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ABSTRACT

Results of a two-year study to measure the extent of Title IX compliance in randomly selected California school districts are reported. Carried out by the California Coalition for Sex Equity in Education, the study was designed to demonstrate that districts which make an active effort to promote Title IX implementation by involving public administrators, board members, teachers, specialists, students, and community members will achieve high levels of sex equity awareness, skills, and knowledge of programs. A corollary purpose was to identify types of training and technical assistance most useful for achieving sex equity in education. A pre-assessment of the selected schools revealed that some schools achieved less than minimum compliance to Title IX. Trained interviewers then questioned school district teams on access to courses, nonacademic programs, physical education, athletics, and employment policies and practices. Results indicate that districts who receive federal assistance for achieving compliance are more prepared to deal with Title IX; the level of each district's compliance can be reliably measured; and political, personal, and economic factors can have an effect on a district's effort to achieve compliance. Researchers also reviewed the taped interviews to discover off the record comments and attitudes by team members. These comments indicated the need for technical assistance and training.

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SCHOOL CHANGE PROCESSES: A REVIEW OF RESEARCH

(Paper prepared for the American Educational Research Association,
April 1981)

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SCHOOL CHANGE PROCESSES: CAN THEY BE MEASURED?

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A B S T R A C T

In 1976, the California Coalition for Sex Equity in Education (CCSEE) was formed as an effective coalition which sought to develop and provide effective delivery of training models, materials, alternative strategies and technical assistance to eliminate gender discrimination in schools. Composed of the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), the California School Board Association (CSBA), the California State Department of Education, (Project SEE), and the Sex Desegregation Assistance Center, (Project EQUITY) at California State University, Fullerton, the ~~CCSEE~~ submitted and was awarded a research and training grant through the ~~Women's~~ Educational Equity Act. The grant was designed to demonstrate that districts which make an active effort in promoting Title IX implementation involving their public administrators, teachers, specialists, community members, board members and students, will achieve higher levels of sex equity awareness, skills and knowledge of program alternatives. A corollary purpose of the project was to identify those specific kinds of training and technical assistance (materials, methods, strategies, and models) that were most useful in school districts that were attempting to meet the Federal and State requirements for sex equity in education.

During the two-year grant period, schools which were selected were involved either as experimental or control districts. During the first year the control districts received only a profile of their current level of Title IX compliance, while the experimental districts received a profile and direct training and technical assistance.

Two basic questions were researched: 1) Are school districts who receive Federal Financial Assistance in the form of consultants, materials, technical

~~assistance~~, etc., more apt to achieve compliance with Title IX? and, 2) Are ~~some methods, materials~~ or approaches more useful to districts that are attempting to ~~meet the Federal~~ Requirements of gender equity than others?

~~At~~ the end of ~~the~~ study, all of the experimental groups had appreciably higher scores on ~~each~~ of the areas researched and there was a statistically significant ~~difference~~ between the experimental and control groups in certain ~~specific~~ areas of Title IX compliance.

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SCHOOL CHANGE PROCESSES: CAN THEY BE MEASURED?

Historical Background

In response to social pressures and in accordance with legal mandates, efforts have been made over the past several years to provide assistance to school personnel in the elimination of sexism. School districts have been provided with non-discriminatory materials, training programs, and technical assistance, yet all these efforts have only served to teach us that institutions are remarkably resistant to traditional "frontal" change efforts. Such activities usually result in a confrontation of opposing attitudes and beliefs, and a complete lack of interest in the subject presented. Typically, educators look upon themselves as being fair and non-discriminatory, even in the face of evidence that indicates overt differential treatment of students and employees. They do not believe that sexism is an issue in their lives, and certainly not in their school district. Like most people, they remain attached to the "status quo". As Parlee (1975) has commented, the fact that data and actions consistently confirm every day beliefs and practices, ought to prompt individuals to take a very critical look at the methods and procedures that produced these facts. Yet, when this clear evidence of differential treatment and overt sexism is identified, the rationalizations run deep from "lack of qualified applicant," to "just being practical," to "treating people in a chivalrous manner," to "we just do not have the proper resources to make any changes". These comments and others only serve to cloak with a mantle of acceptability, actions that are already classified as discriminatory on the basis of sex.

