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ABSTRACT
                Ways in which the application of positivistic,
phenomenological, ethnomethodological, and critical theories affect
educational administration theory and practice are explored in this
paper. A review of literature concludes that positivism separates
practice from abstract theory; phenomenology offers a different view
of reality; ethnomethodology is based on the consensus of school
community members and recognition of contextual influences on action;
and critical theory can generate a dynamic self-reflection process.
Positivism views the school administ tor as an agent of the social
order; phenomenology, as a negotiator; ethnomethodology, as a
collaborative leader; and critical theory, as a facilitator for the
fulfillment of others' human potential. A conclusion is that there
are limitations to each paradigm, yet each offers a new richness of
interpretation for educational administration research. theory, and
practice. Two tables outline the theoretical premises and
implications for practice of each perspective. (53 references)
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THE EFFECTS OF APPLYING ALTERNATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

TO

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION THEORY AND PRACTICE

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THE EFFECTS OF APPLYING ALTERNATIVE RESEARCH METHODS TO

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION THEORY AND PRACTICE

While the focus of the post-positivistic debates is primarily on research methodology, the theory and practice derived from such research must also be explored. Therefore, this article seeks to provide the reader with a more comprehensive understanding of the positivistic, phenomenological, ethnomethodological and critical theory paradigms by clarifying how the application of each research method to educational administration would affect theory and practice.

The persistence and growth of the current debates in the educational administration literature regarding the positivistic paradigm and proposed solutions to this conflict are of utmost significance to educational administration theory, research and practice. Currently, educational administration theory is generally derived from the assumptions of positivism. However, the proposals in the literature have raised questions as to whether other paradigms would not be more appropriate. Evans (1984) sees the resolution of these debates as intrinsically linked to educational administration practice as indicated in his following statement:

> How we choose to respond to the question of what counts as science and therefore what we allow as knowledge are of decisive significance not only for educational administration concerned as a field of study but more importantly as an area of professional practice. (p.

2)

The major arguments against positivism are twofold.
First, authors such as Abel (1981), Berger and Luckmann
(1966), Giddens (1979) and Perrow (1982) have all questioned
the positivistic position as appropriate for studying human
behavior because of the positivistic assumption that all of
reality can be known through the use of objective measures.
These authors posit the claim that knowledge of human
behavior can be understooood by constructed phenomena and,
therefore, assume either the lack of existence of an
objective external reality and/or the intrusiveness and
creativity of the human mind in knowing reality.

Second, the results of empirical research in
educational administration have also produced controversy.
Consideration of this topic has been undertaken by Foster
(1984), Frank (1984), Lincoln (1984, 1985), and Martin
(1984). Discusssion in this area ranges from positivistic
methodolog: having produced little or no results with the
end product bei g no real theory of edcucational
administration to positivistic methodology being improperly
applied to educational administration behavior and thus
producing few significant results.

Glass (1977) exemplifies those researchers who
criticize the paucity of results in the application

empirical research to educational administration practice
when he states:

> The payoff of quantitative program evaluations to
> program administrators and bureaucrats has been far
> less than anticipated. Administrators had expected
> these types of evaluations to identify "what works,"
> "who gets better," "what areas to change," and so on.
> These expectations have not been generally met. (p.39)

Therefore, at a time when education is being closely
scrutinized as to its methods and outcomes, some educational
administration researchers are questioning the results of
historically basing their theoretical position under the
positivistic perspective. The practical results desired
from such theory and research have been found by some to be
wanting.

These concerns have caused some researchers to seek
solutions by directing their efforts toward other research
methodologies. Three alternatives to positivism have been
promenintly presented: First, ethonomethodology which is
derived from a rich background of anthropological studies;
second, phenomenology which presents an atithetical
epistemological position to positivism; third, critical
theory which encompasses positivisitic, Marxian and Freudian
concepts. These three research methodologies are receiving
greater attention in related literature most especially in

the countries of Great Britain, Australia and Canada.

Phenomenology, as the antithesis of the positivistic position, has received notoriety in educational administration because of the Greenfield-Griffiths "debates" (Gronn, 1983). The subjectivity of phenomenology leads to a methodology of deduction and unique qualitative understanding as opposed to the quantitative empirical method of positivism.

