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Defining the Influence of Education on Social Cohesion

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Background: Social Cohesion and Development

One lesson from history seems so obvious that it is sometimes ignored. Economic development is made possible through human cooperation. Cooperation offers the possibility for individuals and nations to accumulate or maximize economic gains that have resulted from creative enterprise and the trade that that enterprise engenders. Because of the complexities of measurement, this branch of economics, institutional economics, is not the most well known, but basically concerns the study of these mechanisms for 'human cooperation' and how they work (Eggertsson, 1990; Olson, 1965, 1982; Putnam, 1993; North, 1990; Fukuyama, 1995; Etzioni, 1995). Drawing from this tradition, there seem to be two elements that make cooperation possible. First are the *institutional rules* that guide all types of organizations. Second are the *stabilizing traditions* within the organizations themselves (Figure 1).

To be effective, each type of organization must adhere to institutional rules which pertain to all organizations in its category and at the same time, develop stabilizing traditions for use within each organization individually. Institutional rules include codes for public conduct,

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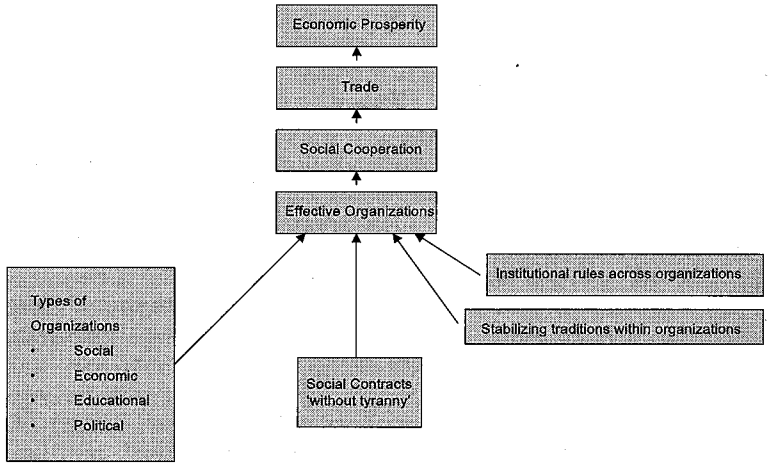
FIGURE 1

The Relationship of Social Cohesion to Economic Prosperity



norms for private behavior, manifest statutes, common law, and contracts among individuals and organizations. An organization consists of groups of individuals bound together for a common purpose. Stabilizing traditions within each organization differ from one another. There are many types of organizations, but, in general, they can be reduced to four basic categories: (i) political organizations (the honesty and transparency of courts, legislatures, and the executive branches of government); (ii) social organizations (shared moral principles of church groups and voluntary associations); (iii) economic organizations (the quality of corporate governance, the adherence to legal procedures when acquiring and promoting employees); and (iv) educational organizations, such as schools, and universities (Almond and Verba, 1963, 1965, 1989; Olsen, 1977, 1982; Coleman, 1988; Heyneman, 2000; Flanagan et. al., 1999; North, 1990).

Each type of organization makes its own contribution to social cohesion. Political organizations arrange the debate and establish the means for public policy. Economic organizations arrange entrepreneurial endeavors and generate income. Social organizations sponsor altruistic endeavors that bind people to moral norms. What about school systems? What functions do school systems have and why do nations invest in them?

Social Functions of Education

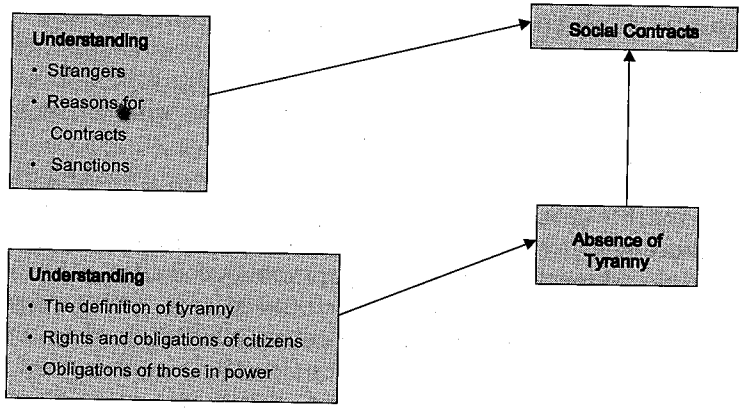
Some suggest that the inability of societies to develop low-cost and

effective self-regulating mechanisms for enforcement of social contracts prevents economic development (Bates, 1989). The concept of a social contract is broader than a legal contract. A social contract includes for instance, a willingness to pay taxes and fulfill other public obligations; it may include the willingness to participate in public affairs, maintain cleanliness of one's property, act responsibly, or be a good citizen. In instances where a society's general philosophy, such as racial tolerance for one's fellow citizens, conflicts with one's private opinion, the social contract of racial tolerance is expected to take precedence, particularly in public *fora*. Countries that lack economic development are often associated with an environment in which contracts are not enforceable by any mechanism, and most certainly are not self-regulating (Figure 2).