The contradictions between what we say and what we do is a continuing dilemma in which maintenance of the "status quo" is often bolstered by deeply ingrained attitudes that have a tendency to limit the choices and self-concepts of the majority of our population. However, major forces are in operation to resolve this dilemma and to remove the contradiction between what our society says and what it does. The first is the strong and continuing pressure for social change, originating from groups representing the traditionally underrepresented members of our society, and second, the body of laws, regulations and court decisions promulgated at both the state and federal levels that prohibit discrimination. The effect of these forces has been to place upon the institution of education, the responsibility to identify, eliminate and prevent the recurrence of discriminatory policies and practices that result in sex discrimination. This responsibility has been called Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

In July of 1975, educational institutions were faced with the prospect of implementing the regulations governing Title IX, which stipulated that all programs within the institution were to be evaluated to determine the degree of compliance or non-compliance. As a result of this evaluation, programs that were in non-compliance with Title IX were to be remediated and modified to provide sex equitable standards for everyone. Funding to implement these programs was not made available to the local school districts on the premise that the changes to achieve Title IX implementation and sex equity could be accomplished by the school district, internally.

Ideally, simple knowledge of the law, its concepts, and the comparative data gathered during the required institutional self-evaluation should have been the means by which change was activated. However we discovered, that just because the theory was correct and the knowledge of the need for change was present, it did not mean that the districts were able to respond positively to the data. It soon became quite obvious, that intervention was necessary if something was going to be done.

Recognizing the difficulty that districts were having in the implementation process, the Department of Education (Health, Education, and Welfare) determined that sex equity could qualify for Title IV Civil Rights monies; monies which had formerly only been appropriated for race and national origin desegregation. Thus the intervention process began, with Institutes of Higher Education qualifying for Training Institutes in Sex Desegregation, and Sex Desegregation Assistance Centers, while State Educational Agencies also qualified to compete for funds and provide assistance where necessary in the implementation of Title IX.

Thus began the cycle of identifying sex desegregation specialists and training them to provide assistance to local school districts. Title IV Civil Rights monies funded some specialists, while some were funded by private foundations, other federal programs, and by local school districts that had a commitment to eliminate discrimination based on sex and achieve sex equity for all in the district. With this bank of specialists identified, we were able to provide human resources to the schools to facilitate change; to deal directly

with the school system for the best educational conditions and experiences; to provide instructional materials and work closely with instructional personnel in and out of the classroom; and, to assist the districts conceptualize a planned learning sequence to achieve sex equity.

Beginning the Change Process

Change was the desired element to the achievement of sex equity - behavioral change and attitude change. To accomplish this, it was necessary to look at the educational institutions, and the oft-times discriminatory actions of that institutions, through the Title IX self-evaluation process. The whole issue became institutional sex discrimination or a behavior that has been built into the agencies policies and practices.

Structural, institutionalized sex discrimination can easily be perpetuated by those who have little knowledge of awareness of its harmful effects. Isolated individuals who have an awareness level established cannot effectively battle institutional sex discrimination, even if their conscious level is raised to the point of easily identifying sexist practices and policies. Many individuals in the agency or institution are not conscious of the sex discriminatory nature of the policies they follow and the practices in which the district may be engaging. When, however, many individuals within an institution become conscious of sex discriminatory institutional processes, the processes will change, especially if at least some of them have the power and societal and/or legal support. Block (1969) supported the fact that some structural

aspects of the institution which ~~are~~ directly and indirectly sex discriminatory, are to a large ~~extent~~ beyond the control of individual institutional members ~~and~~ must be accorded "group recognition". Features such as ~~sex~~ differentiated curriculum, sex ratios in classrooms, sex segregated programs in Physical Education and Athletics, all represent discriminatory features against which considerable legal and popular polemics must be aroused before they can be attacked and changed.