Ethnomethodology is currently being offered as an alternative paradigm for educational administration as demonstrated at the 1983 U.C.E.A. Conference entitle "linking New Concepts of Organizftions to New Paradigms of Inquiry" and the papers presented there by Clark and Guba. While the focus in ethnomethodology is often on the research method as exemplified by the case study, it is most concerned with the interaction between the individual and the society which the individual inhabits.

Critical theory, developed by the Frankfurt School of sociologists in the 1920's, is also offered as an alternative to positivism. A renewal of interest in critical theory occurred during the tumultuous 1960's and it continues to be consistently included in the literature of sociology as an alternative paradigm (Giroux, 1983). Bates (1980, 1982, 1983) and Foster (1980, 1982, 1986) are

currently investigating the application of critical theory to educational administration practice.

Another common formulation deriving from the criticism of positivism is the positioning of the positvistic position in opposition to what is termed the "subjectivstic," "qualitative," or "naturalistic" position. Such distinction is often made in the literature because of the acceptance by some researchers that the premises of subjective and objective knowledge are the fundamental differences among the positions. Because of this basic distinction, phenomenology, ethonmethodology and critical theory are often vewed as one subjective position under such geernal headings as hermeneutics (Giddens, 1976), interpretative sociology (Schutz in Giddens, 1976), naturalistic inquiry (Lincolon and Guba, 1985) or constructionism (Magoon, 1977).

In much of the current debate literature, the advocates of positivism, ehtnomethodology , phenomenology and critical theory present their posititions as true alternative paradigms. That will be be the position assumed in this article. While similarities between alternative positions and an emerging call for synthesis exist (Lincoln and Guba, 1984), enough dissimilarities between positions exist to view them as true alternatives. These smilarities and differences will be explained in the following explications

of positivism and the proposed alternatives to positivism.

Positivism

Positivistic Educational Administration Theory

Theory for the positivistic researcher is based upon
two general assumptions: first, the inherent order of
reality; second, the objective nature of reality. Because
of the inherent order of reality, the educational
administrator with a positivistic perspective views
orderliness not as a goal to be attained but as an existing
quality of the world, society, schools and of human
behavior. This order is best described in the positivistic
search for laws which underlie all of natural and human
life. These underlying laws enable generalizations to be
discovered and applied to similar phenomena. Schools are
viewed as types of organizations and the behavior of people
within all types of organizations can be studied and
compared. Theories about school administration are seen to
be general theories about administration applied to schools.

Hoy and Miskel (1987) describe such generalized
application of organizational characteristics as typologies

which are seen as beneficial to the researcher in that they
"allow for a comparative study of organizations as diverse
as businesses, schools, prisons and churches" (p. 32).
Therefore, the application of characteristics of
administrative behavior in the business field to the
behavior of school administrators (Blake and Mouton, 1981;
Katz and Kahn, 1978; Williams, Wall, Martin and Berchin,
1974) is viewed by the positivistic researcher as consistent
with the inherent ordering of human behavior and the
application of this order across differing manifestations of
human behavior.

Schools being viewed as types of organizations is also
consistent with the second assumption of positivistic theory
definition which assumes that, as a form of social
substructure, organizations such as schools have an
objective existence and can be studied as entities in
themselves. Objectivity can be maintained because the
observed phenomena and the observer are both objective
entities. Thus, schools can be objectively defined as types
of organizations and various models of organizational
function and behavior can be applied to them, such as Hoy
and Miskel's (1987) application of the contingency model or
Katz and Kahn's (1978) application of the social systems
model. The classic model of business as applied to schools

is the production model which Greenfield (1975) defines as "a set of roles and resources arranged to yield a product which conforms to predetermined goals" (p. 93)

The positivistic approach to educational administration theory can thus be seen as defining a generalized and abstract view of human behavior. Cross-categorical perspectives are justified due to the assumed regularities of human behavior which are based upon the assumed underlying laws of all phenomena. It is also assumed in the positivistic theoretical position that the generation of consistent theories regarding human behavior will eventually result in the discovery of laws for human behavior which would be similar to laws discovered for natural phenomena.

Positivistic Educational Administration Practice

Because the goal of empirical research is to predict future administrative behavior and, thereby, gain control over such behavior, the positivistic researcher seeks to discover those administrative actions which would be most effective. Also, because administration is generalizable under this perspective, effective administrative action in any field can be applied to the behavior of school administrators. Thus, while positivism's goal is to

discover what is, it also seeks to discover relationships

between variables and these relationships point to what is

or is not effective. The result of this discovery can be

directive in that effective behavior would best be followed.