People are more likely to adhere to social contracts under certain conditions. They are more likely to adhere to contracts when they do not consider each other as cultural 'strangers'; that is, when they have more understanding of each other as people, as citizens of the same country or as citizens of a 'similar' country where it is believed that the same norms and expectations govern social contracts. The military for instance takes youth from many parts of a nation and helps assimilate them into a set of common norms. Friendship patterns across social groups can sometimes be profoundly influenced by this experience of living and working together in an environment which would not be common outside the military. Public schools are expected to provide a similar experience.

FIGURE 2

The Contribution of Education to Social Cohesion



As Dreeben (1967) reminds us, public schools are also expected to teach the reasons for having social contracts — why is it necessary to pay taxes? Why is it necessary to have laws against drinking and driving? Public schools are expected to teach the sanctions behind social contracts, that is, what one might expect if they choose to not pay taxes, or to drive while intoxicated.

People are more likely to adhere to social contracts when they have a greater understanding of the reasons for those contracts, and are more knowledgeable about the sanctions that may be expected in the event of noncompliance. The most common mechanism for achieving compliance is through the state, particularly through the state's authority to sanction though police, courts and the system of incarceration. But states can sometimes use this authority to sanction to excess; and the state can become tyrannical. In a tyranny, those who run the state force compliance for the sake of their own interest rather than the benefit of society. Totalitarian societies achieve compliance, but that compliance is achieved at the expense of voluntary adherence. The challenge then is for societies to achieve voluntary compliance, that is adherence to the rules without tyranny.

One important function played by public education is its role in reducing the risk of tyranny. School systems do this by helping teach the definition of tyranny, the rights of citizens who believe they are the objects of tyranny; and the obligations and responsibilities of those who are given the authority to use coercive power. In essence, school systems are expected to help make it more likely that a consensus on tyranny will be achieved. Such a consensus makes it more difficult for tyranny to occur because it can be more easily identified and controlled. How can this public consensus come about, and more importantly, how can it be passed to the young?

School systems are likely to affect social cohesion through four mechanisms. If all operate successfully, one might recognize the tangible products of two kinds. Students will have acquired information about the rules and the expected behavior. Secondly, students will have acquired personal experience roughly consistent with the rules and behavioral expectations.

These products can be obtained through four manifest and/or latent mechanisms. First, school systems are expected to teach the rules of the game—those that govern interpersonal and political action. They consist of the social and legal principles underpinning good citizenship, obligations of political leaders, behavior expected of citizens, and consequences for not adhering to these principles (Dreeben, 1968). School systems can also facilitate a student's appreciation for the complexity of issues related to historical and global current events and, in so doing, may

increase the likelihood that a student will see a point of view other than his or her own. By teaching the "rules of the game" in this manner, school systems foster tolerance and lay the groundwork for voluntary behavior consistent with social norms.

Second, school systems are also expected to provide an experience roughly consistent with those citizenship principles, in effect, decreasing the 'distance' between individuals of different origins. The educational experience derives from a wide variety of activities, whether in the classroom, the hallway, schoolyard, playing field, or bus. The degree to which school systems may do this will depend on its ability to design the formal curriculum, its culture, and its social capital. But the purpose for providing these experiences consistent with the principles of citizenship is clear. Both formal and informal social contracts require elements of trust among strangers—to the extent that the socialization of citizens from different social origins allows them to acknowledge and respect each other, that is decreasing the 'distance.' If the educational task is done effectively, this allows political institutions to adjudicate differences and economic institutions to operate efficiently (Lipset, 1959).

Third, school systems are expected to treat all students fairly. If the public perceives that the school system is biased and unfair, then the trust that citizens place in various other public institutions is compromised. For instance, the willingness of adults to 'play by the rules of the game' may be compromised if fairness in the system appears suspect.

Fourth, school systems are expected to incorporate the interests and objectives of many different groups and at the same time attempt to provide a common underpinning for citizenship. Often there are disagreements over the balance between these objectives. These disagreements must be adjudicated. Adjudication can be accomplished through many mechanisms—public school boards, professional councils, parent-teacher associations. The success of a school system is based in part on its ability to garner public support and consensus, and hence its ability to adjudicate differences expressed by different portions of the public over educational objectives.

