of educational materials, must be examined with the larger issue of 'the distribution of knowledge in the Third World' in mind. It is, undoubtedly, encouraging that the former Bahamian Minister of Education stated in his opening address to the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession Conference on Education and Culture in The Caribbean, held in The Bahamas during September 1991, that: "Through joint ventures we need to produce indigenous teaching materials and textbooks. We must encourage our poets, novelists, song writers, musicians and artists to become involved in preserving our heritage through publications, exhibitions and regional festivals" (p. 7). Yet, it remains to be seen whether future policy will incorporate the philosophy of regional cooperation. It is too early to determine the direction that the recently elected Free National Movement (FNM)
Government will take in this regard. The only reference that the FNM made to educational materials in their Manifesto '92 (1992) was that the expenditure of the budget allocation for education would be directed "so that all classrooms are adequately equipped and supplied with quality teaching and learning materials at a reasonable cost" (p. 19). Just how this will be translated into policy and its resulting practices will unfold over their five year term in office.

Support services: Towards a more collaborative atmosphere

Using data collected on teachers and teaching in the developing world, Hurst and Rust (1990) extended their analysis of factors that influence innovation implementation to include the importance of teachers' pay, status and self-esteem, and working conditions. They disagreed with the thesis that the failure to adopt an innovation is because of poorly motivated teachers. Instead, they maintained that teachers "make rational decisions about the relative advantages of the innovations to them and their students" (p. 170). Their recommendation was that if teachers are to be encouraged to try out new ideas and practices, innovations, there must be "a more collaborative atmosphere and set of working practices in schools" (p. 170).

In this dissertation, I viewed support services in a broader sense, and included assistance teachers get from the Ministry of Education bureaucracy, the school's administration, as well as the wider issue of communication among educators at all levels of the educational system. Through my analysis of the questionnaire data, and the more in-depth study of the three schools, I found the notion of 'a more collaborative atmosphere' lacking. The absence of widespread support regarding resources notwithstanding, many teachers talked to me about their opinion that the Ministry of Education bureaucracy does not take the views of the classroom teacher seriously. In addition, the relations within schools themselves raised questions. While there was evidence in one school, Western
Primary, that the relations between the classroom teachers and the school's administration were affable, relations in the other two were less congenial.

The analysis of the questionnaire responses concurred with this general attitude toward the state of the educational system's communication network. Not only did 69% of the respondents indicate that they had not received feedback since the Ministry's 1985 study, but only 26% of the respondents indicated that channels of communication were open.

What, then, is the nature of the support and communication that teachers receive in their attempts to implement the intended curriculum? While the questionnaire, field note and interview data indicated that there were attempts by the Ministry of Education bureaucracy to communicate with classroom teachers, this has not been as effective as policy makers might desire. The following discussion of the operation of the Curriculum Section of the Ministry of Education serves to shed even more light on the issue of communication.

*Curriculum Section: A functioning support unit?*

The way governments go about change within their own organization is a fundamental part of the implementation process. Stated another way, if governments are poor at launching new programs or at bringing about changes within their own ranks, how can they possibly criticize schools for not changing? I suspect it is this more than anything else that turns teachers, administrators, and others off in dealing with government personnel. (Fullan, 1991, p. 253)

Many teachers with whom I spoke viewed the Ministry of Education curriculum officers as sporadic liaisons, offering little reassurance in the classroom teacher's daily implementation of the intended curriculum. In fact, one core subject at the primary school level, mathematics, is without an officer and has been without one since the inception of the 1982 Curriculum Guides. In addition, curriculum officers are, after all, subject to the directives of the Ministry of Education bureaucracy and can only generate resources based upon the finances that the Ministry of Education allocates. Furthermore, as a Ministry of
Education official explained, the very organizational structure of the Curriculum Section, does not lead to the efficient management of curriculum matters.

[I]t's really not the Curriculum Division. It's a Curriculum Section, because it's not structured. It's not really structured; we do not have all of the required officers in the subject areas, so it's referred to just as a section. In this new structure that's supposed to be coming up this year, we are looking at a Curriculum Division where the curriculum officers are together and there is much more structure and there is a closer interrelation of what they're doing rather than [having them] scattered here and there.

Even the Learning Resources Unit (LRU), the building in which the Curriculum Section is located, presents problems for the administrator, particularly when it comes to its intended function as a support service. One of the Assistant Directors of Education, whose portfolio is curriculum, is also responsible for the four sections within the unit. These sections include: the media library, housing the hard software and reference material; the in-service section responsible for teacher workshops; the printing section responsible for the printing of curriculum materials; and the educational broadcasting section that takes care of the production of educational programmes. A senior officer should head each of these sections and should have several support staff to assist her or him. Yet, as a Ministry official informed me:

It hasn't been like that for a very long time. The support staff isn't here. So we do not have skilled personnel. And you know, that has made it very, very difficult. We do all the in-service programmes, we do the educational broadcasting, and we have the media library and the printing section.

This means that the Assistant Director of Education in charge of curriculum has to concern herself with curriculum matters, and also oversee the administration of the four sections of the Learning Resources Unit (LRU). Such a situation is likely to result in some neglect of curriculum related matters as the responsibilities are far too wide in scope for one administrator to manage. Considering the state of the support services, specifically the key structure established for that purpose, LRU, it is not surprising that classroom teachers question the feasibility and efficacy of the intended curriculum policy in The Bahamas today.
Professional development opportunities

Besides the challenging task of making teaching materials available for classroom teachers to use in their daily implementation of the intended curriculum, the issue of in-service opportunities deserves closer consideration. Although the rhetoric of the educational documents, that I examined in chapter four, adopted the stance that the teacher is central in the implementation process, my interview data and observations of the settings, illustrate that policy makers do not translate this rhetoric into policies concerning professional development. Such practices are more in tune with what Darling-Hammond (1990) describes as the view of the teacher as 'a conduit of policy,' and not as an actor. Darling-Hammond (1990) argued that:

As a consequence of this view, policy makers have tended to invest a great deal more in the creation of control systems for teaching than they do in the development of teacher knowledge. Preservice teacher education programs are funded less well than virtually any other college or university program area; investments in staff development are paltry compared to those that occur in other professions or in businesses; schools are structured so that teachers have little opportunity to learn from each other in the course of their work. (p. 345)

This is further disturbing when we consider the research findings of Verspoor and Leno (1986) who assessed the World Bank projects directed toward educational change from 1964 to 1983. These researchers concluded that "teachers are at the core of the educational change process" (cited in Rust and Dalin, 1990, p. 313). They argued further that systems where any effective change has occurred have a successful in-service component and high teacher commitment and motivation for change. Yet, the average allocation for in-service training, they observed, is less than 4% of the cost of the project. While I cannot confirm the percentage of funding available for in-service training in The Bahamas, there are several conclusions that I can draw based upon my 1991 questionnaire data, observations of the setting, discussions with teachers, and the apparent policies that the Ministry of Education bureaucracy employs in this regard.
When discussing the issue of professional development opportunities, Ministry of Education officials usually refer to workshops that are school-based and, occasionally, system-wide. While Ministry officials often conduct the system-wide workshops during the summer months, the school's administration conducts the school-based ones during the school year. During the time that I spent at Central Primary School, its administration conducted a Staff Development Programme. The topic for discussion, "Ways teachers can involve parents in the teaching-learning process," while worthy of examination, may provide little immediate direction for teachers in their daily implementation of the intended curriculum. Indeed, as I recall comments teachers made at the time, many suggestions presented were perceived as additional work for the classroom teacher who already feels overworked.

Nonetheless, as the Ministry of Education stipulated in a 1991 directive, such sessions are to be conducted once per month. Central Primary School's administration had set aside the first Wednesday afternoon of each month for this purpose. On those afternoons, students would be dismissed at two o'clock while teachers remained, after a day of teaching, to discuss topics selected by members of the school's administration.

Efforts to conduct these workshops are encouraging. However, there is a need for even more professional development opportunities if, as the supervisors with whom I spoke indicated, using the categories on the teachers' Annual Confidential Report, average, above average and outstanding, most of the teachers in the Bahamian educational system fall within the 'average' category. If, in addition, as teachers whom I interviewed admitted, there are certain subjects that teachers feel less confident about, professional development opportunities should extend beyond the confines of afternoon sessions conducted by members of the school's administration, and even those conducted in the summer months for those teachers selected to represent their respective schools. Furthermore, the potential for extending these arenas for the purpose of producing indigenous materials is feasible. As this Ministry of Education official noted:
The only way you’re going to be able to get materials of that nature, Bahamian materials, is to allow teachers to have sabbaticals or to be released for a certain period of time. The Bahamas Union of Teachers years and years ago were asking for this, and you know, it just does not seem to be heeded. We must be prepared to release teachers to come out to do the research and, you know, give them two or three months, six months.

Also, professional development opportunities can begin to address the issue of stress that classroom teachers experience daily in their teaching practices. Indeed, the nature of teacher stress is more complicated than it might appear. Huberman (1983) has described the stress that teachers encounter daily as the 'classroom press,' the press for immediacy and concreteness, for multidimensionality and simultaneity, for adapting to everchanging conditions or unpredictability, and for personal involvement with students. Because of this 'classroom press,' teachers focus on day-to-day effects, they have few opportunities for meaningful interaction with colleagues, they exhaust their energy, and they have limited opportunities for sustained reflection about what they do. Such an analysis highlights the inadequacy of the structure of the traditional educational setting to encourage networks that support sharing and communication among classroom teachers. As a result, teachers' dependence upon experiential knowledge for day-to-day coping must increase as there is little time to explore the possibilities outside the classroom context.

This notion of teacher isolation has tremendous implications for the implementation of an innovation such as that incorporated in the curriculum policies of The Bahamas. My observations of the educational settings indicated that there were few opportunities for networking among classroom teachers. This observation concurs with other research findings that have shown that teachers say they learn best from each other, but that they infrequently interact with each other (e.g., Lortie, 1975; Stallings, 1989). This observation has particular relevance for Third World nations as teachers in these contexts face even more demanding situations. As Jennings-Wray (1990) put it, as compared to teachers in the developed world:

somehow teachers in the Third World are expected to be so buoyed up by their own enthusiasm for hard labor that they will willingly take on additional work with no
reward or incentive in sight... These [Third World] teachers, in fact, need stronger support because they are emerging from a state of dependency on methodologies of teachers who taught them, dependency on ideas borrowed from abroad, dependency on foreign textbooks, etc. (p. 140)

**Teacher input**

We're an important part of this whole system. We are the people who make things run. You know those people in [the Ministry of] Education they shuffle around papers, in my opinion, and we're the people who make things run. We're the ones who make the doctors and the lawyers, and even the other people – the criminals; because if we fail, they fail. So we're important. I think we are most important. (Teacher, Eastern Primary School, 1991)

Despite the Director of Education's appeal in 1982 for teachers to "submit comments and suggestions to the particular subject committees so that the work that has now commenced may continue and quality education may be achieved in all our schools," many classroom teachers feel that their input about curriculum concerns is not being addressed. The question of communication and feedback employing teacher input is another concern that relates to the broader issue of support services. As a Ministry of Education official informed me, it was the Ministry of Education's intention, in the years following the release of the 1982 Curriculum Guides, to seek and act upon the input of classroom teachers, but it is, apparently, only now that the Ministry bureaucracy is considering this input. In response to questions about teacher input a Ministry of Education official explained that:

[T]he plan was there [in 1982] for teachers' feedback... it was not in the curriculum guidelines as such. It wasn't really structured in such a way so that they would be able to complete a form or something and send it back. It just said that you may send feedback. We had a plan that was very well outlined, but was never put into action for the teachers to be able to do that. But some of them did anyway. As the years rolled on, this became an automatic path; they did it automatically. But the difficulty with that [incorporating teacher input] is that it has not been structured.
Then, although she was unable to explain why the Ministry did not put its plan for teacher feedback into action, she disclosed what they have done since the 1985 study regarding feedback to teachers:

After the '85 study, the feedback that was collected again was supposed to have been included in the curriculum. I know this doesn't sound very good, but each year, each succeeding year, the whole purpose, the idea was this year we will get the curriculum rewritten. And it has not been rewritten. So what would have happened, the feedback that came back to the curriculum officers was being collected; and some of them would . . . I don't know, I don't think all of them would, because I don't think all of the feedback may have been suitable, but the curriculum officers have within their subject areas been incorporating it with their subject committees. [In fact,] there are plans to incorporate some of that feedback that they collected in '85 in this new [proposed for 1992] curriculum.