Aubry (1978) conceded that if change of any proportion was to occur, those who were mobilized to provide change must do so with both new and integrated models. Whereas, Bandura, Ross and Ross (1973) in a study of theories of identification of learning behavior observed that controlled and dispersed rewarding resources stimulated activity that attempted to imitate the model of the possessor of the rewarding power. Other literature dealing with the outside effects and relationships between administrators and teacher behavioral changes suggests that changes may occur as a result of a massive infusion of strategies and effective action steps. (Tittle and Denker, 1976) Thus, the complexity of the need for change, the development of a model, the provision of a reward system and the massive infusion of efforts all came together in a package designed to provide a powerful mechanism, using available resources and trained personnel, to acquire, extend, and assist districts with Title IX compliance and the ultimate attainment of sex equity.

The Coalition

The California Coalition for Sex Equity In Education, representing state wide organizations who are advocates for the achievement of sex equity in all education programs, sought to design a research and training project which would allow them to define a positive means by which a planned program which reviewed Title IX efforts in the school district and at the same time appealed to the policy makers, could be implemented. Consisting of the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), the California School Board Association (CSBA), the California State Department of Education's Sex Equity Office (Project SEE) and, the Sex Desegregation Assistance Center for Region IX, (Project EQUITY) located at California State University, Fullerton, the CCSEE (California Coalition for Sex Equity In Education) was formed.

Its purpose was to design, develop, and implement an effective system for the establishment of a model to measure compliance with Title IX, provide for a reward system in the form of financial and professional support, and infuse the district with a support system composed of consultants, training, technical assistance and materials. All this to assist the chosen school districts implement Title IX and achieve sex equity.

The Coalition (CCSEE) applied for and received a Research/ Training grant through the Women's Educational Equity Act Program, which was designed to demonstrate the impact of planned intervention to school districts and its effect on the implementation of Title IX. Major concentration was to be focused on the "power base" (school

board members, Superintendent, Administrators) who assume the leadership role in the district and in the achievement of sex equity. The questions to be tested were:

1. Would school districts who receive assistance from federally funded sex equity units be more prepared to comply with Title IX than those who did not receive assistance?
2. Can a school district's level of Title IX compliance be measured in a reliable and valid scale?
3. What other factors are involved in a district's effort to achieve Title IX compliance and sex equity for all?

The proposal was designed to demonstrate that educational institutions who involved board members, administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community could achieve a higher level of awareness of sex equity and reach Title IX compliance more readily than those institutions that did not. Additionally, the model was designed to train the participants and assist them in the development of materials, program alternatives, and other strategies to achieve sex equity. The overall program was to present a structure that depicted a relationship among certain variables that were anticipated to contribute to a change in the district as a result of Title IX implementation.

Researching Discrimination

Discrimination is a word that most people have great difficulty

dealing with either institutionally or personally. How then were we going to research the question of discrimination and where were we planning to establish base line data? Campbell (1981) in her study of bias/discrimination, noted that bias prevents reasonable consideration of a question, since one who is affected by race or sex bias will have difficulty looking at it "objectively". Since objectivity is at the base of the scientific method and empirical research, it would appear that conceptually, the presence of bias/discrimination would render true research impossible. The California Coalition for Sex Equity in Education (CCSEE) however, assumed a position of being non-discriminatory and working from a non-discriminatory platform. We took this position because the researcher is presumed to be "objective." Discrimination may affect the subjects, but it should not affect the researchers. However, Thomas and Sillan (1972) refute this conclusion by indicating that researchers are not immune to the "disease and superstition of American racism and sexism". Yet, in this study, the advocacy for sex equity was evident by all the members of the coalition (three co-directors) therefore we quickly set aside the fears of objectivity and began dealing with empirical data and the relative importance of working with people and facts in determining Title IX compliance.