This is not an easy task. School systems vary in the manner by which different interest groups are accommodated. This is particularly the case when teaching local history. Some teachers avoid areas where problems are likely; some address sensitive areas more fully; others proactively seek out opinions and views to ensure that consensus is reached over what and how to teach. School systems differ also in the success of these efforts. For example, while it is true that the Alamo constitutes an important juncture for Texas and U.S. history, it is also true that motives—on both sides—were multiple and conflicting. And while it is

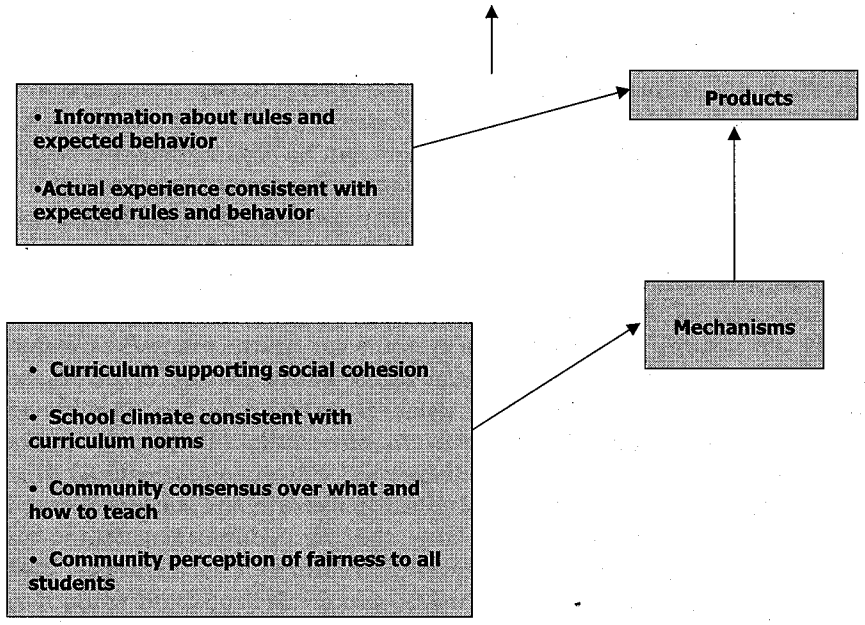
true that civil rights in the American South can be characterized as a struggle for minority inclusion, it is also true that courage on that issue could be found among whites as well as minorities. This ingredient of the school system's contribution to social cohesion concerns the degree to which they help students understand and weigh alternative explanations and incorporate the lessons of multiple points of view without losing a common moral rudder (Figure 3).

These four mechanisms constitute the manner by which school systems might contribute to social cohesion. But education is but one of four categories of social organizations which can make a contribution to social cohesion. To what extent can it be said that school systems make a larger or lesser contribution than political, social, or economic organizations?

Evidence of Performance

Have school systems been successful at fostering social cohesion? The evidence is ambiguous because the influence of education on non-monetary benefits is particularly difficult to isolate from other influ-

FIGURE 3
How Schools Affect Social Cohesion



ences. But there has been some progress in spite of the difficulties (Olsen & Zeckhauser, 1974; Olson, 1977; Duncan, 1976; Comer, 1988; Haveman & Wolfe, 1984, 1994; Wolfe & Zunekas, 1997; Michael, 1982; Wachtel, 1975). Research has included the following: schools' roles in broadening outlook and increasing tolerance and desire to participate in the political process (Lipset, 1959); the association between more and better education and a nation's democratic stability (Almond & Verba, 1963; Puryear, 1994); the connection between educational structures and democratic stability (Meyer, 1970; Kamens, 1998); the degree to which more education is associated with greater voluntary political participation (Verba et. al., 1978; Campbell et. al., 1976; Gintis, 1971; Nie, Junn & Stehlik, 1996); the connection between education and an individual's orientation toward legal behavior and good citizenship (Hahn, 1977; Ehrilch, 1975; Inkeles & Smith, 1974; Torney-Purta, 1995, 1996, 1997; Niemi & Hepburn, 1995); and the association between classroom climate and civic behavior (Torney-Purta & Schwille, 1986; Becker, 1963; Butts, 1980).

There has been comparatively little research on the influence of specific curricula such as social studies or civics on values or behavior (Torney-Purta, Oppenheim, & Farner, 1975; Torney-Purta, 1996). On the other hand, as Lawrence Cremin points out, when placed in context the influence of schools is surprisingly robust. "It is not that schooling lacks potency," he says, "it is that the potency of schooling must be seen in relation to the potency of other experiences" (Cremin, 1976, 36).

There has been little work done on the perception of fairness or the influence of the mechanisms of adjudication (such as effective school boards) on social cohesion outcomes. And there has been no prior work, which has placed these four mechanisms together.

New Challenges for Education

Today school systems face social cohesion challenges that have little historical precedent. Expectations for what students should know and be able to do are not determined by simply economic needs, but also by what it takes to perform the responsibilities of citizenship adequately. Participating in political discourse in the 18th century did not require as much understanding of science or statistics. In the 21st century citizens need to make judgments about issues with strong statistical underpinnings—the evaluation of competing claims over health and the environmental risk, the use of genetically-altered foods, choice of sexual behavior. In essence the citizenship standards for literacy and numeracy have risen (Giddens, 2000).

Also, the foundations for social cohesion have shifted. Well into the

20th century, social cohesion was understood to be the outcome of assimilating peoples of diverse religions, ethnicities, and social groups into a nation with a common language and values. That has changed. A new understanding of social cohesion—taking shape recently—fosters accommodation, not simply assimilation. It often requires compromise and redefinition of the 'typical citizen' from many sides, *including by the majority* as well as minority population.