As she explained, these subject committees, comprising the curriculum officer and classroom teachers whom the principal recommends, act as filtering channels for addressing curriculum issues. Yet, the Ministry bureaucracy has not structured this process so that they can address these issues in a formal and uniform manner, and thereby incorporate them in official curriculum policy documents. In addition, all schools are not necessarily represented on all committees. This might explain why most of the classroom teachers with whom I spoke indicated that they have yet to receive feedback about general concerns that they submitted in the early years following 1982. Similarly, 69% of the respondents to the 1991 questionnaire indicated that they had not received any updated information from the Ministry of Education concerning revisions to the curriculum since the 1985 curriculum study.

It is logical, then, to infer that the reason so many classroom teachers feel that their input is not being valued is because they do not receive any indication that the Ministry of Education officials are acting upon it. Such an oversight, if indeed it is an oversight, needs to be investigated for as has been shown in other Third World contexts such as Trinidad and Tobago (Jules, 1990), Nigeria (Okpala, 1990), and Papua New Guinea (Vicars, 1990), the very success of curriculum reform depends upon the involvement of classroom teachers in the curriculum development process. Teacher input and involvement must go
beyond the mere representation of a handful of teachers on curriculum committees. Policy makers need to establish viable channels of communication so that the teaching community at large can make an impact by voicing their experiences as implementors of curriculum policies.

Such practices as those employed by the former Bahamian Minister of Education and the Ministry of Education bureaucracy regarding the introduction of a new examination serves as a further example of the inadequate lines of communication between the Ministry of Education and classroom teachers. Announcing the new secondary school examination at a District Education Officers' conference held for district officers, school principals, and ministry officials, the Minister of Education proclaimed that:

Perhaps the most challenging initiative this year will be the preparation of our students and our teachers and our schools and our administrators and yourselves for the BGCSE [Bahamas General Certificate of Secondary Education]. . . . In the successful introduction of this examination, the Ministry [of Education] means business. We are committed to it. There is no going back. It is going to happen. So whether it happens successfully or not is going to depend a lot on the people in this room, because we have no choice. It will come in May of 1993. Advantages must be emphasized and it is up to you as leaders to shape this response in your teachers [emphasis added] so that students are given confidence and are introduced to the new exam with ease. ("Students have," 1992)

It is disturbing that policy makers did not invite classroom teachers to attend a forum such as the one at which these remarks were made. But, even more crucial is their apparent perception that the success of the implementation process is one that only needs the 'shaping of teachers' responses' after policy decisions have been made.

The present description of the existing informal channels of communication access to the Ministry of Education bureaucracy does not encourage the establishment of links that are strong enough to enhance the process of policy implementation in The Bahamas. The onus is on policy makers to ensure that channels of communication remain open and active, otherwise a grave injustice is done to the process of curriculum implementation, evaluation, and what should be its resulting re-development. Support services, in the broader sense that I have used it in this study, calls for the establishment of a sense of trust between those
who make policy and the implementors of policy, the classroom teachers. It calls for what Hurst and Rust (1990) termed 'a more collaborative atmosphere and set of working practices in schools.' This must be a major goal of The Bahamas Ministry of Education bureaucracy as they go about the process of curriculum development in the wake of their attempts to revise the 1982 guides, ten years later.

**Internal dynamics of the school context**

The educational context in which teachers translate the curriculum is of key importance when one considers the state of policy implementation. I submit that the working conditions in which classroom teachers are expected to function are as important as the teaching competencies that they possess. In talking about working conditions I extend the concept to include not only physical surroundings, but also the social environment or, what I have termed, the internal dynamics of the school context. Yet, because it is the physical surroundings of the Bahamian schools that are more visible, I begin there.

The state of the physical facilities in the schools of developing nations, such as The Bahamas, presents a dimension that is not often faced to the same extent by those in developed nations. The complexities of economic conditions are more extreme in developing nations. Recently more ethnographic studies have begun to give researchers a clearer idea of the severity these conditions. The profiles that I present of Western, Central and Eastern Primary Schools are my contribution to the descriptions of educational contexts in the developing nation of The Bahamas.

The profile of Eastern Primary School presents the most disturbing 'snapshot' of a school building in disrepair. Whether the structure that Eastern Primary, and schools similar to it, represents is economically viable is a pressing question. And, even more widely, that 65% of the respondents in my survey indicated that there is insufficient space
in their schools for effective learning to take place is cause for concern, especially if these responses are reflective of the larger Bahamian educational context. Yet, as discussed earlier in the dissertation, there is a difference in the responses on this questionnaire item as the less qualified teachers of the sample were more critical. The reason for this difference deserves further investigation.

A common misconception about the teaching profession is that its working hours are shorter. However, when we consider the number of daily instructional hours, extra instructional responsibilities such as break supervision, preparation time, marking of students' assignments, staff meetings and other administrative chores, we must construct a very different picture. In addition, according to Hurst and Rust (1990):

We must also calculate the number of days each week that the teacher works, the number of weeks each year the teacher instructs, and the number of weeks the teacher is obliged to be on the job when students are out of school. . . . [And still,] these figures [would] typically refer to the number of hours a teacher must be in school and do not reflect out of school hours devoted to their profession. (p. 162)

The profiles that I presented of three Bahamian educational contexts illustrated just how taxing the time of teachers can be, in terms of both physical and emotional energy. In particular, the issue of lesson plan books is an area that warrants attention. All the classroom teachers with whom I spoke felt that this was simply an exercise in bureaucratic control, and their time that could be better spent on more practical teacher preparation tasks.

Certainly, the number of working hours and the inherent stress that accompanies it must have a negative impact upon a classroom teacher's willingness to follow the intended curriculum. While this argument might be contentious, if the experiences of the teachers with whom I spoke are any indication of the state of the teaching profession throughout The Bahamas, it is not assuming too much to conclude that their professional commitment to the implementation of the intended curriculum will suffer.

One factor that researchers cite as crucial in their investigations of the schools in developing nations is that of instructional time. According to a World Bank report (1990), Policies for the improving the effectiveness of primary education in developing countries:
Research from a number of countries has shown that the amount of time available for academic studies is consistently related to how much children learn in school. In general the more time teachers spend actually teaching, the more students learn. While learning time is valuable for all students, it is especially important for poor students, whose out-of-school time and opportunities for learning are limited. (p. 9)

During my discussions with classroom teachers, instructional time surfaced repeatedly as a concern in the implementation of the intended curriculum. Instructional time can be influenced by the length of the official school year in hours, the proportion of these hours assigned to the subject, and the amount of time lost through school closures, teacher absences, and other interruptions. Besides these influences, which are common to both developed and developing nations, Bahamian classroom teachers cite additional interruptions that they experience. Interruptions for non-academic activities, inclement weather, morning assemblies that sometimes extend into first and second period classes, public and school holidays, and time for teachers to complete end of term reports and marking are common.

Inclement weather can be particularly disruptive especially during hurricane season in The Bahamas. During my data collection, the weather bureau issued a 'storm watch' that resulted in the cancellation of school for one day. During hurricane season such cancellations can occur whenever there is a perceived danger to the islands. In addition, often students will not come to school if it is raining heavily, as flooding can result in traffic delays for those who are driven to school, and additional difficulties for those who must walk. Also, the flooding can hamper activities on the school grounds, as it may be difficult to get from building to building when necessary.

Besides the problems of inclement weather, non-academic activities, extended morning assemblies, public and school holidays, and administrative tasks, there is also the issue of the allocation of instructional time. The time allocated to each subject relates directly to what policy makers perceive to be the focus of primary schooling. Education for national progress (1976), explicitly stated the amount of time that should be available for academic studies, and what those academic areas should be. The commission team
responsible for the writing of this document reduced the number of subjects to the basic learning areas of communication, mathematics, social and environmental studies, and practical arts. They further recommended that: "A multiplicity of subjects is both unnecessary and undesirable at the beginning stages of learning" (p. 28). Yet, despite this recommendation, there has been an increase in subjects at the primary school level. At the beginning of the 1991-1992 school year, the Ministry of Education issued a proposed subject breakdown for the upper primary level that included two new subjects, family life and health education (2 class periods) and agriculture (2 class periods). This is in addition to the following subjects: mathematics (7 periods), language arts (11 periods), reading (4 periods), social studies (2 periods), physical education (2 periods), science (3 periods), religious knowledge (2 periods), music (2 periods), art and craft (2 periods), and library science (1 period).

These additions deter from the original intentions of policy makers regarding the goal of primary education. As the White paper (1973) stated:

An effort will be made to improve the cultivation of the arts of communication, the learning of skills which are appropriate to the primary level and the strengthening of such areas of the curriculum as mathematics, science, health and citizenship. (pp. 4-5)

Indeed, the objective of functional literacy and numeracy is one that the 1976-1981 planning guide (Education for national progress) highlighted as key in its primary school projection. Yet, many classroom teachers and Ministry of Education officials with whom I spoke agreed that the primary school timetable, as it is presently structured, is overtaxed. Consequently, classroom teachers, although trying to work within the Ministry of Education's timetable framework, must often infringe upon the instructional time of other subjects, particularly if they feel that they need extra time to complete the curriculum of 'core subjects.' As this Ministry of Education official revealed:

The teachers try to work within that [Ministry of Education] framework, but in reality, things don't happen the way you see it on paper there. Because some of them find that they are spending... or they don't have sufficient contact time in certain relevant areas or essential areas, and so they tend to rob from certain other
areas, but they do that without the Ministry of Education knowing it. I do think that
the timetable at the primary level is overcrowded. . . . What you want to do is to
give them [students] the basics. . . . We need to get in a lot of contact time in the
language arts and develop our language skills and computational skills. So they
must have a lot of contact time in mathematics and language [arts]. They are key,
and I don't think these two areas should be sacrificed for any other area.

Still, despite this prevailing attitude, the higher levels of the Ministry of Education
bureaucracy make decisions regarding the composition of timetables. In fact, Ministry of
Education officials whom I interviewed readily expressed their helplessness about being
able to effect changes regarding timetable issues:

We've brought that [timetable issues] up also, but then we don't make the laws; we
don't do it, so we [supervisors] would have to try and talk with teachers and tell
them do their best to see that they cover what they can.

