

Draft

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Equity and Educational Policy and Management

The following is an attempt to organize my thoughts regarding the nature of inequality and education and the potential for CEPM to deal with these issues using the resources of the College of Education and the rest of the University. I first briefly review my perspective on the literature regarding inequality and education, noting the groups of people involved, the types of inequality they face, the sources of these inequities, and the extent to which education can deal with them. I then turn to a discussion of possible strands of work for CEPM to pursue to develop better policy and management procedures to deal with these inequalities.

The thoughts presented here grow out of a long term interest in the area and my experiences in teaching the Sociology of Education and a seminar called "Inequality and Education." Instead of providing individual citations for the conclusions presented below, I have attached a copy of a bibliography prepared for students in these classes. The conclusions presented here are largely based on that material.

Inequality and Education

In the last two decades national education policy has focused on inequalities in education based on race, class, sex and handicaps. In the 1950's court decisions forced the beginning of school desegregation. The 1960's Civil Rights Act led to further concern with the equal treatment

of whites and non-whites. The Johnson administration's War on Poverty and education legislation in the 1960's led to concern for children from disadvantaged backgrounds, including the Title I school programs and various scholarship programs. In the 1970's, based on earlier civil rights legislation, attention was given to sex inequities and the Title IX legislation was implemented. Finally, in the late 1970's with the passage of Public Law 94-142 attention also turned to inequalities that the handicapped face. *now ch-1*

Inequality may take several forms. Some involve school activities, policies, and programs. For instance there may be inequities in the distribution of educational resources both within schools and districts and between districts. There may also be segregation of students within schools through restricting enrollments in classes and activities and segregation between schools through differential admission requirements or segregated neighborhoods and communities. Inequality may also be seen in the outcomes of education. Of immediate concern to educators is inequality in academic achievement. Inequality also occurs in eventual educational attainment as well as in adult occupational attainment and income. *outcome*

Obviously these inequalities are often related, although the determination is not total. School processes influence educational outcomes. The programs to which students are exposed and the resources available to them influence their eventual academic achievement, educational attainment and even their adult status. Yet, the Coleman Report demonstrated that even

with remarkably similar facilities the variation in academic achievement between racial groups remains high. Similarly, sisters and brothers are exposed to very similar educational resources for many years, yet have different patterns of academic achievement and markedly different occupations and incomes in adulthood. One kind of educational outcome may influence another, although again without total determination. Students with higher academic achievement tend to pursue more education and to eventually have higher levels of adult occupational status and income. Yet, extensive differences in occupations and in income exist between minorities and whites with equivalent years of education and similar job training. Similarly, even though women and men have the same average years of education, they differ widely in eventual income. Handicapped people, no matter how extensive their education may be, are limited in the kinds of adult activities they may pursue. Many sociological studies have also documented the effect of social origin on later occupational attainment, independent of training and educational attainment.

Figure 1 summarizes the relationship between the various types of inequality and the groups involved. Nonwhites generally have lower levels of academic achievement and educational attainment than whites. Although they probably do not have fewer resources within schools than other students in the same district, they still face segregation in education and have much lower adult incomes and occupational status than whites.

People from lower socio-economic status backgrounds also have lower academic achievement and lower educational attainment than people from higher status backgrounds. Because of segregated neighborhoods they are often segregated from schools that people of higher income attend, and, as

Figure 1: The Nature of Inequality

SCHOOL PROCESSES			OUTCOMES			
<u>Groups Affected</u>	<u>Access to Resources</u>	<u>Segregation of Students</u>	<u>Educational Achievement</u>	<u>Educational Attainment</u>	<u>Adult Occupations and Income</u>	<u>Relevant Policies</u>
Race	Related to segregation of neighborhoods and regional differences	Usually a function of place of residence and social class	Non-whites often lower than whites, at least partly a function of social class differences	Non-whites usually lower than whites	Non-whites usually lower than whites	Court decisions Civil Rights Act, Title I programs, Affirmative Action
Class	Related to financial resources of area of residence	Through tracking & students' course selection, as well as place of residence	Working class usually lower than middle class	Working class usually lower than middle class	Those from working class origin usually lower	Title I programs
Sex	In later years of school as a result of family choices regarding financial investments	Usually through students' course selections; sometimes through school policies	Girls have higher grades, equal total scores on achievement tests some differences in specific areas	Equal through masters; men have more doctorates and drop out of high school more often	Women lower than men	Title IX Court decisions Civil Rights Act Affirmative Action
Handicaps	Related to type of handicap and financial resources of school	Usually based on type of handicap and resources available	Often handicapped have lower achievement	Handicapped often have lower attainment	Handicapped often lower	Public Law 94-142 Court decisions Affirmative Action
Region	Related to isolation and financial resources of region	?	Those in rural area may have lower achievement	Those from rural areas often have lower attainment	Those from rural origins often lower	State Laws Court decisions
Relevant Policies	Civil Rights Act Scholarship Programs Title IX Title I Programs State laws and court orders	Court decisions Civil Rights Act Title IX Regulations	Title I programs	Scholarship programs	Affirmative Action Civil Rights Act Court decisions Title IX (education only)	

adults, they have lower incomes and occupational status than people from higher status backgrounds, even with equivalent educational attainments.