In some parts of the world, challenges to social cohesion are not a simple extension of growing social diversity. Street violence in Rio de Janeiro, corruption in public service in Asia, the provision of social services by drug lords in South America and by mafia figures in Italy and Russia, the egocentric consumerism among sub-urban youth, these trends pose problems of a different sort (Heyneman & Todoric-Bebic, 2000). In these instances, the task of the public schools is much broader than forging ethnic harmony.

The current challenge of education in Eastern and Central Europe and the former Soviet Union might be analogous to that faced by education in Europe and North America in the early 19th and 20th centuries (Mitter, 1996; Shadrikov, 1993). New nations must be forged, at peace within themselves and tolerant of their, often divergent, neighbors. So far their record of success is mixed.

In fact the influence of school systems are not necessarily positive. School systems are like a sharp tool, a knife, or a saw. School systems can fashion views, which lead to social cohesion, or they can do the opposite. In the case of Sri Lanka, pedagogical materials as early as the 1950s led to the opposite (Nissan, 1996). The dominant historical image portrayed in textbooks was that of a glorious but embattled Sinhalese nation repeatedly having to defend itself and its Buddhist traditions from the ravages of Tamil invaders. Tamils were portrayed as historical enemies. National heroes were chosen whose reputations included having vanquished Tamils in ethnic-based wars. Segregated in their own schools, Tamil textbooks emphasized historical figures whose reputations included accommodation and compromise with the Sinhalese. In neither the Tamil nor the Sinhalese texts were there positive illustrations drawn from the other ethnic group. There were few attempts to teach about the contribution of Tamil kings to Buddhist tradition, or the links between Sinhalese kingdoms and Buddhist centers in India. Language texts were largely monocultural with few positive references to other ethnic groups.

Because texts were culturally inflammatory and because there was no effective effort to balance the prejudice stemming from outside the classroom with more positive experiences, the Sri Lankan schools can be said to have achieved the opposite of the intention of good public systems.

Instead of laying a foundation for national cooperation and harmony, they helped lay the intellectual foundations for social conflict and civil war.

A more recent illustration is provided by the ex-Yuglosovia. Here is a 1994 civics textbook intended for 12-year-olds in Bosnia:

> Horrible crimes committed against the non-Serb population of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Serb-Montenegrin aggressors and domestic chetniks were aimed at creating an ethnically cleansed area where exclusively Serb people would live. In order to carry out this monstrous idea of theirs, they planned to kill or expel hundreds of thousands of Bosniaks and Croats. .... The criminals began to carry out their plans in the most ferocious way. Horror swept through villages and cities.... Looting, raping, and slaughters... screams and outcries of the people being exposed to such horrendous plights... Europe and the rest of the world did nothing to prevent the criminals from ravaging and slaughtering innocent people. (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, 1994)

Whether the events occurred or not is an issue separate from whether the text is appropriate. The public school experience is intended to mold desired behavior of future citizens; therefore citizens of all different groups must feel comfortable about the content. If one group is uncomfortable then the school system has abrogated its public function. This is an example of where that abrogation of public responsibility occurred.

The lessons could hardly be clearer. Many organizations have taken an interest in the problems of social studies and civics education out of professional concern about the possible implications of inter-ethnic and national tension (Byani, et al., 1994). These organizations include UNDP, UNESCO, the European Union, the Council of Europe, UNICEF, the Soros Foundations, and many others (Fogelman & Edwards, 1997; Packer, 1996).

So sensitive have been the threats to peace and stability that military organizations have developed a new concern over education on the premise that inter-ethnic tensions expressed through education could well constitute a risk to peace in the region. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (the OSCE) for instance, established a High Commissioner on National Minorities, based in The Hague. The High Commissioner has already issued recommendations pertaining to the education of the Greek minority population in Albania, the Albanian population in Macedonia; the Slovak population in Hungary, the Hungarian population in Slovakia and the Hungarian population in Romania. In 1996, the High Commissioner requested assistance from the Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations to work on a possible set of guidelines governing the education rights of national minorities. After

considerable discussion and consultation, these guidelines, known as the Hague Recommendations, were published in 1997 and can be added to the many other international conventions and regulations which attempt to identify and to protect the educational rights of children and various sub-populations.[1]

In general these covenants and conventions pertain to the problems of populations that may be subjected to discrimination and prejudice. They concern the right to be educated in one's mother tongue, the right of fair access to more selective training in higher and vocational education, freedom from discrimination, cultural bias, and the like. While these issues are indeed important, effectively they address only one-half of the problem.