If, this is indicative of the general approach to policy formulation, there is a problem not
only for the issue of timetables, but for policy formulation practices generally.

Nonetheless, as instructional time and its use is a key factor in any effective model of
schooling, and as the original intent of policy makers was to strengthen the areas of
literacy, numeracy, and ultimately nourish a sense of national pride and identity (White
Paper, 1973), it seems imperative that the bureaucratic decision makers review the current
stance on the structure of the current Bahamian primary school timetable.

It follows that after a discussion of the current constraints upon instructional time,
and thereby upon the implementation process, that we turn to the impact of extracurricular
activities. While there are undoubtedly a range of purposes for schooling, educators
generally agree upon two major ones. Fullan (1991) labelled these as the
cognitive/academic and the personal/social-development purposes of education. A major
aim of extracurricular activities is to extend the student's personal/social-development
outside the regular classroom context. The term 'extracurricular activities' refers, then, to
those events that lie outside the 'regular' curriculum. By the very nature of its definition,
these events are meant be conducted outside the times meant for the 'regular' curriculum.
Yet, as my data reveal, in the Bahamian schools very often these events infringe upon the instructional time of the regular curriculum.

In the case of the Bahamian primary schools, extracurricular events include after-school programmes, sports teams, choirs, dance groups, music instrument groups, and any event that members of the school's staff decide to organize for student involvement. In practice, 'after-school programmes' may include both academic activities that aim to assist students who are having problems in core subjects such as reading, language arts, and mathematics, as well as programmes whose aim it is to expose students to non-academic activities such as sports, dance and the like. Undoubtedly the non-academic programmes attract more students. Two big events around which extracurricular activities centre at the primary school level in The Bahamas are the annual Junior Junkanoo Competition and the Primary Schools Music Festival. In addition, during the year that I collected data, there was the first ever Primary Schools' Science Exhibition that occupied much of the science class time, and student spare and after school time.

Both the Maraj Report (1974) and the subsequent Education for national progress (1976), included references to extracurricular activities, although they did not use this term. The Maraj Report stated that one of its terms of reference was:

To recommend a programme of external assistance to supplement local manpower and financial resources to meet present and anticipated future needs in the areas of education, youth, community development, culture, sports and all other related subjects included in the portfolio of the Ministry of Education and Culture. (pp. 3-4)

The subsequent planning guide pursued this reference by specifying the following objective for primary education:

OBJECTIVE TWELVE: TO DEVELOP A PROGRAMME OF HEALTH, PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND RECREATION IN THE SCHOOLS.

50. Physical education builds much more than sound bodies. Many important traits – physical, mental and emotional – are best developed through organized physical and sport activities. No school programme is complete if physical education and recreational sports are absent or neglected.
51. During the planning period 1976-81 an adequate programme of physical education for all pupils should be established. The Bahamas is an ideal country for the growth and development of recreational sports. (p. 30)

In addition, the 1982 Physical Education Curriculum Guide extended the objective of its programme to include more diverse activities. Stating that one of its goals was to stimulate students to participate in and enjoy recreation during leisure time, the guide declared that "Where class time may not allow many of the skills of games to be taught well enough, teachers can organize clubs that will cater to them during lunch breaks and perhaps for an hour after school time" [emphasis added] (p. 88).

While the preceding excerpts refer only to physical education and recreational sports, since 1982, extracurricular activities have extended to include much more. In fact, the 1982 Physical Education Curriculum Guide stated that:

[T]here is no reason why afternoon club, (which was a another way of saying "AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES") may not be given a special period every two weeks or so and a whole afternoon 1-3 be devoted to just extra curricular activities. (p. 89)

Still, it is important to note that such activities are meant to be conducted during times other than that allocated for the other subjects of the primary school curriculum.

Although I did not have access to any Ministry of Education circulars, since 1982, that address this issue of extracurricular activities, Ministry of Education officials with whom I spoke voiced similar concerns about the practices that some schools follow in this regard.

[I]n some schools I don't like what I see, because it's just a matter of children sitting back and this teacher has a few in there, and there's nothing really structured. The program . . . the course work that you're going to do, it should be sort of remedial, that you will use to strengthen these children that are taking this course. I don't think that's going too well. I really don't . . . . I worry about that too [other extracurricular activities], because these things that will get public scrutiny and public approval, people tend to spend a lot of time on that. And they've got energy, boundless energy, to put into that, but that worries me. If you're going to do it, then I used to say to my teachers, 'Make a list of the vocabulary, the material that you're going to use, and then bring it into the classroom so the children will be benefiting from what they're doing. But if you're just going to spend your time on that, it's not good enough. Fair time, harvest time, whatever the extra thing that you were doing . . . incorporate it into what the
children are doing; you'll be much better off.' But when it's over, some people can't write the word 'Junkanoo.'

The case of Eastern Primary School was, as I discovered, and as this Ministry of Education official agreed, even more disquieting:

[A]t [Eastern], they have a lot of extra-curricular things going on, and that is why I just stopped [my supervisory visits] during the Christmas, because they . . . when I was at one class, there were some other things going on with the other areas, so I knew they were preparing for Junkanoo. That seems to have been priority. And there are other little things, so I just stopped . . . . There's no balance [between the social and academic]. When you put it with the academic there's just too much emphasis on the culture, the social side of it. They have to go this way and they have to do that, and the music and the . . . you know, there's too much emphasis on that, and I think the academic is being neglected. . . . [D]uring my time of observation, especially in the grade six, the top grade [group], you would find that during a math lesson the children are called out to go to do some music or something, or to go for p.e. [physical education] practice or something like that. Not during math! You have your p.e. period or your music period, so you do that during that time. I mentioned it to the principal. She's always trying to defend it, but I still feel that there is too much emphasis on that, and too much disturbance too, especially in the top grades. And they're the ones that they are really leaning on to do that, and so they're always pulling out the children, especially during the core subjects.

Such comments point to influences, and indeed impediments, to the process of curriculum implementation. Furthermore, it is obvious that there has been a deviation from that which the drafters of the 1982 curriculum policy guidelines initially envisioned would be the purpose of extracurricular activities. Classroom teachers and Ministry of Education officials alike, have begun to question the 'balance between the social and academic spheres of the curriculum.' Many teachers expressed their concerns regarding the impingement on the instructional time that they should have to cover specified areas of the intended curriculum. That teachers identify these concerns as impediments to curriculum implementation points to the need to address the issue of extracurricular activities when formulating curricular policy directives. Yet, as far as I was able to discern, the Ministry of Education has not produced a policy directive to address this issue. It is crucial that policy makers address these concerns if the implementation of the intended curriculum is the improve.
Criticism abounds in the research of schooling in developing nations regarding the employment of foreign models (e.g., Ejiogu, 1980; Heyneman, 1984; Jennings-Wray, 1984a; Kay, 1975; Vulliamy, 1981). Arguments have articulated the danger of incorporating the ideals of industrialized nations into the unique contexts of newly established nations. Still, many times through the support of international aid organizations, such models are indiscriminately transposed into these contexts. The team teaching/open classroom concept was one such model that crept into the Bahamian educational system during the early 1970s, just as it was losing favour in the United States. There are four team teaching schools on the island of New Providence. Eastern Primary, a school in this study, is one of them.

Team teaching has its origins in the United States of the mid-1950s. The original intent of team teaching was to divide student time into three groupings. As Warwick (1971) explained:

Forty per cent of the scheduled time might be spent in large groups of about one hundred, where the emphasis would be on pupil stimulation, motivation, enrichment, planning of activities, etc. Teachers in this area would be specialists and a wide range of audio-visual aids needed. Another forty per cent of the time would be spent by pupils in small groups of twelve to fifteen, the teacher acting as counsellor or consultant. Finally, twenty per cent of the time available would be spend on individual study or in groups of two or three. Here a variety of activities would be involved — reading, research, experimentation, writing, listening to pre-recorded tapes, viewing photographic material, and so on, under the guidance of a tutor. (p. 14)

By 1965, team teaching had become even more sophisticated. Its organization and use of material dictated that a wide rage of equipment would not only be necessary, but advocates argued that "the instructional set-up is not complete without appropriate tools" (Trump, 1965, cited in Warwick, 1971, p. 15). Such materials range from overhead projectors, to televisions, recorders, projection screens, chest microphones, public address systems, study workrooms, and printed materials. This elaborate array of 'appropriate tools' extended to specially-designed schools with the 'appropriate' rooms for large and
small group meetings, resource materials, teacher preparation and other components considered necessary for the team teaching programme.

Team teaching was introduced into contexts of the developed world for various reasons. Among these were the perceived need to address staffing problems, inadequate facilities, and in order to structure a framework for mixed-ability groupings. It is doubtful that Bahamian policy makers identified similar concerns in its educational system. It is more likely, as Ejiogu (1980) argued that policy makers in Nigeria did when implementing team teaching in its student teaching practices, that:

In a blind imitation of practices elsewhere, the educational planners in these [developing] countries advocate changes which bear no relevance whatsoever to the needs of the consumer society. Team-teaching, for example, is irrelevant in a society with an acute shortage of teachers. (p. 165)

As with Nigeria, at the time of the introduction of team teaching into its system, The Bahamas was struggling with the problem of a shortage of qualified teachers, in addition to the shortage of resources and inadequate physical facilities. Nonetheless, policy makers proceeded with plans for two elaborately designed structures that included all the 'appropriate tools' to which Warwick (1971) referred.

The general format of team teaching lessons, as it was originally intended, begins with the preparation of a scheme that builds in both the general and individual needs of the students. Then, through the 'lead' or 'input' lesson, teachers attempt to capture the interests of the students. Activity-centred follow-up work is also built into the programme. Team members hold meetings with the intent of evaluating student reception of the input lesson, and ultimately to plan further lessons.

There are several key premises upon which this whole concept lies. As Warwick (1971) explained:

It is a process which involves — among other factors — matching size and composition of the group to the task in hand; a far more flexible organization as far as time-tabling and lesson periods are concerned; resulting from this, new utilization of audio-visual material, equipment, and teaching spaces; and radical re-thinking of pupil assessment. (p. 20)
Yet, as Warwick (1971) noted, while team teaching requires that such organizational changes are necessary for team teaching to occur, many administrators simply try to fit team teaching techniques into a conventional framework. The result is the adoption of organizational aspects of team teaching, without the intended educational implications.

Team teaching, of the kind that I witnessed at Eastern Primary School, was of the kind that Warwick (1971) described above, with organizational aspects but without the intended educational implications. It is further arguable that this student-centred innovation was doomed from the beginning as it was incompatible with the teacher-centred setting that has persisted in the educational context of The Bahamas. Other researchers have levied similar arguments against curricular innovations of Jamaica (Jennings-Wray, 1985), Papua New Guinea (Vulliamy, 1981), and team teaching attempts in Nigeria (Ejiogu, 1980).

Besides this basic criticism, the practice of team teaching presents a complex set of challenges for the implementor of curriculum policy in the Bahamian context. Indeed, during the time of the introduction of the 1982 Curriculum Guides, teachers in team teaching settings had to grapple not only with curriculum reform, but also with instructional reform. Currently, unless the classroom teacher is new to the team teaching situation, there is a sense of routine about her daily practices. However, I uncovered a complexity when I reviewed the relationship between team teaching and the government's intended curriculum policy.