Educational Institution Selection

A sample pool of all California school districts was drawn using the stratified random sampling process. The stratification variables were ethnic composition and socio-economic status.

From the sample, districts were called and invited to participate either as experimental or control, for the next two years. If the response was "yes," a letter of confirmation followed. In order to assure adequate representation of elementary, secondary and unified school districts, some samples were drawn twice. The final selection produced an acceptable sample by grade level as well as an urban/suburban cross sample that typified the State's communities.

Pre-Assessment

The first basic piece of information sought by the project staff was whether the school districts involved in the project had met what is called the "minimum requirements" of Title IX. A common set of questions was asked of a central office administrator, (Superintendent, Associate Superintendent, Assistance Superintendent, etc.) to determine a level of "paper compliance". (Our definition of paper compliance included, "only what is necessary to keep the district legal".) Each district responded by telephone to such questions as:

1. Does the district have a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of sex? When adopted, etc?
2. Has the district appointed a Title IX Officer and advised district personnel and parents of that appointment?
3. Has the district developed a Title IX Grievance Procedure for adults and students?
4. Has information been disseminated to all students and

employees regarding Title IX and the identification of the Title IX Officer.

5. Has the district completed an institutional self-evaluation?

These and other questions were responded to and recorded by a single interviewer thus eliminating any possibility of another variable being brought into the picture. Most districts responded favorably to these information questions, which would lead the researcher to believe that the district had met the "minimal compliance" features of Title IX.

However, as we worked with the school districts during the two year funding period, in more than one instance, minimal compliance was merely a "paper tiger". We discovered that many of the districts rather than adopting a separate policy on sex discrimination, merely added the word "sex" to their other policies of non-discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, handicap. This word was added by many districts only after receiving word from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, that grants could not be submitted for federal funding without a letter of assurance that the district had a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of sex. Although there is nothing illegal about this process, it hardly denotes a priority to achieve sex equity.

Although all the districts had a Title IX Officer, this person generally wore ten to fifteen hats, 10% or less for Title IX. With regard to the Grievance Procedure, many districts merely announced that Title IX and allegations of sex discrimination could

be heard using the negotiated Grievance Procedure adopted by the teachers. Only three schools actually had a Grievance Procedure for students. Dissemination of information regarding Title IX in most cases had been done one time only. Some districts made sure that the policy of non-discrimination was written in the district hand-book and newsletter at the beginning of each school year, but most districts did not readily provide this information to new students or employees, on a regular basis.

Finally, the institutional self-evaluation! Each school district in the study, (one exception) indicated that they had completed an institutional self evaluation and had modified and remediated their programs where necessary. Working evidence supported the fact that some districts had the self-evaluation completed by the Principal, with no input from teachers, while others had a central office person complete it, and two others had the Director of Personnel to "work it out" and send it to HEW. Thus, the depth of Title IX "minimum compliance" as acknowledged by the districts involved, proved to be less than minimum compliance and less than paper compliance in reality.

One should not be left with the impression that all districts followed this format, but rather the few who regarded institutional change as "minimum compliance" A comparison of "minimum compliance" pre and post did show gains, although not statistically noteworthy. As an evaluation issue, the provisions of technical assistance designed to increase the capability of districts to meet "minimum compliance" was quite positive, and was validated as a quantitative measure of Title IX compliance.

The Assessment Instrument

The next step in this process was to determine the extent to which districts had implemented all the Title IX regulations. To validate and score this information, a Title IX Assessment Instrument was developed to be used to analyze the impact of intervention strategies through a scoring sequence based on institutional change and individual behavior. It was pre-determined by the three co-directors that the instrument would be validated using institutional data rather than individual data. This decision was based on documented research that indicated if institutional change is to occur, the institutional practices must be changed, which will then bring about change in individual attitudes (Gideonse, 1977). Additionally, by using the Title IX requirements as the foundation for the assessment instrument, an assumption could be made that if the district met full compliance with Title IX, it obviously had a commitment to eradicate sex discrimination. Therefore, the Title IX Assessment Instrument was developed and adopted by the California Coalition for Sex Equity In Education (CCSEE) as a valid means of measuring the institutions efforts to comply with Title IX.

