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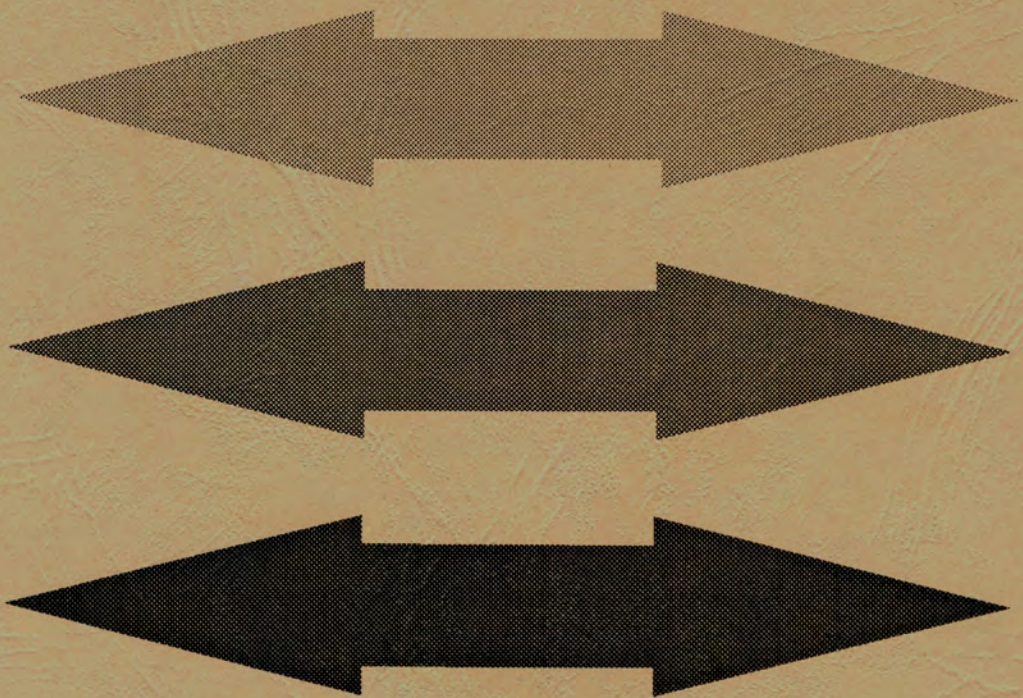

The International Alliance for Invitational Education

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Editorial

An Expanded Vision

The theory proposed and promoted in this journal was first named and is commonly referred to as invitational education. This designation was created when William Purkey and Betty Siegel, founders of this movement, first focused attention on schools, the teaching process, and student learning. Primarily, their aim was to encourage educators to establish relationships that valued students and viewed all students as capable of learning. Invitational education was a natural description for this mission. In the years following the early workshops arranged and led by Drs. Purkey and Siegel, many people from varied professions and around the world attended invitational conferences. As the audience expanded, a broader perspective developed for applying the invitational approach in a variety of institutions and organizations beyond the school setting. Professions such as nursing, business, counseling, and others are now represented among the Alliance membership, and in the process people have expanded the vision for invitational theory and practice.

With this outlook we begin the second volume of our journal. The articles in this issue illustrate not only an expanded vision for invitational theory and practice, but also the international scope of the Alliance for Invitational Education. Three authors are from South Africa, a country whose world-wide notoriety may seem incompatible with the tenets of invitational thought. Indeed, it is revealing that these three educators have embraced this humanistic model as a way of encouraging their countrymen to move the nation forward educationally, politically, and socially. By sharing their research and perspectives in this issue, they enlighten all of us.

In the first article of this issue Cheryl and David Aspy set the tone for an expanded vision by predicting the emergence of the Human Age. They describe the Human Age as a period of evolution when people, institutions, and organizations begin to focus on the tremendous potential of human beings to create beneficial relationships in schools and other settings. During this Human Age, the primary aim is to cultivate relationships and nurture environments in which emerge the higher order behaviors of loving, thinking, and sound physical health.