The other half of the problem pertains to the rights of the majority or the rights of the national community. Their educational interests are no less compelling: the Kazaks in Kazakhstan (de Young & Nadirbekyzy, 1996); the Latvians in Latvia (Catlaks, Dedze & Heyneman, 2001); the Romanians in Romania, and so forth. What is to protect the national community from extremist versions of history as portrayed by curricula designed by minority populations? What are the rights of the national community for having a sense of compromise and historical dignity ascribed to their national culture by minority populations in their own country? What protection does the national community have against the possibility that a minority community within the same country may encourage loyalty to another nation where their ethnic group is more numerous? The problem of civics education has multiple sources, and therefore must involve multiple solutions. Not all solutions can be incorporated under the auspices of the 'rights of minorities.' None of these conventions address this other side of the equation.

While the notion of public schooling was established in 17th century, it is not true to suggest that the educational challenge in modern era is analogous. The fledgling nation-states of the 17th century required social cohesion, but they often used a central authoritarian system to achieve it (Maynew, 1985). The techniques of nation-building in Africa, Latin America, and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union today are not uniform, but for the most part they have emerged from an era of extreme authoritarianism into one more tolerant of divergence and local opinion. This complicates matters considerably. Not only are nations today faced with achieving cohesion, they are faced with the difficulties of achieving it, for better or worse, through wide spread participation in the rules of engagement and flexibility as to its direction.

Education and Social Cohesion in the U.S. Context

Thomas Jefferson first argued for a literate citizenry in America's fledgling democracy: democracies require that citizens understand political institutions and evaluate the claims of politicians—capacities that would protect the democracy from various forms of demagoguery. By the mid-19th century, however, the role of education had expanded. As immigrants began arriving from non-Protestant countries, Horace Mann's advocacy for the common school was one among several efforts to build a system of public schools that could create one nation from many peoples—peoples who differed not only in class origins, but also in their ethnic and racial origins and religious commitments.

The standards movement of the past decade constitutes, at least in part, a revision of Jefferson's expectations regarding the level of literacy needed by American citizenry. Higher expectations for what students should know and be able to do are not driven simply by economic needs, but also by what it takes to perform adequately the responsibilities of citizenship. For example, participating in political discourse in the 18th century did not require much knowledge of science and statistics compared to the 21st century, where citizens need to understand risk with some statistical sophistication to evaluate the claims regarding environmental warming, genetically altered foods, etc. (Giddens, 2000).

The re-evaluation of the school systems' role in creating a literate citizenry is not, however, matched by a re-evaluation of its role in building social cohesion. Parallel to the changes needed in the levels and types of literacy for citizenship—precipitated by the increasing complexity of public issues—the foundations for social cohesion have shifted. Well into the 20th Century, Americans understood social cohesion as the outcome of assimilating peoples of diverse religions, ethnicities, and social groups into a nation with common values and language. That has changed. The use of Spanish by *both* presidential candidates in 2000 confirms a new understanding of social cohesion—taking shape since the 1970s—that fosters accommodation, not simply assimilation, of diverse groups. According to the most recent U.S. Census the number of Hispanic and Asian persons has increased by over 50%. Diversity in ethnicity and religion is pervasive in small towns as well as large urban areas. Social cohesion must be built among these increasingly diverse populations—a cohesion that constitutes a pervasive commitment to voluntary compliance to broadly constituted social norms and to active tolerance for differences among social groups.

Paradoxically, American concern with the apparent breakdown of social cohesion is not a simple extension of the growing diversity. Rather,

the focus of concern and debate is within schools themselves—schools that on the surface may have considerable racial and social homogeneity, but reveal many social fractures that presumably lead to anti-social behavior. Although national statistics show school violence has decreased, its distribution and causes appear different—namely, more suburban and rural incidents that are unrelated to gang activity. School violence in Colorado, California, and Arkansas, to name a few, led to considerable debate in the media regarding the relative effects of school organization, American culture, and parenting practices on the behavior of adolescents. Currently, lawmakers in Colorado, Washington, and Oregon have legislation pending that would require each school district to have a policy directed at student bullying. Similar legislation has already passed in Georgia, New Hampshire, Arkansas, and Delaware—some requiring mediation, others giving new powers to schools to discipline students.

Yet, anti-social behavior, such as bullying, is not new. It is quite an ancient phenomenon, and it has been a classic character in much of children's literature. What has changed, though, is the institutional charter (Meyer, 1970) accorded to schools in the U.S. (Coleman, 1988; Comer, 1996; Finn, Ravitch, & Fansher, 1984; Bryk, 1988). The discretion, for instance, that Willard Waller's (1932) teachers had to inculcate roles and responsibilities of citizenship has been greatly attenuated by court decisions and the often-adversarial role assumed by parents (Grant, 1988). The links between community and school have been weakened through different catchment areas for schools and dual-income families (Coleman, 1987). Even the new framework for providing welfare benefits has affected how families can be involved in their children's schooling. Other scholars emphasize—usually with different rank orderings—weak parenting skills, fractured school cultures, anomic communities, technological access to hate-group propaganda (such as the Internet), and easy access to weapons (Coleman, 1988; Comer, 1996; Finn, Ravitch, & Fansher, 1984; Bryk, 1988; Putnam, 2000; Bellah, 1996; Kliebard, 1995; Varenne, 1997; Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993; Grant, 1988; Eckert, 1989). Yet, the level of social cohesion in schools is not manifest simply by the presence or absence of anti-social behavior, it is also manifest in positive actions of civility—reflecting trust and tolerance across social groupings of students.