The instrument was an interview guide designed to cover five major areas of Title IX and to seek out complete responses through a subset of probing questions. Questions were to be answered by a team from each school district, selected as representative of the major areas to be covered in the interview. The areas covered were:

1. Access to Courses
2. Access to Non-Academic Programs

3. Physical Education
4. Athletics
5. Employment Policies and Practices

The instrument contained forty (40) questions which covered all the above basic issues related to the Title IX regulations. Each of the 40 questions was followed by a subset of probing questions which allowed the interviewers to gain more in-depth information regarding the specific areas.

Interviewers

Interviewers were selected to be involved in a two day training program designed to provide them with the objectives of the project, the research objectives, the nature of the assessment instrument and the scoring procedures and techniques for interviewing. Through case studies and mock interviews, the interviewers became highly skillful. A "given" for all interviewers prior to selection was that each was qualified as a person who was very conversant with all the provisions of Title IX.

The interviewers were trained to work as a team of two, and to seek out responses from the persons being interviewed that would provide the information needed to determine degree of compliance with Title IX. The instrument was to be used as a guide to their discussion and as a reminder of points to be covered. Flexibility in questions was the theme of the program, providing the information was obtained.

A tape recording of each interview session preserved original data for later reliability and validity checking. The scoring

process helped insure reliability by subjecting the raw data to individual review first from the transcription of the notes to the rating of the tapes, to the prepared summary. All data sources were compared and incongruities investigated to determine if there were errors either on the scale scores or on the interview scores.

Interview Findings

Although the overall findings of the project support the conclusions that:

- a. Districts who receive assistance through federally funded sex equity units will be more prepared to comply with Title IX than those who do not receive assistance;
- b. The level of each district's Title IX compliance can be reliably measured; and,
- c. There are many factors including political, personal, economic, etc., that have an affect on a district's effort to achieve Title IX compliance,

it is interesting to note some of the incongruities or subliminal reactions of persons who were part of a team involved in the interview process and were unable to or did not desire to have their feeling or attitudes become a part of the written document. Often a comment only whispered on the tape served as a "red-flag" for those providing technical assistance and training, thus allowing preventative steps to be taken and supportive treatment provided.

At this point it behooves us to share some of these case studies as a constant reminder that not everyone is prepared for or interested in the achievement of sex equity.

The following are but a few samples of the types of "under-the-table" responses that were heard on the tapes. The fact that a person who had not participated in any of the interviews, (a co-director) was the individual who heard each tape, again allowed for certain variables to be consistent and certain information to be "picked-up" that would otherwise have been lost. (The co-director as with the other two co-directors was considered an expert in Title IX.)

Question: What has the district done to ensure that it does not discriminate in the way it provides student access to home economics courses?

Response: (Female Assistant Superintendent of Instruction)

"We have looked at all our courses in home economics and are trying to make changes wherever possible. As far as we can determine, all classes are open to both sexes and both sexes are enrolling."

Comment From Tape:

(Female Voice)

"All she did was look in my classroom and tell me I needed boys in my clothing class. I knew that!!
Some study!"

(Technical assistance provided in this instance included suggestions to the teacher on how to bring more boys into the program, providing materials, and role models for the boys - all completed without indicating that we had heard anything on the tape.)

Question: What has the district done to ensure that it does not discriminate in the way it provides student access to special education courses?

Response: (Male, Director of Special Education)

"Actually, the district has no choice in providing service to all special education students."

However, we are always looking at our programs to be sure that all students are treated fairly, that they have and are provided with every opportunity that regular students have."