First, and foremost, the structure of the physical building of Eastern Primary School is of immediate concern. Policy makers not only imported the concept of team teaching, but imported the open classroom concept that went with it. In 1972, policy makers outfitted Eastern Primary School with all the audio-visual material, equipment, and teaching spaces to which Warwick (1971) alludes. This translated into millions of dollars during the initial construction phase in the early 1970s, and has continued to drain on national and, in turn, educational budget funds. Indeed, the costs of maintaining buildings such as Eastern Primary are enormous. These costs are led by the expense of an air-
conditioning unit, with which the school was originally equipped, as the building has no windows. While the three floor, originally carpeted, pentagon-structured, concrete building remains as a monument to the PLP Government's early educational endeavours, many classroom teachers and Ministry of Education officials alike expressed the concern about whether the initial and continued expenses benefited the larger educational system in The Bahamas.

In addition, as compared to the more elaborate organizational structure of the teaching teams of the 1960s in the United States, the teams at Eastern Primary School include only the team leader, responsible for the immediate supervision of her centre, and the members of the team. As there are no provisions for teacher or clerical aides, in the sense that team teaching advocates originally conceived it, members of the team must prepare lessons, mark student assignments, perform administrative chores and other teaching responsibilities, in addition to coordinating with team members. The absence of teacher or clerical aides certainly contributes to the fact that teachers in the sixth grade centre at Eastern Primary have reverted to the practice of 'turn' teaching instead of 'team' teaching. In the absence of the needed assistance and support, classroom teachers have reverted to a practice that has served them well in the past, and continues to do so in the present.

The views of both classroom teachers, administrators, and Ministry of Education officials concerning this practice of 'turn' teaching as compared to 'team' teaching are remarkably similar. It was the original intent of team teaching advocates that one member of the team would introduce the 'lead' or 'input' lesson given to the larger group of about 100 students. A second member would then take responsibility for the middle section or development of the lesson, and a third member would conclude the lesson. Each member of the team would then be responsible for follow-up activities in smaller groups.

The practice in the sixth grade centre at Eastern Primary School differs, as each of the five team members takes the responsibility for either, literature, religious knowledge,
social studies, family life, or health education. The other team members, then, are supposed to help with the discipline of the group while that team member teaches the input subject for which she is responsible. The team member responsible for the individual subject does most of the preparation for the lesson, and all the marking of student assignments that she gives. In addition, there are specialists for science and physical education. Smaller groups of students also rotate their group visits with the reading specialist.

The flexibility of the scheduling, to which Warwick (1971) and other advocates refer, does not exist at Eastern Primary School. First, while team meetings do take place, usually they are not built into the timetable, as was the intent of team teaching advocates, but instead members must arrange to meet one afternoon a week, after school hours. Additionally, a class period is usually a half hour, although there are double periods built into the schedules for some subjects. Finally, teachers, most often than not, rigidly comply with the time constraints, especially when the whole centre must attend an input lesson.

In addition to these organizational dilemmas, and the issue of resource availability aside, there was a widespread attitude among the teachers with whom I spoke that the practice of team teaching at Eastern Primary School does not facilitate the implementation of the intended curriculum. Foremost among the objections were the issues of student control, varied student abilities within the large groupings, and instructional methods. Teachers complained continually about the problem of discipline in the large group lead or input lessons. Many questioned whether team teaching was suitable for all student abilities. Finally, many teachers felt that the open classroom setting inhibited their instructional creativity.

It was the original intent of team teaching advocates to enhance the teaching process by expanding learning possibilities for children, building flexibility into timetables, and taking advantage of the range of technological advances of the time. Yet, as teachers at Eastern Primary School revealed, there is little evidence of these advantages at Eastern.
then, the situation at Eastern is any indication of other team teaching experiences in educational system of The Bahamas, policy makers need to re-examine the impact of this instructional innovation upon the process and content driven elements of the intended educational policies of the independence era. They need to reconsider the educational worth of team teaching and whether it is advantageous in the fairly traditional system of The Bahamas.

The systematic streaming of students has occupied considerable focus in the educational research literature since the early 1900s. Although analysts argue that this sorting function has a degree of importance, the greater controversy surrounds whether educators apply sorting procedures universally to all persons despite race, gender, social class, or religious preference. Depending upon which of these factors educators perceive as more salient in a given context, the nature and extent of the sorting practice vary. It is not my intention to review the body of literature that addresses these arguments. Instead, I wish to apply the concerns about streaming and non-streaming, that teachers in my study voiced, to the larger picture of curriculum implementation.

Few researchers have sought to relate this aspect, the practice of academic streaming or mixed-ability, to the larger issue of innovation implementation. The impact of either practice, as my interview and field note data show, is one that needs to be considered. Two of the three schools in which I collected data used the academically-streamed setting, while teachers in the third instructed in a mixed-ability setting. All participants with whom I spoke, except for the principal of Western Primary School, expressed their preference for academic streaming. Invariably the reasons for this preference centred around the perceived ease with which teachers felt that they could cater to students of similar ability levels in one setting. Many teachers expressed the perception that, although there may still be 'streaming within streaming,' they could make adjustments in their teaching practices more easily than if they had extreme ability levels in one classroom, as in the mixed-ability setting.
It is difficult to determine the effectiveness of either setting, academic streaming or mixed-ability, based on the data that I have collected. Still, the concerns of teachers in this regard should be noted. These concerns have particular significance when we consider the lower ability students. If, as teachers of these lower ability students expressed, they feel unduly pressured to complete specified components of a curriculum, sometimes to the point that they feel they must push students on whether they have grasped concepts or not, this has serious implications for the implementation of the curriculum innovation.

Are classroom teachers inclined to comply with the guidelines of the innovation at all costs, or are they more concerned about the welfare of their students? While many teachers with whom I spoke stressed their commitment to their students as paramount, we cannot overlook the constraints that assessment imposes. Yet, the crucial question is: Are students given the opportunity to fully grasp, if indeed this ideal is attainable, the content of that intended curriculum if they are constantly pushed to meet a deadline? Such a question is relevant for all ability levels, but is better considered within the larger issue of the examination system, particularly as it manifests itself in the Grade Level Assessment Test (GLAT).

During the last decade, educational researchers have begun to consider the impact that assessment has on curriculum practices, and the implementation of innovations generally (e.g., Broadfoot, 1983; Jules, 1990; Morris, 1985; Okpala, 1990). Among other things, such research has concluded that assessment procedures are one of the greatest constraints on classroom practices. In particular, teachers have pointed to the need to cover the syllabus in the time available and the expectations of their students.

The nature of my data limits my analysis, and resulting discussion, of the influence of assessment on teaching practices. A more detailed analysis might look at a comparison of the actual content of the Grade Level Assessment Test (GLAT) and how that complements or differs from the intended curriculum of the 1982 guides. Although my discussions with teachers suggested that teachers did include some GLAT topics that were
not in the curriculum guides or written schemes of work, it is difficult to make more than tentative observations. For example, while the topics listening and speaking (labelled "listening comprehension" on the GLAT), spelling, grammar and usage (included in a section labelled "language" on the GLAT), and written composition were topics in the 1982 Language Arts Curriculum Guide, teachers have placed them in separate time slots on the timetables as they represent distinct sections of the GLAT. Yet, the Ministry of Education's proposed subject breakdown that they released at the beginning of the 1991-1992 school year did not include separate time slots for topics within subject areas, but only stipulated general breakdowns for each subject. That is, Ministry officials listed language arts and mathematics and gave the proposed number of periods, but they did not break these down into the assignment of topics or areas within these subjects.

On the other hand, the topics that the 1982 Mathematics Curriculum Guide outlined were: problem solving, estimation, mental arithmetic, and informal geometry. The sections that appear on the GLAT are: "Concepts of Number," Mathematics Computation," and "Mathematics Application." Whether the differences in topics represent substantial differences in the general content needs closer scrutiny. Still, if this teacher's remark is to be taken to be indicative of the general practices of classroom teachers throughout the educational system of The Bahamas, the urgency of such scrutiny is noteworthy:

"In grade six, they teach a particular subject in maths, that's gonna come up. If you go according to the curriculum, when the GLAT comes out, the grade six students would not have touched that area yet; so they would bring up some, you know, like percentages or bring it up a bit so that they would have some knowledge of that particular area in math to be able to do the GLAT. As far as the English for both grades three and six, they do a lot of essay writing. And then you know, we do a lot of the objective-type questioning where they read the questions and there are three or four answers because the GLAT is an objective test.

The importance of a more thorough analysis of the content of both the 1982 Curriculum Guides and the GLAT aside, I do have sufficient data for an analysis using Morris' (1985) model of influences that affect teaching practices. This model places the examination system as a central dynamic in the implementation of an innovation. It draws
attention to five components that inform my analysis of the Bahamian educational context. These include: the ability of the students, student expectations, teacher accountability, colleague conformity, and the school administration. I extend the last influence, the school administration, to include the administration of individual schools and the Ministry of Education bureaucracy.

During my discussions with classroom teachers, many pointed to assessment practices, both internal and external, as being integrally tied to streaming and non-streaming practices. The pressure to prepare students, despite variations in ability levels, for unit, mid-term, end of term, end of year, and the GLAT examinations looms over their practices as an ever-threatening obstacle. The practice of including the name of the teacher on the student’s examination paper further compounds this pressure. Classroom teachers indicated their reluctance to instruct lower ability groups, and administrators confirmed this reluctance as expressed by teachers. Teachers further expressed that they felt pressured to 'cover the syllabus' so that they were not blamed for examination failures. Often, as many teachers admitted, the 'covering of the syllabus' did not necessarily mean that students had adequately grasped the concepts in question.

As I reflect upon the reasons that principals gave for their choices of the teacher with whom I would work, I propose that perhaps the status of the teacher is one that hinges upon the perceived competence of the teacher, and ultimately her examination pass-failure rate. As evidenced through my discussions, principals undoubtedly have pride in examination results as a measure of the school's reputation. The Ministry of Education bureaucracy and the Bahamian community can determine a school's academic profile through the annual Grade Level Assessment Test technical reports that compare schools with each other, by individual island, regionally, and with other schools throughout The Bahamas. Finally, students themselves exercise a degree of pressure as they, and their parents, expect that the teacher will fulfil examination requirements, which in their minds means that the student should pass the examination.
These influences, student ability, student and parental expectations, teacher accountability, colleague conformity, and the school administration/Ministry of Education bureaucracy, fit into the larger picture of the implementation of the 1982 Curriculum Guides in very explicit ways. First, they point to major criteria that teachers consider in deciding whether to follow the intended content of the guides. Then, in turn, such an analysis has implications for the content of both the curriculum and that of examinations, particularly the GLAT as it is a major element in the implementation equation. If the GLAT examination, and the topics that comprise its syllabi, influence classroom practices as greatly as my data suggest, then, the potential of this examination to promote and enhance the intended curriculum must be harnessed. In this regard, Lewin's (1984) comments, in reference to Malaysia and Sri Lanka, have efficacy:

> Decisions on teaching methods, content objectives, and the use of the curriculum, are clearly not wholly circumscribed by public examinations. None the less, in situations where a primary motive in going to school is to be selected for more schooling and acquiring qualifications, examinations are likely to exert considerable influence on the curriculum at both design and implementation stages; more than, for example, exhortation, rhetoric and prescription contained in texts and guidebooks. (cited in Morris, 1985, p. 15)

Simultaneously, we must be careful that policy makers do not use examination results as a measure of a teacher's success. It is indeed disturbing, that the former Prime Minister of The Bahamas, the Right Honourable Sir Lynden Pindling, proclaimed as recently as February of 1992 that:

> Parents pay a vast amount in taxes every year for the education of their children and they are entitled to an evaluation of how their children's schools are performing. Therefore the examination results of different schools in different subjects will be published each year so that parents would be able to evaluate what teachers are performing better in what schools [emphasis added]. (The Tribune, February 27, 1992, p. 12)

A second implication relates to the varied student ability levels that classroom teachers must contend with in their daily implementation of the intended curriculum. In this regard, we must consider the reality of the classroom teacher's constraints when dealing with 'slower' groups and somehow incorporate this in curriculum policy. Finally, the
larger question, whether the academically-streamed or mixed-ability setting is more beneficial to the student, and the success of the innovation, must be investigated more thoroughly.