Social cohesion goals are universal expectations of school systems, but two factors significantly complicate their implementation. One is that social cohesion goals are never the only objectives and in fact, school systems such as many in the U.S., hold to objectives such as independence of thought, entrepreneurial action, and inner-directed motivation

which may appear contradictory to social cohesion objectives. As Dreeben points out

> Parents and teachers admonish children to act independently and do their work well; few of them support the idea that people should willingly acknowledge their similarity to others in specifically categorical terms while ignoring obvious differences—denying in a sense their own individuality. (Dreeben, 1967, p. 227)

The second complicating problem is that school systems differ radically in their sources of control. As Gutmann (1987) reminds us, control over every system of education is divided by four legitimate sources of authority: (i) the community including family ethnic, religious and linguistic interests; (ii) the individual, whose interests, particularly at the stage of young adulthood, may diverge from those of the family; (iii) the education profession (which may include what is right for the child from a medical as well as a psychological view); and (iv) the state, including the interests of the economy and wider polity.

These four are all normal sources of legitimate interests. What differs is the degree to which one source of authority has access to the administrative levels of influence. Figure 4 illustrates the distribution of authority across these three sources between the U.S. and France. In France the profession and the central state have quite high degrees of control. In the U.S., with its numerous (often elected) school boards, parent committees and local authorities, the community has access to the mechanisms for exerting considerable influence over the day-to-day activities of the local school system, whereas the education profession in the U.S. by comparison to France, is quite powerless.

This division of authority is important to keep in mind when the question is asked about how effective are school systems at influencing social cohesion? The answer may well depend on how a school system is controlled.

While strong social cohesion is, in and of itself, a desired outcome of

FIGURE 4
Control Over Education

	A	B	C	
	Ethnic Group Religious Community Parents	**Education Profession**	**Central Gov. Authority**	**Local Gov. Authority**
FRANCE	Low	High	High	Low
U.S.	High	Low	Low	High

schooling, its significance extends beyond that public good: levels of social cohesion can also affect the academic achievement of our nation's more vulnerable student populations—those whose commitment to schooling is weak and further compromised in schools with weak social cohesion (Wehlage, et al. 1989; Powell, Farrar, & Cohen, 1985; Oakes, 1995; Ogbu, 1974; Morgan & Sorensen, 1997).

Finally, educators and commentators have argued that schools contribute more to the well-being of children and the larger society than academic achievement, yet the introduction of massive systems of academic accountability have diminished the value of other contributions. This work will create a measure of social cohesion outcomes, and therefore may broaden the discussion over the contributions of schooling, allowing the national debate, for the first time, to include the other important outcomes, which the public expects from its education system.

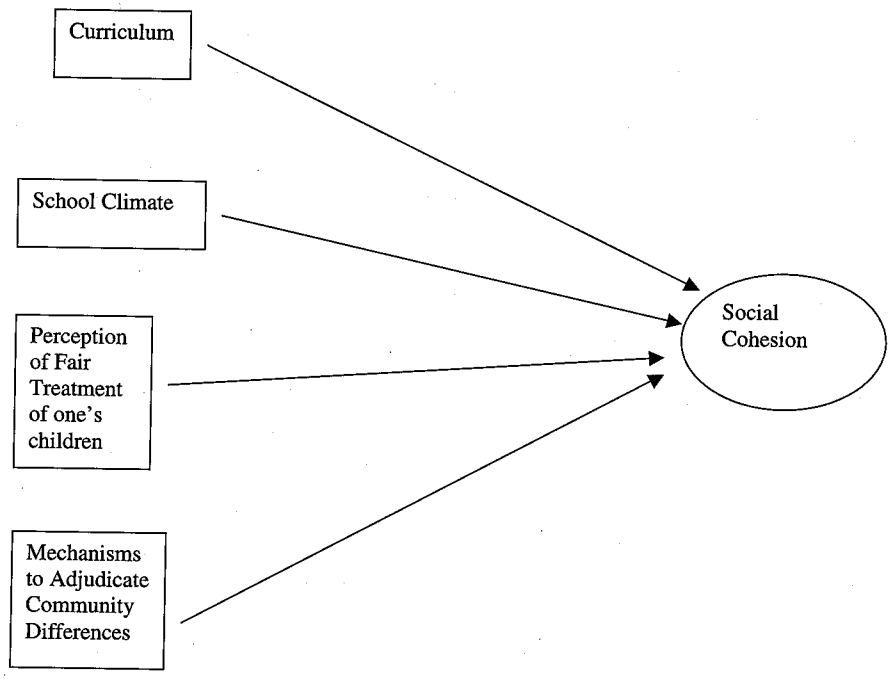
International analyses of citizenship in emerging democracies provide us with a greater appreciation of the role of schooling in building social cohesion. A growing consensus has emerged globally on the nature of the civics education curriculum (Torney-Purta, 1995; Torney-Purta & Schwille, 1986; Torney-Purta, Lehman, Oswalde, & Schultz, 2001). With many new nations aspiring to become stable democracies, the varying conditions that challenge social cohesion are more apparent (Heyneman, 2000; Heyneman & Todoric-Bebic, 2000). Thus, the educational contribution to social cohesion and the measure of social cohesion performance must be culturally specific to the challenge at hand. In the U.S., heterogeneity, geographic mobility, and impersonal social relations present relatively unique challenges to social cohesion.