Comment From Tape: (Female Voice)

"Maybe we ought to tell them that the numbers in our special education classes are 95 to 1 male because teachers think only males are in need of help."

(Technical assistance provided to this district included a major training program in the identification of special education needs of students, including selection and participation)

Question: Does the district have criteria for selecting and evaluating instructional materials regarding sex bias?

Response: (Female)

"Actually, we have a committee that reviews all our library selections before purchasing. This committee has asked permission to assist in the review of textbooks and instructional materials, but we have not had an answer as yet."

Comment From Tape:

(Female Voice)

"We don't need any of that stuff, the State picks our books for us - let them worry about sex bias."

(Technical assistance was to provide a series of workshops to the district teachers in the identification of sexism in textbooks and instructional materials, as well as providing samples of criteria developed by the project and assistance in using same)

Question: What has the district done to ensure that all students have equitable opportunities to participate in extra-curricular clubs?

Response: (Male Voice - Department Chair)

"All our clubs are open to both sexes and they all have the same criteria for admission. We actually have no problems in this area - the boys are very receptive to having the girls join their clubs."

Comment From Tape: (Male Student Voice)

"We don't want any girls in our clubs"

(Technical assistance included workshops with students on the harmful effects of sex discrimination on students; workshops on Title IX; and workshops on establishing equal criteria for club membership.)

Question: Has the district taken steps to ensure that all honors and scholarships are free of gender bias?

Response: (Male Voice - Dean of Students)

"We'll we haven't really looked at that just yet as we only have a few scholarships offered each year." However I am sure that they are equitable."

Comment From Tape: (Female Student Voice)

"Sure, but the boys still get all the scholarships."

(Technical assistance provided to the district included a review of their scholarship program and recommendations for remediation)

Question: Has the district implemented a co-ed P.E. program for all activities at all grade levels (exception participation in contact sports)

Response: (Male, Principal of High School)

"Absolutely, in fact that's the first move we made to implement Title IX. Co-education P.E. is the game of the day."

Comment from Tape:

(Male student Voice)

"Just wait until next week. Mr. X says we're going back to real P.E. with boys, and we're not going to tell anyone."

(Technical assistance concentrated on providing a number of workshops for teachers and students on co-education physical activities)

Question: Has the district made a study of its employment practices to assure affirmative action?

Response: (Male, Superintendent)

"You bet, we have the best affirmative action policy in the whole county and we are working very hard to implement it with the best trained individuals."

Comment From Tape:

(Female Voice)

"Then why are all the Principals Men"

(Technical Assistance included providing Management Training Programs for interested females)

These types of ambiguities in responses actually permitted the staff of CCSEE to bring specific training programs to the district that may not have been assessed as needed, based upon the original response from district personnel.

Outcomes

As a result of this study, certain basic conclusions or outcomes became quite evident:

1. The training, technical assistance, consultation and instructional models for change that were provided to the experimental districts assisted them in making significant changes in relation to compliance with Title IX. In some districts, significant changes were directly proportional to the amount of assistance provided.
2. The Title IX Assessment Instrument proved to be a valid indicator of where the district placed in relation to Title IX compliance. It was also adopted and adapted by many school districts as a follow-up of the CCSEE program.
3. The treatment provided was extremely reliable based upon identified need and became a valuable extension of the district's Title IX efforts.
4. Training and technical assistance tailored to meet the district needs is a prototype for establishing programmatic change.

5. As the depth of Title IX Compliance increased, it was directly related to the amount of participation by administrators, teachers, students, and parents, including board members from the district, in the training and technical assistance program.
6. The fact that the districts were able to plan with the California Coalition for Sex Equity in Education (CCSEE) staff to meet Title IX compliance, resulted in an orderly change process within the district.

As change is initiated in educational institutions, reinforcement is an extremely important variable. Encouragement, providing assistance through materials and personnel, all provide the delicate balance needed to ensure a steady progression of change. We at CCSSE are very proud to have been a part of this change process.

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