**Personal backgrounds and professional experiences of teachers**

Fullan (1991) has argued that policy makers must "understand the subjective world — the phenomenology — of the role incumbents as a necessary precondition for engaging in any change effort with them" (p. 131). Implicit in this recommendation is the idea that the subjective world of the 'role incumbents,' the teachers, is multifaceted. The subjective world of teachers comprises not only their immediate classroom environment, but also the personal realm of their daily lives. Teachers bring their personal and practical experiences with them to their classroom practices. Their daily routines and rhythms, are therefore expressions of their personal practical knowledge. According to Clandinin (1986) "if we acknowledge the existence of experiential knowledge, the importance we attribute to understanding the influence of her [a teacher's] past experience is enhanced" (pp. 3-4). In turn, we recognize that a teacher's purposes and values shapes this knowledge.

Several implications of this stance as it pertains to policy implementation should be noted. Foremost among these is the importance of viewing practice and policy as intimately interrelated. Practice has a profound influence upon policy just as policy has an impact upon practice. Findings by policy researchers (e.g., Cohen & Ball, 1990; Jennings-Wray, 1985) have suggested that teachers do not simply assimilate innovations, but instead enact new policies as they fit into their existing knowledge, beliefs, and practices. Similarly, classroom teachers in my study claimed to teach from what they know, and claimed to use practices that have worked for them in the past. The practice of 'turn' teaching as compared to 'team' teaching is an example of this 'reliance upon that which works.' In addition, teachers consider much more than the principles of policies that
policy makers pass down to them. All the factors that I discussed above, including resources, support services, and the internal dynamics of the school context have a direct bearing on what teachers decide to do in their classrooms. Furthermore, the larger societal context, local, national and international, has an impact in ways that we need to begin to recognize and appreciate.

Central to an investigation of the larger societal context is the status of the teacher in the Third World. Such an investigation must include a discussion of teachers' pay, perceived self-esteem, and professional status. While my data is somewhat limited in this regard, Hurst and Rust (1990) did offer some insights that serve to contextualize many comments that classroom teachers made during my discussions with them.

Hurst and Rust (1990) reviewed studies that provide data using comparisons of teacher incomes with each other; comparisons of the level of pay of teachers with a cost-of-living index; comparisons with other officers in the public administration services holding equivalent qualifications; contrasts with other sectors of the work world; and assessments of attitudes people have about teaching. According to Hurst and Rust, this data have done little more than highlight the obvious fact that teachers in the Third World are poorly paid. The consequences have been drastic for the education systems in these countries. The better teachers in the Third World have tended to leave teaching, and militant action by teachers' associations has resulted in power struggles between teachers and governments, and within the ranks of teachers. Additionally, while moonlighting and the lack of promotion prospects have offered little hope, the working conditions of teachers in the Third World have served to complicate matters even further.

Hurst and Rust's (1990) argument that the above findings are common in the Third World concurs with much of what teachers revealed to me during our discussions. The impression that I have, based on my discussions with the teachers of the study, is that the morale of the teachers in The Bahamas is at an all time low. The feeling among many teachers is that this situation has compounded itself since the teachers' strike in the early
1980s. This strike pitted teachers against the Progressive Liberal Party run government, and ultimately the public at large. Relations have improved very little since the early 1980s. Consequently, the status and self-esteem of teachers have suffered serious set-backs.

Indeed, Hurst and Rust's (1990) conclusion that it is doubtful if teachers in the Third World will ever achieve a professional status, is, although ominous, reflective of how many teachers, and former teachers, in The Bahamas view the state of the teaching profession today. This view is reinforced because teachers do not control entry to their profession, they do not regulate the price charged for their services, they do not have wide options for mobility and promotion, they do not formulate their disciplinary codes, and they do not enjoy high regard for entering the profession (Hurst & Rust, 1990). Yet, it is crucial that policy makers pay considerably greater attention to the state of teachers and the teaching profession, particularly because it is the teachers on whom they depend to implement policies. As Fullan (1991) has stated so succinctly, "For both stability and change, the mental health and attitudes of teachers are absolutely crucial to success" (p. 117).

Summary

Resources, support services, the internal dynamics of the school context, assessment practices, and the personal backgrounds and professional experiences of teachers are key issues that influence the implementation of the intended curriculum in The Bahamas. In this chapter I have outlined various aspects of these issues that the data of this study have highlighted as crucial. Improvement in the curriculum implementation process in The Bahamas depends on how seriously policy makers take these issues. A greater commitment must be placed on those components that enhance success. The analysis of the data in this study has led me to conclude that these components include the production of indigenous materials, a more collaborative support network, respect for teacher
experience and insight, and a re-examination of the factors that have an impact, both internally and externally, upon the school context. In the next chapter I highlight these components as I outline the implications of the findings presented in this dissertation.
CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

Heeding the call of developmental theorists (e.g., Jennings-Wray, 1980; Miller, 1983; Watson, 1984) to examine the nexus between policy and practice in educational systems of the Third World, I have attempted to uncover the multifaceted dynamics of curriculum processes in the Bahamian educational system. The initial examination of the policy documents in chapter four presented the general structure of policy guidelines that have served, up to the time of the general elections of August of 1992, as the backbone of the Bahamian educational philosophy. Then, I sought to determine how closely the rhetoric of these educational policy documents matched the contemporary practices of Bahamian classroom teachers.

I conducted this exploration by observing the practices of classroom teachers and engaging in discussions with them, and other Bahamas Ministry of Education officials. In an attempt to place these voices into the larger context, I also administered a questionnaire to a larger group of classroom teachers and compared my findings with those of the Ministry of Education's earlier 1985 study on the same theme. Finally, I compared the analysis of the data from all sources, documents, questionnaire, field notes, and interviews, with that of earlier research on educational reform generally, and the implementation of curriculum innovations specifically. The following section presents an overview of the implications that I have drawn from this investigation.
Curriculum Reform: A 'Multivariate Business'

Managing social change is indeed a multivariate business that requires us to think of and address more than one factor at a time. While the theory and practice of successful educational change do make sense, and do point to clear guidelines for action, it is always the case that particular actions in particular situations require integrating the more general knowledge of change with detailed knowledge of the politics, personalities, and history peculiar to the setting in question. (Fullan, 1991, p. xii)

The intent of this dissertation from the very beginning was to do just what Fullan (1991) suggested above. I have attempted to integrate the more general knowledge of educational change with the detailed knowledge of the educational context of The Bahamas. Such a charge has led me to uncover the extremely complex nature of curriculum processes in this setting. Although the rhetoric of the policy documents I examined in chapter four was proclaimed by Bahamian policy makers up to the August general elections of 1992, the contemporary practices that classroom contexts yield, as evidenced in this study, are inconsistent with the intended policies. Many factors have led to this divergence between policy and practice.

The question of resource availability, specifically resources of an indigenous nature, was the most significant issue uncovered by this study. Both questionnaires (1985 and 1991) and my field note and interview data indicated that classroom teachers felt that there was a scarcity of Bahamian materials for use in their daily practices. Even when materials were available and supplied by the Ministry of Education or through school funds, students had limited access to these materials. Additionally, the pressure that classroom teachers expressed about their having to purchase resources that they needed to fulfil their daily responsibilities complicated the question of resource availability even further.

The importance of a collaborative atmosphere between the 'support arm' of the Ministry of Education and classroom teachers, within the schools, between the
administration and classroom teachers, and among the members of the teaching profession is crucial. This study uncovered several problems related to this issue.

First, it is a serious accusation that the Curriculum Section of the Ministry of Education is not adequately fulfilling its role as a support service. Yet, data collected for this dissertation indicated that this was the situation. Currently, teachers do not perceive this body as serving its intended support function. In addition, curriculum administrators reported that there are too few trained support personnel. Finally, members within the Curriculum Section of the Ministry of Education revealed that its administrative staff is overtaxed with responsibilities that detract from efforts that could be devoted to curriculum matters.

Second, there are few professional development opportunities for classroom teachers. The data of this dissertation indicated that classroom teachers do not perceive the opportunities currently available for them as adequate. This finding is in direct opposition to the intentions of policy makers as articulated in the educational documents that I examined in chapter four. Furthermore, if, as previous research has indicated (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 1990; Fullan, 1991; Jennings-Wray, 1990; Rust & Dalin, 1990), educational structures do not encourage networking and interaction among teachers, the need to make professional opportunities available is paramount. This is especially so if teachers claim, as some do in my study and in other studies discussed earlier, that they learn best from each other.

Besides a functioning Curriculum Section/Division and professional development opportunities for teachers, a third component of the support network that the data of this dissertation indicated was neglected is that of teacher input. In contrast to the 1982 rhetoric appealing to classroom teachers to submit their concerns regarding the curriculum, the findings of this study indicated that either teachers felt that the Ministry of Education bureaucracy did not view their concerns as legitimate, or that their concerns were not considered at all. Indeed, as I noted earlier in the dissertation, a Ministry of Education
official admitted that while they solicited such concerns, there was no formal machinery to address these concerns other than the standing curriculum committees established during the initial formulation period of the 1982 Curriculum Guides. Also, that not all schools are routinely represented on these committees, and as a result not all classroom teachers have access to these committees, is reason for concern.

Furthermore, if the attitude of the former Minister of Education toward the impending Bahamas General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE) examination is any indication of the perception that policy makers have of the implementation of reform, the business of curriculum reform is not likely to improve until these perceptions change. Although The Bahamas and many other Third World countries have modified the complex planning models of the 1960s and 1970s, and realized that planning takes place in a broader network of social and political forces, the process itself has remained a centrist activity (see Anderson, 1982).

Unfortunately, while policy makers might view limitation and control through the centralization of power as ideal, centralization has not translated into firmness of organization, authority, or accountability. Murray's (1979) analysis of another Caribbean nation, Jamaica, summarizes this dilemma:

> It is evident also that concern with the daily mechanics of the administration overbalances understanding of "content" – an observation which might justly be made of similar institutions elsewhere. (By "content" is meant the goals, the foundation, and the practice of education.) (p. 174)

While the internal dynamics of each school context may vary, the findings presented in this dissertation show that there are common factors that affect the implementation of the intended curriculum in all schools of the study in similar ways. Foremost among these are the physical environment of the school, working hours of teachers, streaming and non-streaming, examinations, instructional time and its allocation, and extracurricular activities. A final factor that must be noted, although only common to one school in my field study, is the team teaching and open classroom concept.
Assuming that the working conditions of teachers are as important as the teaching competencies that they possess, I explored how the various facets of the working environment influenced the implementation of the intended curriculum. Although the responses of the less qualified teachers to the questionnaire item that addressed this issue showed that they were more critical than the more qualified teachers, the higher percentages of both groups (70% and 62% respectively) indicated that they were dissatisfied with the physical facilities. In addition, the condition of the school buildings and the playground areas was an issue that often surfaced during my discussions with classroom teachers. In particular, the situation at Eastern Primary School is one that raises serious questions about its continued viability. Even the teachers at Central Primary School expressed their concern about the termite-ridden desks and floors that were in need of repair. The major representative body of the country's teachers, the Bahamas Union of Teachers, has echoed these concerns.