Quantifying Education's Influence on Social Cohesion

One causal model is shown in Figure 5. Separate from parallel influences of the three other pillars (social, political, and economic organizations), the social cohesion of a community is shown to be directly affected by education through (A) curriculum content (primarily history, civics, and literature), (B) community perceptions of fairness to one's children, (C) procedures available for effective adjudication to members of the school community in order to achieve a consensus over what and how to teach, and (D) the school culture consistent with the curriculum expectations. These are assumed to be attributes of schools or school systems, not individuals, to eliminate some of the difficult dependencies among observations at the individual level (Hannaway and Talbert, 1993).

FIGURE 5

The Influence of Education on Social Cohesion



Curriculum Content

Evidence that curriculum content can affect the social cohesion in a school is longstanding, and the link is rather well understood. The content of the social studies curriculum can foster tolerance for different cultures to the extent that historical events—especially those of social conflict¾are presented as historical dilemmas. On the other hand, if the content is oriented strictly toward constructing evil motivations of one group against another, then the potential to cultivate tolerance is compromised. Similarly, only providing literature or historical accounts that foster an egotistical view—only *my* people, *my* experiences—undermines the development of tolerance (Bennett, 1988). Since the 1950s, western European nations, mindful of such problems, have had a cooperative program that establishes cross-national reviews of history texts to foster the inclusion of the points of view of various nations into any given text. Fostering such tolerance is a central component of our nation's civic standards. As a result, the standards for civics education in the U.S. have been used in Eastern

Europe (Slater, 1997; CIVITAS-International, 1995; Feinberg, forthcoming; Fogelman & Edwards, 1997).[2]

It is assumed that the model to specify educational effects on social cohesion is designed differently to fit each different context. For instance, within the U.S. there are several factors thought to affect curriculum content: (i) academic standards of the state or district; (ii) accountability systems of the state (do they test, what do they test, what are the consequences); and (iii) the certification requirements of their teachers in the relevant fields. In the 1980s, many urban districts adopted multicultural approaches to the teaching of history that affect the methods of teaching historical events. Massachusetts, Maryland, and Virginia are the states best known for establishing an accountability system for the teaching of history.

Perception of Fairness to One's Children

When a community perceives the system of schooling is biased to favor a given social class, ethnic group, or other identifiable social group, then the willingness to "play by the rules" is compromised. Similarly, tolerance between the presumed beneficiaries and victims is likely less. In this case perception is emphasized, since the reality may or may not coincide with the perception, but it is the perception that informs behavior.

Perceptions of equality of opportunity are presumably affected by state and district policies and school practices regarding grouping of students. At the middle school level, grouping is most evident in 8th grade assignments for mathematics and foreign language. A long and rich sociological literature points to the social class effects on tracking assignments at all age levels. (Hirschman & Wong, 1986; Rowan & Miracle, 1983; Slavin, 1987, 1993; Oakes, 1992, 1995; Farkas & Johnson, 1996; Garet & DeLany, 1998; Dauber, Alexander, & Entwisle, 1996; Hallinan, 1994; Kilgore, 1991). Research also suggests that more educated parents seek to establish tracking/grouping policies that favor their children (Johnson, 1980; McGrath & Kuriloff, 1999). Finally, inclusive practices in student activities outside the classroom, disciplinary actions taken by school officials, media coverage of school incidents, and social networks among adults may also affect the perception of equality of opportunity.

A curious, but persistent phenomenon may also affect the perception of equality of opportunity: a special case of relative deprivation. During World War II, sociologists studied the perception of fairness in two military divisions—one with a high rate of promotion, another with a low rate. Members of the division with high rates of promotion were significantly more likely to view the practices of their division as "unfair" compared to those in the division with low rates of promotion. Researchers concluded that where promotions were great in number, the likelihood of having colleagues promoted with merits no greater than one's own merit was greater than in divisions with low rates of promotion, creating a sense of unfairness through relative deprivation (Stouffer, 1949). Similar dynamics can occur within schools with various tracking practices.