The second article by Jacobus Kok of Rand Afrikaans University in South Africa explores the relationship between the characteristics of adulthood and the assumptions of invitational theory. Dr. Kok presents an optimistic view of the role invitational education can play for a country attempting to move toward an egalitarian stance for the betterment of all peoples.

In her article about inviting schools in the USA, Trudie Steyn offers a visitor's observations of some common characteristics found among these schools. Also from South Africa, Dr. Steyn summarizes the various roles that administrators, teachers, students, parents, and communities adopt in ensuring that invitational beliefs are reflected in the actions of the school. Her findings have implications for other schools in other places.

A third South African, Patsy Paxton was a visiting scholar at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro this past year. She compares the beliefs of invitational theory with the principles of Total Quality Management (TQM). As she points out, TQM is a model adopted by business and industry through the work and writing of W. Edwards Deming. Now this approach is being acknowledged by educators for its promise in restructuring and reforming schools in the United States. Dr. Paxton's comparison of these two perspectives illustrates the compatibility of the invitational model with other approaches that advocate human worth, dignity, and responsibility.

Carolyn Dickman's article addresses the issue of gender stereotyping and encourages teachers at all levels of education to design strategies that would correct these behaviors. As an inclusive model, invitational education seems an appropriate approach to use in training teachers, parents, and students to avoid discrimination or stereotypical behavior.

In the last article, Henry Peel and Elizabeth Foster emphasize parental involvement in middle schools. Readers who are familiar with recent research on student success are aware of the findings related to parental involvement. Drs. Peel and Foster address this topic in the context of the middle school; a transition period they believe is crucial in the decline of parental involvement in schools. They suggest the invitational model is well suited to help schools design and implement strategies and programs to encourage cooperation and collaboration with parents.

While addressing essentially educational issues, each of these articles contributes to a wider vision for invitational theory by expanding the focus beyond student-teacher relationships. The Human Age in Education, for example, advocates better human relations in all life's endeavors. Likewise, gender issues, goals of adulthood, roles that various populations play in school development, and the effect parental involvement has on student success all propose an expanded frame to encompass the invitational perspective. The potential of the invitational model to provide an understandable structure gives it wide appeal, which makes the mission of this journal all the more important. Clarification of the theory and reports of its application will legitimize the invitational approach and strengthen its usefulness across many settings and varied relationships.

John J. Schmidt, Editor

The Human Age in Education

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American society is riddled with political corruption variously called graft, scams, scandals, or other description. In fact, misfeasance is so widespread a majority of our citizens believe that all optimistic predictions for the human race are examples of Pollyanna thinking. However, in spite of ubiquitous mischief, it is possible to identify clear-cut positive trends in our society. That is, despite the broad road of deviousness there remain constructive events that can lead to healthy outcomes. We need to remember the old truism, "It is an ill wind that blows no good." The purpose of this writing is to describe a path of hope that could become a viable alternative for a significant portion of the educational community, the Human Age in education.

Human beings have a basic need to orientation in a space-time continuum. Indeed, anthropologists, archaeologists and historians have specialized in identifying the time periods through which the Earth has passed. This article identifies a space-time location for educators in order to explicate the positive factors of our present situation and to launch ourselves effectively into our future reality. In short, if we correctly identify our emerging Zeitgeist, it is possible we can cope with it more productively.

One means to orient ourselves can be found in Figure 1 (Carkhuff, 1988), which identifies critical phases of human evolution. Carkhuff has placed humankind currently in the Information Age. A host of other writers concurs with this observation and thus believes that our culture presently is dominated by the press of information.

Carkhuff has illustrated that historical ages often are defined by a characteristic that typifies the most significant accomplishments of the age. Thus, we have the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, the Iron Age, and more recently the Electronics Age and the Information Age; each of these ages has specified either some natural resource or technical capacity that overshadowed all other aspects of that period. It seems remarkable that, as yet, human beings have not had their time history, a Human Age.