The issue of working hours is one that is intertwined with the general working conditions of teachers. It became evident through my interview and field note data that classroom teachers in The Bahamas are experiencing high levels of stress. The issue of the lesson plan books is one that is particularly contentious. More generally, the amount of physical and emotional energy that the teachers in the present study indicated that the Ministry of Education officials require of them may account for the cases of 'burn out' and high attrition rates that researchers have reported in many Third World countries (Hurst & Rust, 1990). Such trends are bound to have negative effects upon the implementation process and business of curriculum reform generally.

The practice of streaming or non-streaming is another internal dynamic of the school setting that has implications for curriculum reform in The Bahamas. While the data of the present study is limited in terms of allowing me to state definitively that one setting is more advantageous than the other, the opinions of teachers with whom I spoke regarding which practice they prefer is clear. Except for one principal, all teachers with whom I
spoke preferred the academically-streamed setting. It would be advantageous if policy makers were to pursue the implications of this preference by classroom teachers. Certainly, it is not unreasonable to propose that if classroom teachers feel more comfortable in academically-streamed settings, then they are more likely to function better in these settings.

In turn, however, the preference for the academically-streamed setting may serve to heighten the concern that many of teachers of the study expressed concerning the nature of the examination system. Specifically, it is the Grade Level Assessment Test (GLAT) that has an impact upon the intended curriculum in ways that policy makers may not be fully aware. The data of this study revealed that not only does this examination influence the content of the curriculum, but also what and how teachers teach, and even the structure of subjects within the curriculum.

The examination system, both external and internal, plays a central role in the curriculum reform business and even reaches beyond the immediate curriculum implementation circle. That is, policy makers hold teachers accountable for the performances of their students, and they are often evaluated by these performances, despite what some administrators and Ministry of Education officials may state. This practice is made even more overt through the recent comment by the former Prime Minister of The Bahamas stating that, in the future, parents could evaluate how their children's schools are performing by scrutinizing the examination results of different schools that would be published each year. Additionally, the perceived close relationship between assessment practices and that of streaming practices is one that serves to add pressure to the already stressful lives of classroom teachers.

The allocation and use of instructional time in schools of Third World nations such as The Bahamas are crucial considerations. If the amount of time available for academic studies is related to how much children learn in school, there is cause for concern when I review the interview and field note data of this study. Interruptions for non-academic
activities, inclement weather, morning assemblies, public and school holidays, and time for teachers to complete reports, marking and other administrative duties take up much of the instructional time. In addition, many administrators and classroom teachers expressed a growing concern that policy makers are adding too many subjects to the primary school timetable.

The many non-academic interruptions and the continually expanding timetable compounds the curriculum reform business. Many teachers and Ministry of Education officials with whom I spoke expressed their feeling that there was an increasing departure from literacy and numeracy which they felt were important foci for primary education. In addition, such a departure is in contrast to the initial intentions of the educational policy documents that I discussed earlier in the dissertation. If these views reflect trends of the general practices in the Bahamian educational system, then policy makers may want to re-examine the composition of primary school timetables.

Besides the non-academic activities, the nature of the larger issue of extracurricular activities is potentially problematic for the curriculum reform business. In two of schools in which I conducted field work, most classroom teachers voiced their opposition to extracurricular activities. The opposition centred around the time when these activities were conducted. They are not conducted outside the regular school hours, but instead infringe upon the time allocated for the academic activities of the regular curriculum. This infringement is a cause for concern not only for classroom teachers, but Ministry of Education officials with whom I spoke expressed similar views.

Implications for the curriculum reform business when we consider the influence of extracurricular activities upon teaching practices are noteworthy. In addition to divergences from the intended purposes of extracurricular activities, as articulated in the Bahamian educational documents, the issue of extracurricular activities is proding many Bahamian educators to question the 'balance between the social and academic spheres of the curriculum.'
Despite the fact that team teaching is practiced in only four schools on the island of New Providence, these team teaching schools serve large numbers of students. Three of the four schools are Grade A schools, which means that they have a student population of over 1,000. If, then, the data from Eastern Primary School are indicative of what happens in such settings, a re-examination of the practice of team teaching in the educational system of The Bahamas might prove to be insightful. The basic problem areas for the implementation of the intended curriculum in the team teaching setting include those of the physical structure of the building, the organization of team teaching groups (teachers and students), resource shortages, and timetable complications.

The similarity in the views of most of the classroom teachers, administrators, and Ministry of Education officials with whom I spoke concerning the perplexities of the team teaching situation points to need for a closer examination of this practice. There has been a departure from the original concept of team teaching in several ways. That is, while the building and open classroom structures exist, there is insufficient support staff, resource materials, and the timetable flexibility that are all necessary for the intended educational benefits to be realized.

Encompassing all these dilemmas of the school context is the subjective world, itself varied and multifaceted, of the classroom teacher. This subjective world of necessity goes beyond the immediate classroom context and reaches into the personal realm. The many tales and allusions to their personal lives that classroom teachers revealed to me through our discussions support this assumption. That the personal experiences of teachers have an impact upon their daily practices, serves to highlight the subsequent influence upon the implementation of curriculum reform. It points to the inter-related nature of practice and policy as they affect each other. Teachers in my study revealed that they teach from what they know, and use practices that have worked for them in the past. They base their decisions to implement policies on much more than the fact that policy
makers pass down directives. Resource availability, support services, and the internal
dynamics of the school setting influence their decision making.

In addition, factors in the larger societal, local, national and international contexts
are beginning to have an impact in ways that we may never have acknowledged. Many
classroom teachers in my study expressed their concern about the way that the public
perceives them. The professional status of teachers has direct implications for how
teachers view themselves and in turn is likely to affect their classroom practices. Many
teachers expressed the opinion that the morale of the teaching profession in The Bahamas
has never been so low.

The mental state and attitudes of teachers have obvious implications for curriculum
reform. Without improvements in this regard, it is unlikely that the implementation of
curriculum reforms will improve. The experiences of The Bahamas resonate with those of
other Third World countries in this regard (e.g., Bude, 1982; Jennings-Wray, 1984b;
Mshana, 1992). Such experiences point to the need to reflect upon, respect, and appreciate
the lived experiences of the classroom teacher.

By integrating the more general knowledge of educational change with detailed
knowledge of Bahamian politics, personalities, and the history of the Bahamian educational
setting, the way ahead is challenging, but potentially promising. But, we must move
beyond rhetoric and good intentions. In the words of Fullan (1991), "the way ahead is
through melding individual and institutional renewal. One cannot wait for the other. Both
must be pursued simultaneously and aggressively. . . . We need to replace negativism and
Pollyanna-ish rhetoric with informed action" (p. 354). Armed with such insights, perhaps
we can move beyond the rhetoric and on to action.
Policy implications

The curriculum reform business is one that involves not only a handful of policy makers, but classroom teachers, administrators, parents, students and the wider community working together in a collaborative atmosphere. If the school is to act as a viable change agent in the Bahamian society, educational priorities need to be re-examined. The implications of the data presented in this dissertation are clear. Bahamian educational priorities must include a re-conceptualization of funding priorities, the production of indigenous materials, a more collaborative support network for classroom teachers, channels for classroom teachers to voice their experiences and insights, and a consideration of the internal and external factors that have an impact upon the school context and its practices.

The question of the extent of the responsibility that the government in Third World nations such as The Bahamas should take regarding the educational systems is a timely one. Discussions in the educational literature concerning the financing of education in these contexts have centred around privatisation, student loans, payment by results. Yet, these are not without their drawbacks. For example, while private investment might be advanced as the solution, poorer families are likely to suffer. It is clear, however, that governments in nations like The Bahamas must seek to establish realistic goals regarding the number of years of education that they can provide for each child, and concentrate on putting its funding to the best use.

In the light of this recommendation, while the traditional 'textbook culture' has it drawbacks, textbooks, especially those indigenous in nature, must feature prominently in the allocation of educational funds. Simultaneously, I do not wish to imply that we should not pay attention to the affective side of learning, non-formal education, content bias in textbooks, coordination between curriculum development bodies, and the status of
teachers. Indeed, the findings presented in this dissertation point to the importance of the two last factors, coordination and status of teachers, in the implementation equation.

The economics of the production of indigenous materials is one that has broad consequences. Yet, if policy makers perceive the use of indigenous materials as worthwhile, then they ought to pave the way for the realization of indigenous publishing houses. The establishment and support of indigenous publishing houses, whether in The Bahamas, or in the Caribbean Region, is a viable path to the production of indigenous materials.

Focusing on the strengthening of the local resource base, not only in terms of personnel, but also in terms of local materials could prove to be beneficial at national, regional, and international levels. This approach is part of what has become known as ecodevelopment—"the umbrella concept for future growth [that] . . . must be fully integrated into national planning [which] . . . might be the only hope for peaceful and comfortable survival of human population on small islands in the 21st century" (Bonnet & Towle, 1981). Ecodevelopment accepts the value of regional and international cooperation in formulating and implementing policies geared at reducing dependency, and implies a serious educational commitment and initiative, particularly by the political leaders.

Resources are necessary if policy makers are to facilitate the job of curriculum implementation. Simultaneously, we must be careful not to assume that once such resources are available that teachers will uniformly follow policy directives. Still, the chances of teachers following the intentions of policy makers by incorporating indigenous material in their lessons are more likely if such materials are available for their use.

From an organizational perspective, it is possible that a restructuring of the Learning Resources Unit (LRU) might be beneficial. Although it is obvious that the four sections of the LRU are ultimately related to the curriculum, it is important that a separate body responsible for the organization and administration of the curriculum function as such. This body could maintain close liaisons with the other sections of the LRU, while
maintaining its own focus on services that enhance the success of curriculum implementation, including those services that the LRU might provide. For example, professional development opportunities could be an outgrowth of the cooperative relationship between the Curriculum Section/Division and the Learning Resources Unit.

Researchers (e.g., Downey, 1988; Fullan, 1972; Harlen, 1977; House, 1980; Stern & Keislar, 1977) have documented the benefits to be gained through participation of those directly involved in the schools themselves, (including teachers, principals and their administrations and support staff, parents through such bodies as Parent-Teacher Associations, and the business sector through such bodies as Community Boards that may exist already but lack the necessary impact on policy). Furthermore, the potential for such involvement is almost limitless given the advantages of the comparatively small scale of the educational system such as that of The Bahamas. There exists a situation of "close proximity . . . between those administering the system, those teaching in it, and those who are clients of it" (Brock & Smawfield, 1988, p. 232). Such accessibility could be harnessed as those involved can more readily share various needs and points of view, and then act upon them.