Under the positivistic perspective, schools have

specific goals which are to be achieved. These school goals

are viewed by Popkewitz (1984) as "distinct from practice

and examined separately" (p. 40). However, self-sustaining

goals do define the roles of the personnel within schools in

that goals give direction to action. Greenfield (1975)

explains this relationship between school goals and

administrative behavior: "School administrators bring

people and resources together so that the goals of the

organizations and presumably of an encompassing social order

may be met. . . . the administrator mediates between the

organization and the people within it" (p. 73). As a

mediator, the administrator sustains the school goals and

focuses the direction of school personnel action to the

attainment of these goals.

In order to accomplish this task, the administrator,

under the positivistic perspective, assumes an underlying

order in schools based upon the rational behavior of people.

Thus, the administrator becomes a maintainer of this order

by seeking to deter any deviations from the attainment of

school goals by sanctioning any irrational behavior by any member of the school community. Those members who work to attain school goals are rewarded appropriately.

The school organization, however, does not remain static. External influences seek to change school goals and it is the administrator's role to "mediate the impact of event sequences from external sources, and filter the influences that stem from links between rival centers of influence" (Smith, 1976, p. 137). In order to decide which influence shall or shall not be allowed to change the school focus, administrators, according to Bennis (1963), make their decisions based upon positivistic research:

> Change can be defined as a process of bringing together a change agent and client system to plan and attain an improved state of functioning in the client system by utilizing and applying valid knowledge. (p. 139)

For administrators, the goals of the school remain primary and all administrative decisions, mediations, behaviors and personnel evaluations are defined by these goals.

Phenomenology

Phenomenological Educational Administration Theory

The phenomenological researcher holds a different

perspective on theory due to the phenomenological assumption of objective reality being in a constant state of flux. Because of this unceasing change, the study of objective reality cannot produce generalizations. Reality is specifically situated as to time and place and only particulars can be discovered. Any order which seems apparent in human behavior is viewed by the phenomenological theorist as being imposed by the mind of the individual person who observes reality. Thus, truth is seen as relative to individual perceptions. Without generalizability as a goal, theory development becomes multiple theory production without the researcher being able to apply the theory produced from the research to any other situation except the situation observed. Greenfield (1974) indicates the goal of such particularistic theory generation: "The role of theory is to tell us the way things are rather than to point to the way they ought to be or how we would like them to be" (p. 4).

Since generalizability is not possible and since the only order which can be known is that which is imposed by the individual person, then the study of reality is focused on the perceptions of the individual and how that person makes sense out of a particular situation. Schools are, therefore, not viewed as a type of social structure but are

seen as unique constellations of individuals. Schools
cannot be studied as objective entities because schools have
no existence outside the perceptions of the individuals who
engage in a relationship called "school." Schools can also
not be studied as a classification because each school is
considered to be a unique existential event defined by "the
varied perceptions by individuals of what they can, should
or must do in dealing with others" (Greenfield, 1974, p. 3).
Each school can be known by research, but the study of one
school cannot assist educators in understanding another
school.

Likewise, educational administration behavior is unique
to the specific time, place and individual person. Theory
cannot provide answers or directions on how to behave in a
situation. Theories derived from the study of various
schools can be understood, uniquely interpreted and
subjectively incorporated or discarded by an administrator.
The behavior of the educational administrator cannot be
generalized because overt administrative action may have
different motivating factors. Greenfield (1978) defines
educational administration behavior as particularistic and
unique because it

>   depends in large measure on self and on all the social
>   processes by which the self is formed: it depends on
>   who we are and on what others around us are thinking

and doing. (p. 12)

Thus, the phenomenological view of educational administration theory is seen to be one of multi-faceted perspectives on unique existential events. Such uniqueness can only be interpreted by individual administrators and become incorporated into that individual's perceptions of personal administrative behavior. And no formal research can result under the phenomenological perspective because of this uniqueness.

Phenomenological Educational Administration Practice

The phenomenological researcher views schools as invented concepts to fulfill the social purpose of education. Because schools have no objective existence, one can only define schools through the individual perceptions of those who comprise the school community. However, school personnel, while being the actual creators of the school, objectify this concept and thus become alienated from their own creation. Under the phenomenological perspective, it is the role of school administrators to assist school personnel, as well as themselves, to become aware of the primacy of individual perceptions in school formation.