						Information
					Electrical	
				Industrial		
			Agrarian			
		Tool Making				
	Homo Sapiens					
Homonid						
3.5 billion Years	14 million Years					

Figure 1
Critical Phases of Human Evolution

Human Age

Even though the historic naming systems have frequently used either natural resources or technical factors to overshadow people, the evolution of human activities has portended the emergence of human beings as the dominant resource of a forthcoming period. It is as if human life has been germinating in preparation for its full flowering. The underlying message is that it can be said that a Human Age has unfolded when, and if, the human race focuses upon fulfilling its positive potential. Thus, the Human Age is: The period when the earth's focus is upon the realization of humankind's higher order potentials, i.e., loving, thinking and sound physical health.

It may be helpful to define the Human Age colloquially by contrasting it with previous ages. For instance, we can imagine a person of the Agrarian Age proclaiming, "Look how our plants are growing!" A person of the Industrial Age might brag, "Look at what our machines can do!" Someone in the Information Age could hold, "Look at the data our computers can produce!" In the Human Age an individual may say, "Look at how well people can live together!"

There are signs that the Human Age is already emerging. One major catalyst for this event is that the limits of machines are becoming more vivid. Scientists are finding that it is seemingly is impossible to give emotions to computers and people still beat those electronic marvels on even the simplest tests of creativity. In short, when the higher order potentials of human beings are compared to those of our most complex machines, human beings arguably are clearly superior.

Therefore, in the long run our wisest ploy is to invest heavily in the development of higher order human abilities.

The foregoing notion is supported by the fact that the human mind is far superior to t of electronic computers. For example, it is estimated that the human brain contains 100 billion neurons and that each is capable of interconnecting with 50,000 others (Diamond, 1984). Our current mental challenges have hardly scratched the surface of the capacity of the human brain. Yet, it far overshadows computers for conceptual thought.

The previous statements indicate that we have much to do before we have tapped the resources within people of us. This is to say that if we are to produce the highest order achievements, people, not machines, will attain them. This understanding is beginning to penetrate the awareness of enough people to generate a critical mass of activists who will lead the commencement of a Human Age. Translated into operational terms, there is a need to devise an educational system that develops human beings' highest order abilities because our fulfillment depends upon it. In many respects the invitational model, developed and promoted by Purkey and others (Purkey & Novak, 1984; Purkey & Schmidt, 1987; Purkey & Stanley, 1991), embraces assumptions about human potential and about a humanistic process for creating beneficial environments. Whatever model or models we choose, a first step is to understand how traditional institutions and beliefs will contribute to or detract from the Human Age. Two such traditions include religion and education.

Religion and the Human Age

The emergence of a Human Age does not mean that people will displace God. Rather, it means a fulfillment of the grand purposes which a loving God has endowed upon humankind. Conversely, if in our thinking we continue to subordinate our highest human activity to the world's natural resources or our technical abilities, we can never achieve God's loftiest purposes for our development into His fullest creation. This high regard for us is reflected in writings such as the biblical assertion that "People are created a little lower than the angels."Thus, within a religious we will unite frame of reference it is only as we strive toward our highest possibilities that with God's aspirations for us. In this sense, our struggle for our optimum development will make us partners with God, not equals, but co-laborers.

Education and the Human Age

The Human Age has vast implications for education. Indeed, such an idea stands in stark contrast to the pedestrian purposes that dominate the present education enterprise. Indeed, such a vision entails some specific alterations in current educational climates and among them are:

I. Liberation rather than control: The educational climate would shift from constricting the conduct of learners to welcoming their divergent attempts to free their constructive talents, however unskilled initially. The interpersonal climate would be warm, supportive and cordial. Non-human resources also would be easily and generously accessible.

II. Consultation rather than indoctrination: The formal school atmosphere would give way to easy informality as helpers become friendly consultants to and encouragers of the learners.

III. Celebration rather than punitive evaluation: Rejoicing over constructive effort would become the hallmark of education while punitive evaluation would disappear. It would be assumed that sound efforts were the preferred path to credible products. The correlated assumption would be that enthusiastic efforts rise most easily from non-punitive, encouraging feedback. Thus, all healthy effort would be greeted warmly.

IV. Surprised reception rather expected prediction: The concern for predicting student outcomes would yield to genuine wonderment at the unexpected creative products of learners.