School Culture

School culture refers to the rituals embedded in social relationships, ceremonies and traditions that attach members to the school and its mission, and to the norms and beliefs that guide the actions of members. Deal and Peterson (1999) describe toxic school cultures as those that focus on negative values (serving only a few students well, belittling others) and are spiritually fractured. Johnson (1990), in her study of teachers at work, finds all too many teachers in public schools frustrated by the absence of a positive culture that fosters common goals and demonstrates a willingness to confront moral issues. On the other hand, if the school is effective, positive reinforcement may be observed within the autonomous behavior of the students on their own. One illustration:

> While waiting for one of the teachers to meet her in the front office, a researcher was looking at the school photos when a bunch of teenage boys started approaching the phone. The researcher marveled at the serendipity of what they were saying. Apparently they had just been told that they would not stay after school for athletics because it was so cold outside. Referring to how many phone calls each person could make, one tall boy said in a good humored way "we have a two number limit. That means one home phone and one cell phone." He unknowingly had just provided the researcher with an example of ways in which students enforce the rules. He did so, perhaps mimicking the adult voices he so often hears, but by doing so with a sense of humor, he effectively reinforced what was a right behavior. His peers reformed their behavior. (Taylor Haynes, p. 6)

Probably the most developed research tradition that bears upon school culture and its effect on tolerance is that of desegregation. Researchers sought to understand what types of social conditions would indeed increase tolerance (or reduce prejudice) across racial groups. Whether it was at work or school, the most consistent finding was that of equality: when people of different racial groups had interactions that placed them in positions of equality, then increased tolerance was a likely outcome. But if the social positions "assigned" them were unequal,

increased tolerance was unlikely (Slavin & Dickle, 1981; Metz, 1978; Blalock, 1967).

Beginning with Waller's (1932) descriptions of peer cultures in the 1930's, researchers verify the propensity of adolescents to establish oppositional cultures in schools (Coleman, 1961; Comer, 1980). While some researchers have been content to label such oppositional cultures as developmentally appropriate, Eckert (1989) and Bossert (1979) find that school practices can foster such cultures by the way students are managed and rewarded. What is clear is that the presence of oppositional student cultures compromises a school's ability to foster tolerance among various social groups of students.

Bryk, Lee and Holland (1993), as well as Metz (1978) and Johnson (1990) found that the coherence of valued norms among teachers had an important effect on school culture. Catholic schools typically have a great deal of consistency regarding the rules of the classroom, whereas in public schools, those rules vary considerably from teacher to teacher. Such variance leads to greater disregard for all rules, and thus the potential for social cohesion is reduced.

Adjudication

Adjudication procedures refer to the formal and informal methods that a community has of surfacing and addressing grievances. Grievances could be over how to teach a particularly sensitive issue, access to scarce resources, or organizational efficiency. Access to adjudication institutions and the fairness of outcomes are central preconditions for "playing by the rules". Certainly, the literature on social revolution—which constitutes the most drastic refusal to "play by the rules"—speaks to the critical role of adjudication mechanisms (Skocpol, 1979; Sohrabi, 1995; Tilly, 1978). Likewise, the formation of unions in all nations led not simply to better wages, but to the institutionalization of adjudication mechanisms (Burowoy, 1979).

While little research appears to focus on the factors that affect adjudication procedures in schools, we do know that parental SES affects the degree of activism that parents have as advocates for their children (Loveless, 1999). Logically, one should expect adjudication mechanisms to be more responsive to high SES parents.

Data necessary to test this model must be collected by utilizing heterogeneity of techniques and methods. No simple survey will suffice, nor will interviews and observations regardless of their depth, be able to capture sufficient information. Much work needs to be done in specifying the school culture and social capital variables, as well as the differences

in adjudication factors. Obviously, it is also difficult to evaluate those factors thought to have an indirect effect on social cohesion. One would need to evaluate the need for stratifying along certain dimensions, for example, the content of history standards and the presence of an accountability system for those standards.

Summary

From the outset public education has had social cohesion as one of its central purposes. Although there have been attempts to gauge the effects of the education experience on one or another aspect of behavior or attitudes, there has been little effort to date to gauge the impact of education on social cohesion as a whole. The ethnic and religious crises in the former Soviet Union and the challenges to authorities in Latin America and parts of Asia have raised the world's concern. Social cohesion, and whatever can be used to reduce the ill effects of tension and civil war, is now sometimes treated as a part of defense strategy. This new priority has rejuvenated an interest in defining the manner by which these institutions and organizations reinforce social cohesion. This article has tried to summarize recent efforts to define the manner by which education may affect on social cohesion.

Notes

[1] These include the Polish Minorities Treaty of 1919; the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948; the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education in 1960; the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child in 1959; the subsequent UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989; the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in 1950; the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in 1995; the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities in 1992; the Council of Europe Charter on Regional or Minority Languages in 1992; the UNESCO Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice in 1978; the Copenhagen Declaration of the Conference of the Human Dimension in 1990; and the UN Universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 1993.

[2] Civics standards have little to do with the content of the curriculum. Knowing the Bill of Rights is not a part of the standards. The standards consist of the ability to listen effectively to opposing arguments; the degree to which personal behavior is affected by principle, the degree to which one is able to recognize the right of opposing positions to make their case.

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