Additionally, the size of the country makes it easier for policy makers to observe the consequences of policy decisions. The advantages to be gained by obtaining and acting on such immediate and reliable feedback once collected and evaluated is worth considering. Once policy makers secure the participation of teachers and clients, they can enhance and facilitate implementation across the whole system. With this reasoning in mind, it was encouraging to note that, in preparation for the August 1992 electoral race the Free National Movement proposed that they would create the environment necessary to establish a decentralised educational system, in which parents and teachers would have the responsibility for governing schools at the local level. They stipulated in their educational platform that the Ministry of Education would be "ultimately responsible for setting and maintaining national standards. . . . [but that] the FNM w[ould] put each school or group
of schools under the administration of a Board to include members elected from among the parents along with the principal and teachers" ("PLP government," 1992). What remains to be seen is whether such plans will become a reality.

The power of the examination system, particularly the GLAT examination could be used in a positive way. However, it is important that we recognize from the onset that the success and failure of students on a given examination is due to a combination of factors that may or may not be directly related to the classroom teacher's practices. This recognition at the fore, the power of the examination system could be harnessed in ways that could enhance the implementation of the intended curriculum. The first and immediate step would be to ensure that the content of the examination syllabi and the intended curriculum, and the resource materials for use in the classroom, are intimately related.

The overarching challenge for policy makers remains one that is positioned towards the reversal of attitudes and philosophies regarding the nature of the curriculum, curriculum policy formulation, implementation and analysis. In the search for a balance between the development of an indigenous education system, and some measure of dependence on financial support and services provided by other countries, small nations like The Bahamas must recognize those neocolonial links that hamper their national educational development, and failures that are of their own making. Many of the solutions rest not outside but within the former colonies themselves.

Delimitations

The connection between the micro and macro elements of a research picture is one that, of necessity, must become focal. The present study has placed the primary focus on the classroom teacher, one of micro components in the educational change process. While I did make attempts to explore views, experiences and attitudes of Ministry of Education officials and administrators, this exploration is limited in comparison to that of the
classroom teacher. In addition, I have neglected to examine the experiences and views of students, parents and the larger community. Yet, this is not to suggest that these actors are not important, but instead that the classroom teacher is a starting point as she is more integrally involved in the on-going process of implementation.

Finally, this study is restricted to an examination of fifth and sixth grade classrooms in the public system on the island of New Providence. I did not attempt to investigate the private school system, nor the classrooms in the Family Islands of The Bahamas. The following section offers general and specific suggestions for future research that address the issues, contexts, and questions that the present study did not pursue.

Suggestions for future research

The exploratory nature of this study has resulted in the uncovering of several aspects of the curriculum reform process in the primary educational system of The Bahamas. Many obstacles to greater implementation success surround the issues of resources, the support network, and the decision making process. By examining these areas more thoroughly, we could better understand the reason for the gap between the rhetoric of policy documents and the practice of classroom teachers.

An analysis of governmental policies regarding textbook selection, purchasing and production is an obvious starting point. Views that classroom teachers and Ministry of Education officials expressed in the present study revealed a certain degree of ambivalence concerning this issue. Yet, the data of this study highlighted the importance of the inclusion of indigenous materials if the implementation of the intended curriculum is to be successful.

The issue of the support network is two-fold and includes not only daily support services, but also long range professional development opportunities. Therefore, an examination of the Learning Resources Unit (LRU), including the Curriculum Section,
would provide planners with information about what they can do to improve teacher support services and professional development opportunities. The findings of the present study point to the immediacy of this kind of study that seeks to uncover the current philosophy of policy makers about the function of the LRU, and more specifically, a Curriculum Section. In fact, the general attitude of policy makers, especially those in top management positions, towards teachers should be tied into this investigation as it could reveal much about how they perceive curriculum reform.

In addition, the importance of reviewing teacher education programmes and their consonance with primary school curriculum is particularly relevant. The nature of the relationship between the Teacher Education Department of The College of The Bahamas, the Ministry of Education Curriculum Section, and classroom teachers in the system, is one that should be explored. The continued success of curriculum reform depends on the very nature of this relationship (see Mshana, 1992).

A study that focuses on the complex issues of gender, class, and ethnicity is also important. The need to address the impact of gender upon a predominantly female teaching population is obvious. In addition, the growing Haitian immigrant population in The Bahamas highlights the issues of class and ethnicity that are becoming more evident, not only in the educational system, but the Bahamian society generally.

In summary, as far as curriculum reform is concerned, future Third World research should serve the purpose of investigating reasons for the successes and failures of innovations. It should serve to extend insights gained through research and offer possibilities of alternate approaches. Policy makers in the Third World have not fully appreciated the value of monitoring innovations. As Murray (1979) has written of the experiences in these contexts:

Modular planning is weak in a great many [Third World] countries, and so a yawning gap remains between promise and fulfilment. Evaluation is too frequently regarded as a luxury... Justification for a particular choice of action is usually merely intuitive, rarely ever empirical. Management rarely ever demonstrates the
logical rightness of any of its actions. Claims are asserted; action taken; and posterity looks back upon errors in resignation. (p. 178)

The process of change is not without its pitfalls. The business of curriculum reform, in particular, is one that often involves changes in attitudes and practices. The need for planned and systematic approaches to facilitate change involves the cooperative talents of educational planners, classroom teachers, students, administrators, and the wider community. Policy makers in Third World nations such as The Bahamas ought to share the decision making process with those who are intimately affected, or they will witness few instances of success. Rather than protecting or seeking to enhance political position, policy makers must demonstrate a commitment to change and shatter the myth that a hierarchy exists among the participants in the implementation process. Finally, there should be monitoring, and public acknowledgment of both the successes and failures of reform. The reform path is beyond rhetoric and toward action.
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Appendix A
Access Letter

Linda Davis
18 - 1915 West Broadway
Vancouver, B. C.
V6J 1Z3

February 28, 1991

Mr. Luther Smith
Permanent Secretary
Bahamas Ministry of Education
P. O. Box N 3913
Nassau, Bahamas

Dear Mr. Smith:

Re: Access to Primary School Classrooms for Doctoral Research

At my doctoral committee meeting held on February 20, 1991, I presented a draft
dissertation proposal. My committee members gave interim approval and I am presently
preparing the proposal for re-submission by mid-March (1991). I have now been directed
to seek official approval from The Bahamas Ministry of Education to conduct my study in
its school system.

Specifically, as discussed with my committee, my topic is to address curriculum policy
documents and contemporary practice in The Bahamian primary school system. I can
forward, at your request, a copy of the proposal that outlines details of the study and its methodology. However, I should state that my study proposes to examine the Upper Primary Level--Grades 5 & 6 on the island of New Providence. It was necessary to delimit my study as I have only one school term to collect my data and a limited budget allocated for field research. Nonetheless, I do look forward to expanding this investigation upon completion of my doctoral studies. I am on study leave from the College of The Bahamas to complete this degree.

I have selected this topic because recent literature in the area points to a need to examine curriculum and the processes of schooling in the developing world. The topic requires that I investigate Bahamian classrooms and estimate how these observed processes and practices appear to be derived from the stated policies. Also, I wish to administer, to teachers in the system, a questionnaire which is a minor adaptation of that used in 1985 by a Curriculum Project Committee appointed by The Bahamas Ministry of Education. The data derived from both questionnaires provide us with a comparison of profiles at two times in Bahamian pedagogical practice--1985 and 1991. Participant-observations of contemporary schooling and discussions with the teachers will highlight insights of practice, an essence of my thesis analysis. I would need the Fall Term of 1991 to administer the questionnaire, and to conduct these participant-observations and teacher interviews. I envision selecting three (3) schools and three (3) teachers with whom I will work for five (5) weeks each. The questionnaire would, however, be administered to all Grade 5 & 6 teachers in New Providence.

Before I can proceed any further I must obtain The Bahamas Ministry of Education's official approval. The Ethics Committee of the University of British Columbia requires this documentation before they will permit me to conduct my field work. In addition, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, from whom I obtained a
Commonwealth Scholarship, requires evidence of the Ministry's official approval indicating that I will be able to gain access to the data that I will need to complete my study. The Ministry's records (Tertiary Section) will show that I was nominated by The Bahamas Government to receive this award.

If I am granted the Ministry's approval, I will return to The Bahamas as soon as possible before I am scheduled to begin my field work in September (1991). I will take my Comprehensive Examination in June (1991), after which I will be free to prepare for my field work. The Ministry's approval to enter the schools so early in my planning phase will certainly facilitate preparations for September. When I return to The Bahamas in July (1991), I would then determine, through collaboration with the various Bahamas Ministry of Education officers, which schools will be most suitable, speak with the teachers with whom I will be working, and settle into an office space at the College of The Bahamas. These arrangements could be initiated through the mail, but it would be to my advantage to follow them up with in-person negotiations.

I have been preparing for this study for the past year. I have had several discussions with Former Director of Education, Miss Marjorie Davis. The assistance of Miss Edna Russell, and of the staff of the Curriculum & Learning resources Unit, with the collection of various Curriculum Guides and Policy Documents has been most valuable. In addition, Mr. Sidney Curry and Mr. E. Stubbs of the Ministry's Planning Unit, and Mr. Leroy Sumner of the Testing and Evaluation Unit, have been very generous with their time and information. There are, of course, many others who have assisted by photocopying documents that I do not have access to here in Vancouver. It is because of this generous and unwavering assistance that I have been able to establish a conceptual framework for this study with which my doctoral committee is very pleased. Indeed, as we have
discussed on several occasions during the past year, they too realize the importance of curriculum studies in contexts such as The Bahamas.

I do hope that I have provided the information necessary for you to submit my request for consideration. I look forward to the Ministry's response at its earliest opportunity so that I proceed with my plans to begin field work in September of 1991.

Sincerely

Linda Davis
Appendix B
Teacher's Letter of Participation

Linda Davis
College of The Bahamas
P.O. Box 4912
Nassau, Bahamas

September 2, 1991

Dear Colleague:

I am conducting a research project which examines curriculum processes in The Bahamian Primary School System. As part of my data collection, I plan to conduct participant-observations of Upper Primary classrooms in New Providence. I need to identify three-five (3-5) teachers who will be willing to participate in this study. Your name was selected from a list of fifth and sixth grade teachers in New Providence.

I am sending this letter to you and four (4) other teachers in the Upper Primary level in order to obtain your consent to participate in my project. Although the Ministry has granted me permission to conduct my study, it is in no way associated with, or commissioned by the Ministry. Rather, my research will be submitted as my doctoral dissertation, in the programme of Social Foundations of Educational Policy, at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, where I am pursuing this degree. Another reason for my study is that I am astounded by the lack of documentation about curriculum processes, and
the central role that teachers hold in these processes, particularly in countries like The Bahamas. Therefore, I feel compelled to add to this area of research.

I hope that you will consider participating in this study. Your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw at any time. Your participation would require that you permit me to spend about four - five weeks of the first term (September - December, 1991) with you. I would observe your class sessions and would spend four days of each week with you. In addition, if you will permit it, I would like to teach one of your class sessions each week. Finally, I would like the opportunity to discuss curriculum issues with you, particularly as they might arise out of classroom sessions. These discussions would be informal and could be conducted after classes or whenever we have a break in the classroom schedule. In addition, if you permit it, I would like to tape record our discussions which might take about 30-40 minutes each time, depending on the issues involved. Your anonymity is assured. Once I have transferred our taped discussions and my observation notes to computer disk, the tapes will be erased and the notes destroyed. A pseudonym will be used in place of your real name in my dissertation.