V. Discussion rather than lecture: The role of teacher-as-authority would yield to teacher as fellow learner. As excited co-learners, teachers and students would engage in dialogue about topics of mutual interest.

VI. Love rather than refection: The mutual recognition of the intrinsic worth of each school participant would replace the competitive atmosphere in which one person's success requires another's failure. Interdependent ventures would be the vogue.

VII. Enjoyment rather than suffering: Laughter and healthy joy would replace the humorless atmosphere of most classrooms. Classes would focus on locating positive events that could be greeted with joyful enthusiasm.

VIII. Beauty rather than ugliness: Lovely sights and sounds would replace the bland austerity of current school climates.

IX. Thought rather than memory: The continuing integration of new data would replace the search for fixed truth. The underlying assumption would be that humankind's understanding of everything emerges and increases thus creating a need to continuously reassess all knowledge. We live in an expanding universe physically, emotionally and intellectually.

The main thrust of the changes required for an education in the Human Age is the formation of an inviting atmosphere rather than prefabricated programs. This direction evolves from a realization that when people's abilities are facilitated they emerge unpredictably and their new needs generate new requirements for

learning facilitation. The specific needs and learning programs must be positioned dynamically as the process unfolds. This does not mean chaos, but rather a continuous matching of needs with resources.

Learning Procedures

A Human Education will require an educational process that differs from traditional classroom instruction. The main difference would be in the relationship between teachers and students. Instruction would take place among cooperative coworkers rather than between the expert and the uninformed. This model already is being applied widely in medical schools including Harvard University Medical School (Tosteson, 1990) where The New Pathways program uses Problem-Based Learning (PBL). The medical students study in groups with a facilitator who prompts their inquiry with appropriate questions. The course content develops from a series of patient cases for which the learners formulate treatment plans. The students discuss their plans with the group and use library, laboratory and human resources as sources of information. The results indicate that when compared to learners in traditional programs the PBL participants like the content better, learn as many facts and acquire more of the attributes of life-long learners. A salient point is that the medical model of instruction (PBL) as well as similar efforts in many other schools already demonstrate that it is possible to deliver an educational experience to learners that is consistent with the goals of a Human Age.

The central aim of a Human Age school would be to immerse all participants in an atmosphere in which their highest order behaviors (loving, thinking, and sound physical health) could emerge in an inviting climate. One assumption is that all people have a potential for high order behaviors and that those attributes are developed most easily in situations that invite the use of highly civilized responses. In short, the hope is to consciously cultivate the characteristics that add to human civilization.

A second assumption of Human Education is that as higher order abilities are emphasized simultaneously and automatically, people will be prepared to participate effectively in fundamental tasks such as earning a livelihood. Indeed, a majority of occupations in this age already require higher order skills. Therefore, in the future, people who do not receive a Human Education will be handicapped vocationally.

Historical Perspective

Human Education is not new. Throughout history, gifted parents and teachers who understood their children's higher order abilities have supplied them with an education similar to the one described in the foregoing section. The exciting, new quality of the present situation is that a larger and expanding number of people

comprehend this type of education and collectively are able to generate a sufficient effort to make it a reality for a growing number of human beings. Therefore, the Human Age may be upon us and civility may soon become a reality for a significant part of the human race. This is to say that more people will think, love and be physically healthy.

Potential of the Human Age

The awesome potential of a Human Age is overwhelming in some ways. Realizing this potential requires boldness and a strange kind of assertive humility that dares to claim the positive promises of our creation. The hope that we can be much more than we are forces us to reach into ourselves to actualize the marvelous potential that lies within. In many ways our previous failures have shaped us toward a cynical view of ourselves. Our collective self-concept borders on that of losers. Seemingly, we doubt the possibility of a better way. Yet, our successes tell us clearly that we are more than globs of purposeless, hopeless protoplasm.

Implementing an educational process for the Human Age will provide the opportunity to give our children something far beyond polluted streams, polluted skies, polluted soil, inadequate medical care, deteriorated libraries and a huge financial burden for each of them. We can leave them a planet where children will have a better opportunity to become loving, thinking, healthy human beings.