Thus, there are no school goals for administrators to

attain. The goals are within each person and the
administrator seeks to pursue his own goals. A school
community is possible because the individuals involved share
congruent goals. When a member of the school community's
perceptions about education are no longer congruent with the
perceptions of the other members, it is the role of the
administrator to assist in the resolution of this
incongruency through communication. There is no specific
role which the administrator assumes. Administrative
behavior is imposed from within the individual and not from
external forces. Administrative behavior is, thus, uniquely
defined by each person in that position and generalization
of such behavior is not possible.

School communities are viewed by the phenomenological
theorist as unordered and in a constant state of flux. Such
consistent change is seen as healthy in that schools are
evolutionary concepts which dynamically change according to
how congruent individual goals change. Eisenstadt (1968)
describes this evolutionary concept:

> Any institutional system is never fully homogeneous in
> the sense of being fully accepted or accepted to the
> same degree by all those participating in it. These
> different orientations may become the foci of conflict.
> (p. 17)

The school administrator, when such conflict arises,

views this as an opportunity for change. Only through conflict can the status quo be challenged, ideas changed and evolutionary movement made possible. Conflict does not arise out of behavioral problems themselves, but out of the perceptual differences which underlie these behaviors. Therefore, in the resolution of conflict, the administrator does not impose his perceptions on others, but attempts to assist others in the resolution of their perceptual differences.

While change is viewed as beneficial for schools, change cannot be imposed externally. Such imposition will occur only if the members of the school community choose to accept new ideas or practices. The school administrator can seek to influence change by communication, but the members of the school community remain free to choose or reject the proposed change. Thus, the role and behavior of administrators are seen to be viewed as personally defined conduct in the school community.

Ethnomethodology

Ethnomethodological Educational Administration Theory

The ethnomethodological researcher also posits

objective reality as existing, but the knowledge of that
reality can only be obtained by discovering the
interpretation of that reality by social consensus. Social
consensus imposes order on an ever-changing objective
reality. Because reality is so ordered, the social rules
generated by social consensus are the only generalizations
possible and these social rules are what are defined as
theories by ethnomethodological researchers. Smith (1984)
defines the knowledge obtained through this theoretical
position: "The basis of truth or trustworthiness is social
agreement; what is judged true or trustworthy is what we can
agree, conditioned by time and place, is true or
trustworthy" (p. 386).

Thus, the implications for educational administration
theory under the ethnomethodological perspective are not the
discovery of abstract laws of human behavior, but the
discovery of social rules which groups generate in social
situations called schools. Schools are not viewed as a type
of organization, but as conceptual structures which provide
a framework for social action. The social action of the
school community is seen to be the socialization of
students. Because generalization is possible among
similarly designated organizations, studies of student,
teacher and administrative behavior across schools is

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possible (Miles and Huberman, 1984b; Popkewitz, 1983);
however, the results of such studies are not generalizable
to all schools in all instances. The results are specific
to the situation and people involved and the resulting
conclusions would need to be reinterpreted in each new
situation. Miles (1971) clarifies that schools have unique
properties which make them inherently different from other
organizations but which allow schools to be studied
cross-categorically with reference to the uniqueness of the
environment and individuals concerned.

The theories or social rules generated by these studies
are stated in terms of explanations of practical situations.
The goal of ethnomethodological theory is to define problems
and their solutions because, as Silverman (1971) indicates:
"Models are only useful for the illumination they throw on
problems at issue" (p. 65). Thus, the results of school
studies under an ethnomethodological perspective are stated
in specific, practical language.

Popkewitz (1983) found that in the six schools under
his study, the adoption of a new academic program was
influenced by social groups directly and indirectly involved
with the program. Miles and Huberman's (1984b) study on
school improvement generated the reasons for the adoption or
non-adoption of an innovative school program by teachers.

Both studies sought to answer the question of "why" not "what." The "why" resulting from the study is the theory generated.

This emphasis upon the "why" of behavior is based upon the ethnomethodological focus on group motivation. Because of this emphasis on motivation, ethnomethodological studies have received prominent emphasis in educational evaluation research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Reichardt and Cook, 1979) which has sought to know not just what happens in schools, but why people in schools behave as they do. Case study methodology in educational administration is also receiving renewed implementation as exemplified by Smyth's (1984) work on clinical supervision, Grant and Sleeter's (1986) study of a junior high school and Morris et al's (1984) perspective on principals' everyday actions.

