FIELD STUDY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: SEX STEREOTYPES

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The doctoral program in educational administration consists of several components: a core of courses considered essential to all candidates from the College of Education, a program of coursework designed to meet the specific educational needs of the candidate, a field experience, and a dissertation. The field experience for candidates in educational administration should add to the administrative experience of the candidate and provide experience in areas of responsibility other than the present position of the candidate. The field experience may also provide an opportunity to gain skills in project design and execution and may assist the candidate in defining an area of study for the dissertation experience.

My field experience was selected because of my interest in the area of equal opportunities in education. My interest in this area had been developing for some time, but was sharpened during a class on School Policy instructed by Dr. Sheldon Varney. At that time I wrote a position paper regarding the elimination of sex bias in education for a hypothetical school board and then had to defend my policy. I used data collected from various sources on the extent and consequences of sex bias in education as well as a slide-tape presentation developed by the National Education Association called "Images of Males and Females in Elementary School Textbooks."[1]

I later became a member of the Task Force on Sex Equality in Education and participated in several community dialogue sessions that this group conducted. These sessions increased my awareness of the need for programs to assist educators and others to learn more about sex bias and sex discrimination in the schools and ways to avoid or overcome the adverse influence of this bias and discrimination.

Patricia Brandt was then the Equal Opportunities Officer for the Department of Education. She had expressed a need for an in-service training program for administrators and teachers that could be used for workshops in the schools. I requested that my field experience be done in the Office of Equal Opportunity with Brandt. My committee agreed that working in the Office of Equal Opportunity would contribute to my education by providing me with a leadership role other than my role as school principal. It would also assist me in defining my dissertation topic.

It was decided that I would work in the OEO office during the summer of 1976. My task was to learn as much as possible about the OEO functions and the role of the OEO officer in the Department of Education, as well as to write an in-service training program for administrators on sex role stereotypes and the elimination of sex bias in education. I began my summer experience by reading through the documents and papers that outlined the various federal and state regulations covering discrimination in employment and education. Pat Brandt also gave me a verbal briefing on the status of the various phases of OEO compliance procedures currently in use in the DOE. At that time, the DOE was in the process of self-evaluation in the various areas covered by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 which prohibits sex discrimination in educational programs which receive federal funds.

In-service training for administration was an important area of concern because compliance with Title IX regulatons was required of all schools. The extent and consequences of sex bias in education have been studied by the Hawaii Task Force on Sex Bias in Education.[2] The areas where sex bias was found were in textbooks and learning materials; counseling; vocational; technical and practical arts; and athletics. This group also studied the personnel in the Department of Education and found sex imbalance in the administration staffs of the schools.

Laws and regulations designed to eliminate this

sex bias have been enacted. However, many researchers have commented that federal and state laws barring discrimination by sex in a wide variety of social contexts are not likely to be effective as long as the underlying attitudes that brought about this discrimination are not changed.[3] Delays in the implementation of these laws that prohibit sex discrimination are contrary to the public welfare. Changes in the area of sex bias in the schools are necessary to insure that students currently in the system will not be adversely affected by the bias and discrimination.

Therefore, I planned an in-service training program to include information on the extent and consequences of sex bias, laws and regulations against sex discrimination, ways of identifying sex bias, and an action plan for elimination of sex bias in the schools. I also incorporated a measure of attitude. The goals of the training program were to create an awareness of the extent of sex bias in the schools of Hawaii and to develop strategies to overcome the effects of sex bias in the schools of Hawaii. A long range goal was to eliminate sex discrimination in the schools of Hawaii and to provide equality of opportunity for all of Hawaii's children.

The specific objectives were:

1. Raise awareness of specific practices, materials and inadequacies that constitute sex discrimination.
2. Provide factual information about Title IX regulations and information regarding compliance with these laws and regulations.
3. Train educators to recognize sex bias in their own attitudes and practices as well as in curriculum material, counseling, funding procedures, hiring practices, etc.
4. Train educators to use critical analysis skills in reviewing potentially biased materials, practices, etc.
5. To develop criteria for the selection, purchase or development of non-biased materials.
6. To train educators in the selection and use of non-biased materials.
7. To train educators to survey current practices in their schools regarding sex bias.
8. To develop an implementation plan for each school or office for elimination of sex bias.
9. Develop an evaluation plan for ongoing review of practices and materials to insure

progress towards the elimination of sex bias in the schools of Hawaii.

The target group for the training was administrators at all levels so that a cadre of trained personnel would be available to assist others in becoming aware of discrimination and techniques for the elimination of such discrimination where found. The evaluation included a checklist for participants as to the value of the workshop.

In order to develop the in-service program it was necessary to do research both at the OEO office and at Hamilton Library at the University of Hawaii. I was able to do research on federal laws and regulations and traced the development of affirmative action through these laws. This was then incorporated into the in-service training package that I developed. Research on the effects of sex bias in education was also undertaken and a section was included in the in-service training program on bias in textbooks and other areas of the educational program. Methods for examining textbooks were explored. Examples of discriminatory practices were included as well as strategies for overcoming bias.

The use of the Attitude Toward Women Scale (AWS) was devised as a pre-post measure of attitudes.[4] This test was used in the in-service training program to determine if attitudes changed following the workshop experience. This part of the training program was designed to assist users in making an objective evaluation of the effectiveness of the in-service training.

The completed training program[5] was used by the OEO office in the in-service training given to administrators in the state to assist them in compliance with Title IX regulations during the 1977-78 school year.

This field experience in the OEO was a great benefit to me as I began to explore various dissertation topics. My final dissertation title was: "A Study of the Differential Effects of Workshops on the Attitudes of Administrators Toward Sex-Role Stereotyping."[6] As I explored this topic, I was able to draw on my experiences in the OEO office to assist me. The literature review included many of the documents that I examined while working in that office.

Another benefit to me was the opportunity to correspond with several groups who had designed in-service training programs. I was able to receive copies of several of these. Following the field experience, I traveled to the mainland and visited the Far West Regional Laboratory in San Francisco and was able to preview some of the films that were developed there. I also met with Gloria Golden and Lisa Hunter, the authors of an in-service training program designed for teachers.[7]

The field experience that I had was worthwhile for my own educational goals. It was beneficial to the Department of Education in providing an in-service package that could be used for administrators and teachers.

Footnotes

[1]Lenore Weitzman and Diane Rizzo. *Images of Males and Females in Elementary School Textbooks,* Washington: National Education Association, 1974.

[2]Hawaii Task Force on Sex Bias in Education. "A Report on Sex Bias in the Public Schools of Hawaii," Honolulu, 1975.

[3]National Education Association. "Education for Survival," Washington: N.E.A., 1972.

[4]Janet T. Spence and Robert Helmreich, "Attitudes Toward Women Scale" in *Catalogue of Selected Documents in Psychology,* II, 1972, p. 66.

[5]Janet James. *Elimination of Sex Discrimination in Education,* Unpublished manuscript, 1976.

[6]Janet James. *A Study of the Differential Effects of Workshops on the Attitudes of Administrators Toward Sex-Role Stereotyping.* Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, University of Hawaii, 1979.

[7]Gloria Golden, Lisa Hunter, and Greta Marine. *The Process of Change,* Oakland, California: Far West Regional Laboratory, 1974.

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