Conclusion

In the midst of America's present widespread confusion and despair, a growing group (not a majority) of people is discovering that they have constructive potentials worth developing. In short, they believe they can become loving, thinking, physically healthy human beings in the full sense of those words. In order to attain their goal these people need an education to equip them with the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to realize their highest potential. Since such an approach does not currently exist in most schools, a new educational context has to be created in many communities. Such an effort would focus upon the development of an inviting school climate that encourages and welcomes the emergence of the healthy human abilities of all participants. The invitational approach mentioned earlier is one that espouses this type of philosophy (Purkey & Novak, 1984).

The creation of an educational enterprise for the Human Age is a worthy goal for our nation and is a proper alternative to the short-sighted educational system that focuses primarily on shaping people to meet the needs of our industrial complex. If an educational enterprise were created, it would be a fitting legacy for the generations who may otherwise be remembered historically for pollution,

poorly managed health care systems and a heavy financial burden for every citizen. It is worth the effort.

We have before us two clear alternatives. One is to continue with an educational system that neglects our higher order abilities (loving, thinking and physical health) and remain on a path that confines us to the world of political corruption and self destruction. The other path invites us to create an educational enterprise that will develop our higher order abilities and enter the Human Age with hope and fulfillment. The choice is ours, but it requires a willingness to relinquish our old behavioral patterns and to adopt newer, healthier ones. The gains will be worth the cost.

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Adulthood Responsibility and Invitational Education

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First and third world values characterize the Republic of South Africa, and today its challenge is to integrate a diverse population into a unified and equitable society. Education, naturally, is a key element to attain this goal. To succeed in this regard, common aims and guidelines are needed to give direction to the educational system. The concept of "adulthood," which is considered to be the ultimate aim of education by leading theorists, provides a common denominator for education in the new South Africa. One problem, however, is finding a useful description of the essentials of adulthood—a description that reveals desirable and relevant elements of adulthood in today's society. The need for a clear and relevant profile of adulthood became the catalyst for establishing a research team to conduct an empirical survey to determine the facets of adulthood.

According to educational theory, every child is on his or her way to adulthood—adulthood as defined in a particular environment. An underlying belief of this study was that a description of adulthood could be used to determine the aims of education, the strategies, the curricula, the evaluation instruments, the pedagogical relationships, and the management considerations.

What is adulthood? What is its essence? What is the content of this concept? How is adulthood viewed in South Africa today? The idea of adulthood can be viewed as universal, but its form and content are specific to each particular culture and community. It is a broad and complex abstraction and no one is expected to fully comprehend it. According to Kok and Myburgh (1992), the following aspects of adulthood exist: a sense of responsibility, financial or material values, social obligations, family obligations, labor orientation, environmental responsibility, acceptance of accountability, self-concept, time orientation, civil responsibilities, a sense of religion. To answer the preceding questions and explore the concept of adulthood as it is perceived in South Africa, theories on adulthood were reviewed and an empirical inquiry was planned. In this article, the results from this study are presented and the

potential role for invitational education (Purkey & Novak, 1984) is emphasized.

Design

Four questions were posed in this study:

1) Are all these aspects of adulthood present in the South African concept of adulthood?
2) Are all these aspects of equal importance?
3) How important is each one of them?
4) Is there a rank order of importance amongst them?

To find valid answers to these questions, an empirical study on a country-wide scale was conducted. The eleven aspects of adulthood mentioned above served as the basis on which the research instrument was designed.

Apart from biographical information, the questionnaire consisted of 88 items covering the eleven aspects of adulthood. Each respondent rated these 88 items on a nine point scale from "of little importance" to "very important." The respondents judged each item in terms of how important is it for an adult to be, or to do, certain things.

The questionnaire was sent to 1,945 people. Of these, 722 surveys were returned in a suitable condition for analysis. These 722 respondents consisted of 96 politicians, 253 businessmen and 368 teacher educators. The politicians were representative of the three houses of parliament and of the legislative assemblies of two of the self governing national states. The businessmen were randomly selected from the three major business chambers in the country. The teacher educators were faculty members of 14 teacher training institutions, i.e., colleges and universities. The questionnaires were sent and returned by mail.