Ethnomethodological Educational Administration Practice

The ethnomethodological researcher posits the situational aspects of a defined reality to be of primary importance. To study schools and the actions of school personnel, the researcher must view each instance of study as situation-specific. Thus, the study of educational administration behavior is viewed as being not only not

generalizable with administration in other organizations,
but also being not generalizable between schools.

Each school community is viewed as unique in that
reality is socially defined. The specific individuals who
comprise the school community perceive the situation
uniquely and the social interaction and social rules agreed
upon by the school community also define the reality of that
community. The administrative role is thus socially defined
by the members of the school community and this definition
interacts with the administrator's perceptions of that role.
As schools are concepts created by people in order to
realize their shared goals, roles are defined as tasks to
acccomplish these goals. Thus, the administrative role is
responsive to the shared goals of the specific school
community and these behavioral expectations are assumed to
be freely undertaken by the administrator.

Within a school, the administrator's primary task is
that of communication. Communication is of intrinsic
importance to the ethnomethodological researcher because
"the common language available for the objectification of
experiences is grounded in everyday life and keeps pointing
back to it" (Berger and Luckmann, 1966, p. 25). Language is
the only means the administrator has of discovering the
perceptions of the school community and the only means for

the open transmission of the shared values of that
community. Language allows the administrator to maintain
the focus on the goals to be attained. Thus, the
administrator must assist school personnel in interpreting
what has occurred in the schools in order to identify the
meaning behind past actions. Meaning can only be known
retrospectively because it is after the action that one can
look back to determine the significance of an action in
context, and meaning can only be expressed in language.

The administrator is also viewed as a negotiator
between conflicting perceptions. Schools are dynamic and
unordered concepts with order imposed by the shared goals of
the community. When perceptions of individuals are in
conflict with these goals, the administrator is to assist
individuals to reconcile their differences.

Critical Theory

Critical Educational Administration Theory

Critical theory posits reality as being in a constant
state of change. Because of this change, laws are not
sought by the critical theorist. Only specifics can be
known. Theory is seen to be generated by the individual, by

groups and by society as a totality. Theory generation
occurs when each of these categories engages In the
reflection on the difference between reality and appearance.
The goal of such theory generation is to motivate human
action.

Schools are viewed by the critical theorist as created
human structures which maintain current societal ideology.
As such, schools continue the social and intellectual
restraints which cause people to remain oppressed. As a
proponent of ideological maintenance, schools participate in
establishing "the contraints on truth-speaking practices
which prevent the populace and theorists alike from exposing
outrageous social conditions" (Fuhrman and Sizek, 1979-80,
p. 39). While schools are seen as allied with the
oppressive status quo, Bressler (1963) perceives schools as
having the potential to emancipate society:

> Social change can be controlled by the application of
> disciplined intelligence. . . the educational process
> is the only alternative to stagnation or revolutionary
> violence. It is the duty of education to preside over
> gradualistic change toward a more perfect expression of
> the democratic tradition. (p. 8)

The role of educational administration theory from the
critical perspective is to enable individuals within the
schooling process to become aware of the societal
ideological restraints placed upon them and, through

reflection, become less controlled by restraints. Thus, theory is not "a mere vehicle that becomes superfluous as soon as the data are at hand" (Giroux, 1983, p. 17), but a vital, dynamic and evolutionary motivator for action. Schools are seen as objective entities engaged in ideological maintenance, but there exists no body of theory about schools because schools are composed of individual people and the tension between these individuals and the school is what provides the impetus for these individuals to engage in critique of such oppression and thus become less restrained.

For the educational administrator, critical theory does not provide statements of how that person should act. Instead, critical theory generates statements of specific instances of reality in schooling which the administrator then reflects upon. These statements of reality are evaluated and then incorporated into the actions of the administrator, if the statements are reflectively acceptable. Examples of such reflective statements for consideration are Apple's (1979) and Sharp's (1980) exposure of the political and economic influences on school curriculum. Thus, there is not a specific body of theory on educational administration from the critical perspective. Theory is generated by the individual engaged in the

critique of reality and the resultant exposure of the
inconsistencies between the real and the ideal. Under this
perspective, each person is a theorist and the theory
generated is personal and may or may not be accepted by
others.