Of course you may decline this request, but if you are interested, and wish further clarification, I would be pleased to meet with you. Please contact me at your earliest opportunity, as I wish to finalize arrangements prior to the beginning of the school term. My telephone number is 323-5589, or I may be contacted at the College of The Bahamas, Humanities Division.

Sincerely

Linda Davis

Lecturer, College of The Bahamas
I __________________ consent to participate in this study of Bahamian curriculum policy and practices. I have received a copy of the letter of consent and details of the project from the researcher, Linda Davis.

DATE ___________  

SIGNATURE ____________________
Appendix C

Cover Letter for Questionnaire Instrument

Linda Davis
P.O. Box N 8520
Nassau, Bahamas

September 30, 1991

Dear Colleague:

I am conducting a research project which examines curriculum processes in The Bahamian Primary School System. As part of my data collection, I plan to administer a questionnaire to fifth and sixth grade teachers like yourself throughout the New Providence public school system.

I am sending this questionnaire to you and other teachers in the Upper Primary level in order to obtain your views of the Ministry of Education's Curriculum Guides. As you may recall the Evaluation, Planning, Research and Development Unit of the Ministry of Education conducted a survey of the primary school curriculum in 1985. I have included several questions from their questionnaire. However, although the Ministry has granted me permission to conduct my study, it is in no way associated with, or commissioned by the Ministry. Rather, my research will be submitted as my doctoral dissertation in the programme of Social Foundations of Educational Policy, at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, where I am pursuing this degree. Another reason for my
study is that I am astounded by the lack of documentation about curriculum processes, and
the central role that teachers hold in these processes, particularly in countries like The
Bahamas. Therefore, I feel compelled to add to this area of research.

You are invited to participate in this study. Your participation is voluntary and you have
the right to withdraw at any time. However, the submission of your completed
questionnaire will be evidence of your consent to participate. Please complete the enclosed
questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed envelope. Your reply will be anonymous
and confidential. Once the data has been transferred to computer disk, the questionnaire
will be destroyed. Please return the questionnaire to me by Friday, October 25, 1991.

If you are interested in the results of my study, I will be sending a summary of the results
to The Bahamas Union of Teachers office on Bethell Avenue for their files. In addition, if
you wish to contact me for any reason regarding my study, please do not hesitate. I can be
contacted at The College of The Bahamas (Humanities Division), or at the number printed
on the questionnaire.

This questionnaire should take you no more than fifteen minutes to complete. Your
participation in this study is extremely valuable, and I wish to offer my gratitude to you, in
advance, for having taken the time to complete the questionnaire.

Sincerely

Linda Davis
Lecturer, College of The Bahamas
PURPOSE: This questionnaire is one source of data collection for a study of curriculum policy and practices in The Bahamas. I am interested in finding out about primary school teachers' perceptions of the objectives and effectiveness of the Bahamian primary school Curriculum Guides. Some questions included in this questionnaire are the same as those used by the Evaluation, Planning, Research and Development Unit of the Ministry of Education in their 1985 survey. However, this study has not been commissioned by the Bahamas Ministry of Education, but is being conducted as a requirement of my doctoral studies programme which I am pursuing at the University of British Columbia, Canada. I wish to assure you that your anonymity is secure and that there will be no attempt to link names with responses.

In this first section I would like to get some background information about you. Please check the appropriate response.

1. What is your gender?  ○ Female  ○ Male
2. Were you born in The Bahamas?  ○ Yes  ○ No
3. Are your parents native Bahamians?  ○ Yes  ○ No

Now I would like to know about your teaching and academic background. Please check the appropriate response.

4. Which is the appropriate classification of your teaching position?
   ○ Untrained Teacher
   ○ Teacher Referred (Referred in teacher education)
   ○ Assistant Teacher (Degree, but no teacher education)
   ○ Trained Teacher (Teaching Certificate)

5. Which qualifications have you obtained?
   ○ Bahamas Junior Certificate(s)
   ○ General Certificate(s) of Education
   ○ Associate Degree
   ○ Bachelor of Arts Degree
   ○ Bachelor of Science Degree
   ○ Master's Degree
   ○ Doctorate Degree
   ○ Other (Please Specify)

I would now like to know about your teaching experience in The Bahamas.
6. How many years have you taught in The Bahamian PUBLIC School System?

Years. ________ Please specify where.

7. How many years have you taught in The Bahamian PRIVATE School System?

Years. ________ Please specify where.

8. If you taught outside The Bahamas, would you please specify how many years?

Years. ________ Please specify where.

I would now like to find out some information about what subjects and grades you are presently teaching. Please check the appropriate column. Also, please answer the remainder of the questionnaire based on the answer given to this question.

9. Which grades and subjects do you PRESENTLY teach?

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The next series of questions deal specifically with the Ministry of Education's Curriculum Guides. Please check the response that best reflects your position. Please remember to answer according to the subjects that you PRESENTLY teach.

10. Is the Curriculum Guide available to you?

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11. Do you have your own copy of the Curriculum Guide?

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12. If an answer to #11 is "NO", then what guide(s) do you use? Indicate in the space below.
For the following statements please check the response that BEST describes your opinion of the Curriculum Guide. Please remember to answer according to the subjects that you PRESENTLY teach.

13. I feel that the format of the guide helps me to teach lessons in a logical manner.

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14. I feel that the format of the Curriculum Guide is very comprehensive.

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15. I feel that the format of the Curriculum Guide is easy to use.

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16. The Curriculum Guide has sufficient suggested activities.

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17. The instructions to prepare the activities are easy to follow.

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18. The suggested application of the activity to the total lesson plan is appropriate.

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19. The content of the Curriculum Guide needs revision.

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20. The suggested texts for the curriculum are available.

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21. Each child has adequate access to the suggested texts.

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22. Do the texts correspond with the Curriculum Guide?

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23. Is there sufficient resource material to help teach the curriculum?

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25. I feel confident teaching the curriculum.  
   ○ Yes  ○ No

26. If your answer to question #25 is "NO", rank order as many responses as necessary to best describe the reasons for your lack of confidence. Please rank order from most important to the least important ("1" being most important).

○ Inadequate materials.  ○ Inadequate support services.
○ Poorly designed curriculum. ○ Inadequate supervision.
○ Inadequate training. ○ Inadequate preparation time.
○ Unfamiliar content. ○ Limited familiarity with appropriate teaching style.
○ Other (Please specify).
27. I follow the guidelines presented in the Curriculum Guide.

- Very closely.
- Closely.
- Somewhat closely.
- Not at all.

28. I believe that the goals and objectives of the Curriculum Guides are _____ to the student's academic needs.

- very relevant.
- relevant.
- somewhat relevant.
- not at all relevant.

29. I believe that the goals and objectives of the Curriculum Guides are _____ for the student's life in society.

- very relevant.
- relevant.
- somewhat relevant.
- not at all relevant.

I am interested in the kind of support you receive in implementing the guides. Please remember to answer according to the subjects that you PRESENTLY teach.

30. Do you receive any assistance from the Ministry of Education to implement any of the following Curriculum Guides?

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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31. Please check the kind of assistance that you have received from the Ministry.

- Workshops.
- Visits from Ministry officials.
- Amendments to the curriculum.
- Personal contact with the subject curriculum officer.
- Other (Please specify).
The Ministry of Education administered a questionnaire in 1985. I am interested in the feedback and support that the Ministry has given since that questionnaire.

32. Were you teaching in The Bahamian public school system during 1985?
   ○ Yes ○ No

33. If you answered "YES" to question #32, have you received any updated information from the Ministry concerning revisions to the curriculum that you presently teach?
   ○ Yes ○ No

34. To what extent do you feel that you have open channels to communicate concerns you have about the curriculum to the Ministry.
   ○ Very open.
   ○ Open.
   ○ Somewhat open.
   ○ Not open at all.

I would now like to know about your opinion regarding the physical facilities at your school.

35. Instructional areas provide sufficient space to accommodate existing class enrolments in an effective learning situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

36. General size and arrangement of instructional areas provide for the adaptation of the instruction to a variety of learning activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

37. Which of the following are available for your use in teaching the curriculum? Please remember to answer according to the subjects that you PRESENTLY teach.

- Overhead Projector.
- Film Projector.
- Reference Books.
- Cassette Tape recorders.
- Slides.
- Maps.
- Overhead Transparencies.
- Bahamian Charts and Poster.
- Film strips.
- Video Tape recordings.
- Video Tape machines.
- Cassette Tape recordings.
- Brochures.
- Computers.
- Periodicals, pamphlets.
- Records.
- Other (Please specify).
38. I am interested in suggestions that you may have for curriculum revisions in any of the subject areas. Please list those suggestions.

39. Please list other problems that you encounter in implementing the curriculum in your classroom that this questionnaire does not address.

40. How might the problems you listed in question #39 be addressed?

41. Are there any other comments that you would like to note that have not been addressed by this questionnaire?

THE TIME THAT YOU HAVE TAKEN TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.
Appendix D

Table 1

Classification of Teaching Positions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>assistant</th>
<th>trained</th>
<th>untrained</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4%)</td>
<td>(93%)</td>
<td>(2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>605</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Ministry)</td>
<td>(.8%)</td>
<td>(86%)</td>
<td>(14%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Ministry)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(88%)</td>
<td>(12%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

Teachers with University Degrees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>University Degree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(63%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Ministry)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Ministry)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(37%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3

Gender Composition of Teaching Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>female</th>
<th>male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Ministry)</td>
<td>(94%)</td>
<td>(6%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Ministry)</td>
<td>(95%)</td>
<td>(5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>715</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Ministry)</td>
<td>(95%)</td>
<td>(5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Total number for Ministry surveys includes principals, teachers and support staff at the primary level on the island of New Providence. Total number for 1991 survey includes respondents for the questionnaire administered for this dissertation.
Table 4: Availability of Suggested Textbooks by Subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Language (62%)</th>
<th>Reading (63%)</th>
<th>Religious Knowledge (61%)</th>
<th>Science (54%)</th>
<th>Social Studies (57%)</th>
<th>Mathematics (60%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>217 (82%)</td>
<td>231 (83%)</td>
<td>207 (43%)</td>
<td>212 (41%)</td>
<td>228 (39%)</td>
<td>156 (62%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>96 (62%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questionnaire item = The suggested texts for the curriculum are available.
Response options = Yes or No.

1. Mean across all subjects (1991) = 63%
2. Mean across all subjects (1985) = 55%
3. Mean across all subjects (1991) = 57%
Table 5: Student Access to Suggested Texts By Subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Religious Knowledge</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Social Studies</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Response options = Yes or No.

Questionnaire Item = Each child has adequate access to the suggested texts.

- **Ministry**
- **Yes**
- **No**

\[
\frac{3}{4} \text{ Mean across all subjects (1985) } = 29\%
\]
\[
\frac{2}{4} \text{ Mean across all subjects (1991) } = 44\%
\]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Religious Knowledge</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Studies</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Response options = Yes or No.

Questionnaire item = Do the texts correspond with the Curriculum Guides?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Religious Knowledge</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Studies</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6

Correspondence Between Suggested Texts and Guide by Subject.
Table 7

Assistance Received From Ministry of Education By Subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>1985</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social studies</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious knowledge</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Response options = Yes or No.