An important feature of this group of respondents is that its members are reasonably representative of all the people of South Africa. A wide spectrum of language, cultural, ethnic, and religious groups is represented in this sample. The respondents also represent all the geographical regions of the country. Complete details about this study, the research instrument, and the results, are contained in a comprehensive report by Kok and Myburgh (1992). The data collected in this study were analyzed on computer by means of the BMDP 50 statistical package.

Validity and Reliability of the Survey Instrument

Statistical procedures used to validate the instrument included a first and second order factor analysis. The first order analysis consisted of a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) followed by a Principal Factor Analysis (PFA). Orthogonal axes and varimax rotation were applied in both cases. In the second order analysis the results from the first order analysis were used as input. In this case, again a PCA with orthogonal axes and varimax rotation was applied, followed by a PFA using the Doblimin procedure. The variables derived from the application of this factor analysis were, in the final phase, subjected to an investigation of reliability.

Structural and detailed analyses were executed by applying MANOVA, ANOVA and Scheffe for vectors consisting of three or more variables. In cases where two variables were probed simultaneously, Hotelling's T2-test, followed by the Student t-test, was applied. The X2 test in the detailed analyses was also applied to individual items whenever necessary. The independent variables were age, gender, marital status, income level, language, educational qualification, religious affiliation, and profession.

From the application of this factor analysis, two factors were found: 74 items loaded on the first factor and 14 on the second one. Factor 1 was identified as a sense Q responsibility, and factor 2 was a sense of religion. These two factors were subsequently probed for reliability. The Cronbach alpha- reliability coefficient was calculated by means of the NPSO program (1974). The correlation coefficient of .97 for factor 1 and .924 for factor 2 signified a reasonably high level of reliability. No item was rejected by the application of this procedure. On the basis of the theoretical considerations, as well as the above mentioned statistical analyses, these two factors were primary factors in the description of adulthood.

Results

The following differences were found when the independent variables were used to examine comparisons among respondents:

- Afrikaans speaking respondents, as well as respondents with a language other than English, valued a sense of responsibility more than English speaking respondents.
- Respondents with a language other than English valued a sense of religion more than English speakers.

- Respondents with a post graduate education valued a sense of religion less than other respondents.
- Teacher educators valued a sense of responsibility more than businessmen.
- Respondents living in rural areas valued a sense of religion more than respondents living in urban and semi-urban areas.
- Respondents with a religious affiliation valued a sense of religion more than respondents with no such affiliation.
- Christians valued a sense of religion and a sense of responsibility more than respondents of other religious orientations and those with no religious affiliation.
- Married respondents valued a sense of responsibility and a sense of religion more than respondents with another marital status.
- Respondents from lower income levels valued a sense of responsibility more than respondents from higher income levels.

Rank Order of the Aspects of Adulthood

One important question to be answered in this study was whether all eleven aspects of adulthood were of equal importance in South African society. The eleven factors were ranked according to the averages assigned to them based on respondents' ratings on the nine point scale. Table 1 presents the average ratings and the ranks of these eleven aspects of adulthood.

Table 1

Rankings and Average Ratings for Aspects of Adulthood

Rank	Aspects of Adulthood	Average Ratings
1	Personal responsibility	8.33
2	Family obligations	8.23
3	Positive self-concept	8.00
4	Responsibility for the environment	7.79
5	Attitude towards labor	7.47
6 (tied)	Accountability	7.23
6 (tied)	Social responsibility	7.23
6 (tied)	Financial responsibility	7.23
9	Civil responsibility	7.04
10	Sense of religion	6.82
11	Time perception	5.97

All aspects of adulthood received high ratings by the respondents in this study. The ratings ranged from 5.97 to 8.33 on the nine point scale. From these results, personal responsibility appears to be the highest ranked

aspect of adulthood. This isclosely followed by family obligations, a positive self-concept and care for the environment.