Critical Educational Administration Practice

The critical researcher, like the positivistic
researcher, assumes a distinction between theory and
practice; however, the critical researcher seeks to unify
theory and practice whereby "the understanding of the
contradictions inherent in existing society becomes
constitutive of the very activity to transform society"
(Bernstein, 1976, p. 182). Thus, the exposure of the
contrast between the real and ideal through the process of
critique provides an awareness which moves people to change
society more toward the ideal. The tasks of the school
administrator are to expose the influence of societal
ideology on the school's ideology, to assist members of the
school community to become aware of their own ideological
influences and to engage in personal dialectic to understand
the ideological influences upon personal administrative
behavior.

The critical perspective views language as the most prominent social means of reifying ideology in any organization. Thus, the focus of the school administrator should be upon the language regarding schools used by society, by members of the school community, and by the administrator personally. Language is the means whereby the myths and values which are subconsciously adhered to are translated into overt representations. The exposure of this underlying ideology occurs when individuals are provided with the impetus and means to reflect upon what has occurred and then engage in open dialogue about these perceptions. Bernstein (1976) terms such discourse by school personnel as a "free, unconstrained community of enquirers" (p. 214). Thus, the administrator is not viewed as one who has more power, but as one who provides the setting and climate for all members of the school community, including the administrator, to engage in open dialogue as equals in order to expose the underlying influences on school personnel behavior.

Such exposure must result in more than mere knowledge because as Freud (Bernstein, 1976) indicates, mere knowledge, even in the field of psychotherapy, does not lead to change: "If knowledge about the unconscious were as important for the patient as people inexperienced in

psychoanalysis imagine, listening to lectures or reading
books would be encugh to cure him" (p. 201). The exposure
of underlying influen-es on school personnel behavior must
result in a change of perceptions which is made apparent
through a change in language and action. Action should be
based upon personal choice and become more emancipated from
ideological influences. This more freely situated behavior
is termed by Habermas (Bernstein, 1976) as strategic action
in that it depunds upon correct evaluation of alternative
choices which result from calculation supplemented by values
and not from calculation based upon control.

Summary

Upon analysis, the impact of applying different
research methods to educational administration has
far-reaching implications fo. theory and practice.

If positivism continues to dominate the educational
administration field, then theory generation will remain
separated from practice because theory will be
generalizations of abstract administrative behavior which
the practitioner must extrapolate to specific instances of
behavior. Phenomenological theory would be neither
generalizable nor directive but would provide another view

of reality which the individual administrator could choose
to accept or reject. The acceptance of ethnomethodology by
educational administration researchers would produce theory
based upon the consensus of the members for each specific
school community. Emphasis would also be placed upon the
social context of administrative behavior with theory
indicating how this context influences unique and specific
action. Critical theory would generate no body of formal
theory regarding educational administration, but there would
exist a dynamic process of self-reflection which would
result in the administrator becoming more self-determined.

Insert Table A

Under the positivistic perspective, the educator would
continue to define the administrative role by its relation
to the goals of the school, as maintainer of the inherent
order of a school system, and as controlling agent in the
school who assumes the role of authority and responsibility.
The phenomenological view of educational administration
practice would define the administrative role by the unique
perceptions of the administrator whose task would be to
negotiate individual school members' perceptual differences.
If ethnomethodology were accepted as a legitimate basis for

educational administration practice, then the administrative
role would be defined by the agreed-upon goals of the school
community. The individual administrator would be viewed as
a communicator and negotiator and not as one in a position
of power. Authority and responsibility would be shared by
all members of the school community, including students and
parents. Critical theory acceptance would provide a view of
educational administration practice as defined by the
individual administrator and by the social consensus of the
school community. The administrator would be seen as one
member of the school community who assists the other members
toward their goals of emancipating their human capacities.

Insert Table B

Conclusion

Whether in defense of or in opposition to positivism,
authors have taken sides in this debate because empirical
research is considered to be the only legitimate methodology
in all fields of inquiry. Bendix and Roth (1971) clarify
this opposition to positivism:

From being a method of inquiry to answer carefully

delimited questions, science has been turned into a
fetish with which to interpret the world, advise
politicians, examine the future, provide an education
and entertain the public. (p. 102)

When any theoretical position or research methodology

becomes established as the primary position or methodology,

then proponentss of other positions or methods will seek to

"dethrone" this position or method. The proponents of other

positions and methodologies seek either to preplace

positivism or to establish an oligarchical methodological

situation.