Because of coeducation females and males are exposed to similar educational resources until the later years of education when families may opt to invest more heavily in the education of males. Some sex segregation persists, especially vocational training and in the higher levels of education where students may choose their courses. Males have more learning and behavior problems in schools and lower grades than females throughout the school years. Yet, they score as well as females on the total scores of achievement tests, usually surpassing girls in mathematical ability by the middle grades. (Girls usually retain their advantage in verbal skills.) On the average, females and males have equal educational attainment, but males more often drop out of high school and are more often found in the highest levels of training. In adulthood men earn much more than women and men and women usually pursue different occupations.

Generalizations about handicapped people require specifications for the type of handicap. However, there are often differences in academic achievement and in educational attainment, segregation from other students, and differences in resources available. The handicapped rarely equal the non-handicapped in adult status.

Although I know of no specific legislation related to the problem (except perhaps state laws regarding school finance), some studies have documented inequities between rural and suburban and urban schools. These include differences in achievement, educational facilities, educational

attainment, and even eventual adult success.

The relationship between the types of inequality is often not consistent from one group to another. As noted above, minorities and children from lower status backgrounds have both academic achievement and adult incomes that are lower than those of whites and people from higher status backgrounds. In contrast, girls receive higher grades than boys from grade school through graduate school, yet in adult life women earn much less than men. The interface of two categories, such as race and sex, may also produce anomalies. Black women have a higher unemployment rate than would be expected from even the combination of their sex (women have a higher unemployment rate than men) and their race (blacks have a higher unemployment rate than whites). Yet, black women seem to be rewarded more in terms of income for increasing years of education than black men are, even though their average overall earnings are much lower.

What causes these inequities? Some of them may have a physiological basis. For instance, mental retardation obviously influences children's capacity for academic achievement. Physical variables may also influence sex differences in mathematical and verbal achievement. Family background has a large influence on inequalities, especially those related to class. Many differences in achievement and aspirations can be traced to early familial socialization practices, including language development and parental expectations. Other inequalities may be attributed to the economy. Even when women and men have the same educational attainment and similar skills and training they are given different jobs and unequal pay. Whites and non-whites with equivalent educational attainment end up with

drastically different life incomes. Political and demographic variables also influence inequalities. Segregated neighborhoods make integration difficult to achieve. Schools in sparsely populated regions may have more difficulty financing adequate educational facilities.

A prevailing belief in this country is that education may cure many of our societal ills. Historically we have often looked to the schools for solutions to social problems. Yet, the problems have usually remained; the schools could not provide the answer. This is because education is a linking institution. It receives children after their initial training in the family and then prepares children for their adult life in the economy and polity. The economy and polity have a continuing influence on school policies, and children's families influence not just their characteristics upon entering school, but many of the attitudes and aspirations they develop in later years. In general, our country has probably expected too much of schooling in solving social problems. Education cannot alter biological characteristics, family patterns, or the economy.

Yet, educational policies can and do influence some of the inequalities based on race, class, sex, handicaps and region. (See Figure 1 for a summary of policies regarding various inequalities and the different groups under consideration.) Educational policies can help equalize resources of various schools through reallocation of funds and services. Segregation in education may be altered through improved counseling and by regulations that prohibit segregation in schools and activities. Educational policies can also help compensate for biological and familial differences through various means of compensatory education, thus altering inequalities in academic achievement.

*influence of
ed policies
on inequalities*

Inequalities in educational attainment can be changed through improvements in achievement and incentive programs such as scholarships for advanced education. While the economy cannot be directly altered through efforts in education (and most specifically education cannot alter societal variations in income and occupational status), the inputs for the economy can be changed. As more non-traditional students are trained for various aspects of the occupational world, the available pool of candidates will alter, thus eventually perhaps forcing changes in the occupations. If the schools can encourage changes in students' aspirations, these students may also eventually pressure the economic world for change. Thus, while many inequalities cannot be directly traced to education and changes in education cannot deal directly with many of their sources, there is some potential for change.

Policy and Management Issues and Equity

Research at CEPM can deal with the inequities discussed above. Projects sponsored by NIE through CEPM could focus on the development of staffing strategies, policy development and implementation, general belief systems, and distribution of community resources that will be most effective in producing equity. In some cases basic research is needed to determine the nature and sources of inequities so that effective management and policies can be developed. In other cases applied research that involves the analysis of various management procedures may be more appropriate. Examples of possible projects are presented below. Some involve original research; others involve the synthesis and analysis of data already gathered.