Discussion

This study indicates that the views of the respondents regarding adulthood revolve around two primary factors: a sense of responsibility and a sense of religion. These two factors are reflected in eleven aspects of adult behavior (Kok & Myburgh, 1992). When these eleven aspects, as distinguished in the literature and subsequently applied in this study, are subjected to closer inspection, clearly the golden thread that knits them together, is indeed a person's sense of responsibility: responsibility for oneself, one's family, one's fellowman, the environment, time, financial affairs, and so forth. It is also true that adulthood is associated with no other concept as strongly as with responsibility. This profile may be of value to educational theorists and curriculum planners.

With regard to the second factor, "sense of religion," these results indicate that it may be a separate factor. As such, a sense of religion does not seem to fit with or to be a part of the sense of responsibility. That is to say, the items of the instrument that have a bearing on a sense of religion referred to something other than a sense of responsibility. The question remains; is a sense of religion an integral factor of adulthood? Logically, it follows that a sense of religion is neither an essential ingredient of adulthood, nor does it need to be. By contrast, the findings of this study indicate that a sense of responsibility appears to be an essential aspect of adulthood. Children who are not adults and who are on their way to adulthood can have a sense of religion, and are often religious. Likewise, there are adults who manifest all the aspects of a sense of responsibility without being religious or without such an affiliation. Whether or not it is responsible to go through life without any religious orientation is a matter of one's outlook on life, and therefore is a debatable issue.

Implications for Invitational Theory and Practice

The findings of this study support the beliefs advanced by invitational theory and practice. For example, invitational theory assumes that every person is responsible, valuable and capable and should be treated accordingly. In that responsibility was found in this study to be the essence of adulthood, it follows that an educational paradigm advocating responsibility to oneself and others should be considered paramount.

Invitational theory offers an educational model that clearly embraces this stance. For this reason, as a result of this country-wide study, the invitational philosophy was proposed as a framework for the educational system in South Africa.

Responsibility is the essence of invitational theory and practice. It encompasses both value and ability. Consequently, it is contradictory to treat someone as responsible, yet not treat that person as valuable and as able. When a person is treated in a responsible manner and expected to behave likewise, this conveys to the individual that he or she is valuable and able to assume certain responsibilities.

In countries with diverse populations (the majority of nations fall into this category), it is imperative to find common values among the various languages and ethnic groups in order to prevent discrimination and hostility. Such a stance promotes cooperation, understanding and mutual acceptance. Invitational theory offers a paradigm that can bridge gaps between people, further cooperation, and develop the potential of all for the benefit of oneself and society as a whole. A country that sees adulthood as the product of its educational system, and views invitational theory and practice as the framework within which to deliver the desired product, has a fair chance to become a winning nation. That is the dream and an imperative goal for South Africa; to become a winning nation for all its peoples (Sunter, 1987).

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The Manifestation of Invitational Theory in Inviting Schools

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Schools can be described in many different ways and by many different actions. "They are places where people work, people play, where people make friends, people get hurt or annoyed, where people are forced to go, people love to go, where people waste their time, and where people learn" (Gaffney, 1991, p. 12). Schools can also be regarded as places where people are invited to learn and to realize their relatively boundless potential (Purkey & Novak, 1984). To achieve this aim, it is important that an atmosphere conducive to learning and development be created in schools.

Every year many schools around the world and especially in the United States of America are awarded the Inviting School Award by the International Alliance for Invitational Education. Schools that receive this award distinguish themselves by practicing the assumptions of invitational theory. They complete questionnaires and submit other documentation to illustrate how they have incorporated the beliefs of invitational theory into educational practice.

This article summarizes visitations, observations, and interviews performed at eleven schools that were awarded the Inviting School Award in the U. S. The author performed this field research to determine ways that these schools incorporate an invitational philosophy. In particular, this study examines how two assumptions of invitational theory manifest themselves in these eleven schools. These two assumptions are: (1) People are able, valuable and responsible and should be treated accordingly; and (2) Education is a collaborative, cooperative relationship. To illustrate how these assumptions are manifested, this field study focuses on some mottoes of these schools, and, more specifically, to the variety of different ways these schools have implemented invitational theory in practice.