The replacement of positivism with any other paradigm

will cause the same form of debates to occur. As Frank

(1984) indicates, positivism has served educational

administration well, but incompletely. Every other research

paradigm also has limitations and, "when research paradigm

turns to research ideology, the seeds for decreasing

usefulness are sown" (p. 13,. No one researach methodology

can be "the" research methodology for edcational

administration because of the limitations inherent in each.

Phenomenological research has been criticized as being

so specific to individual experience as to have no meaning

for theorists or practitioners. As Griffiths (1979) states:

"It is of little value to anyone other than the individual

using this approach" (p. 56). Braithwaite (1955) also

criticizes phenomenological research as being non-existent in that its application to sociobehavioral study is minimal. Phenomenology is often faulted for being a philosophical position and not a true research methodology.

While the number of ethnomethodological case studies have significantly increased in the field of education, the case study approach continues to be judged as an inadequate research method as indicated in two apects of the case study procedure. First, case studies are situation-specific and, as such, provide the researcher and practitioner with a static view of reality in which process and change cannot be discerned (Weick, 1969, p. 19). Case study procedure is also critiqued because of the assumed involvement of the researcher in the research process. Barnes (1967) summarizes this position in his statement that "participants become involved and overly subjective: they begin to to overvalue and push their own beliefs and normative theories" (p. 77).

Critical theory's application to the field of education administration is just beginning to develop in the works of Foster and Bates. However, van den Berg (1980) posits inherent logical flaws in the critical theory paradigm: First, if man is able to freely choose, then he is able to choose the irrational as well as the rational: second, the

higher truth sought by critical theorists is undefined, unverifiable and elusive.

Each research methodology can be critiqued because each methodology has limitations. If any methodology existed which could not be criticized, then that paradigm would desreve the position of primacy.

Thus, no "one" research methodology holds the "answer" to reality. The limitations of alternative research methodologies must be accepted, as well as the limitations of positivism. These debates are second-level arguments in that research methodologies are based upon historically formalized perspectives of people's beliefs about reality. The debates are really about beliefs of individual researchers to which no simple resolution can occur. However, whatever the "outcome" of these debates, a new richness of interpretation will exist for educational administration research, theory and practice.

TABLE A

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION THEORY

		Positivism	Phenomenology	Ethnomethodology	Critical Theory
1.	Philosophical Bases	1. reality ordered and known objectively	1. reality unordered and known subjectively by individual	1. reality unordered and known subjectively by group consensus	1. interaction between objective and subjective knowledge of reality
2.	School Definition	2. type of organization	2. unique concepts of individual members	2. unique concepts of school community consensus	2. maintainer of societal ideology
3.	School Administration Definition	3. as type of generalizable administration	3. unique perceptions of individual members of school community	3. unique social consensus of members of school community	3. reflection of individual embodying individual and societal ideology
4.	Goal of Theory	4. generate laws to predict and control administrative action	4. explain individual perceptions regarding administrative behavior	4. explain social rules regarding administrative behavior	4. emancipation from externally and internally imposed constraints upon administrative behavior

TABLE B

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION PRACTICE

	Positivism	Phenomenology	Ethnomethodology	Critical Theory
1. Application	1. generalizable to all administrative practice	1. unique to individual administrator	1. unique to specific school community	1. unique to individual administrator and school community
2. Role Definition	2. by school goals which are other than individual or social goals	2. by individual perceptions of administrator	2. by social consensus of school community	2. by individual administrator perceptions and social consensus of school community
3. Order of Schools	3. inherent in school organizations	3. imposed by individual administrator	3. imposed by school community	3. movement toward more rational administrative behavior
4. Administrative Task	4. maintain order in school setting	4. communication of congruent individual perceptions	4. communication of shared goals of school community	4. provide climate of critique for members of school community
5. Conflict Resolution	5. impose sanctions to maintain school order	5. negotiate differences of individual perceptions	5. negotiate differences between individual perceptions and school community consensus	5. provide climate for discourse by members of school community
6. Administrative Focus	6. actions of administrator	6. individual perceptions of administrator	6. language which indicates shared goals of school community	6. ideological influence on education via language

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