Methods

A list of schools in the U. S. A. that have received the Inviting School Award was obtained from the International Alliance for Invitational Education. None of these schools were familiar to the researcher. Ten schools were selected based on their availability (some schools were enjoying spring vacation during my visit to the United States), their location (they had to fit a feasible itinerary during a limited stay in the states), and type of schools available (rural and urban schools, and schools with different grade levels were included in the study). An eleventh school was included when an official invitation to visit was extended to the author.

Of the eleven schools finally selected for this field study two were high schools (grades 9-12), five were elementary schools (kindergarten through fourth or fifth grade), and four were elementary/middle schools (kindergarten through eighth grade). The schools were located in two states, New York and North Carolina. The eleven visits took place during the month of April in 1992.

An open-ended questionnaire was sent to the principal of each school before the visits. This procedure of sending the questionnaire beforehand gave the researcher ample time during the visit for an in-depth interview with the principal or other administrator, and allowed enough time for observation at each school site. Various documents, including student handbooks, parent brochures, letters to parents, staff development programs, appraisal form for staff members, and examples of rewards to students, formed part of the data collection process. Photographs were also taken at each school.

Ten days of approximately five hours per day were spent visiting each school, with the exception of one day when two schools were visited. Eleven administrators and eleven staff members designated by the principals were interviewed at the schools. Impromptu discussions with other staff members also took place at each of the schools. Each principal was asked to identify the motto of the school, and to provide one characteristic that best highlighted the nature of the school.

Findings

Mottoes

During the interviews with the administrators it became evident that the mottoes of these schools implicitly reveal the inviting posture and atmosphere that each school strives to attain. Many of these mottoes acknowledge and promote the importance of students and their ability to learn. The mottoes of one school for example stated that "All children can learn and are loved." At another school, an administrator

emphasized that "We want every child to learn and succeed in school. We will not quit until all children succeed." One of the high schools noted that its staff is trying to overcome the distance between the "haves" and the "have nots" by "making the school inviting and meaningful to all." This staff also reflected the belief that their school is a place "where every student can succeed."

The caring aspect of these mottoes is also apparent. Phrases such as "caring concern" and "learning is fun" illustrate an important belief of these schools. One staff member commented that "The school is here for the child, and every effort is made to promote academic learning and self-esteem." Repeatedly in these interviews it was noted how the mottoes of these different schools all set a similar stage on which to embrace the beliefs of invitational theory.

People Are Able, Valuable and Responsible and Should Be Treated Accordingly

Educators' personal and professional behavior, among themselves and with others, reflects whether or not they accept this assumption (Purkey & Novak, 1984). From the questionnaires, observations and interviews in this study, this author found that these eleven schools adhere to this principle. For all these schools the ability, value and responsibility of students are paramount to a healthy learning environment. One administrator summed up the situation this way: "All students are considered able to learn and every effort is made to assist them through regular instruction, recourse classes, and tutorial programs. Each student's contribution to learning and to the total community is considered valuable. Students are encouraged to make appropriate choices and responsible decisions."

Inviting schools strive to respect every student for his or her individual self-worth, and therefore recognize the individuality of each student. This recognition has certain implications for the student. In this regard one interviewee in an elementary school commented, "Attempts are made to teach children that they are accountable to themselves for their decisions."

One school formulated a "Student Bill of Rights," including seven aspects that acknowledge, value and respect the uniqueness of the student. Two examples are: (1) The student shall be treated with respect and shall be encouraged to treat others with respect, and (2) The student shall be given an opportunity to be heard in his or her own behalf before any disciplinary action is taken by the school staff.

Students who have distinguished themselves academically and in other endeavors, or who have shown improvement in areas such as behavior and attendance are honored for their performance. One school displayed exceptional performances and improvements on a special bulletin board in a showcase.

Another posted the "Citizen of the Week" for each class, and a third school used quarterly certificates and television announcements for all "good citizens" to acknowledge their achievements and accomplishments. One of the schools awarded the efforts of teachers by electing the "Teacher of the Year" whose photograph was displayed in the foyer of the school.

All the schools visited in this study value the contributions of students in various areas of decision making. Some schools provide students with opportunities to participate and contribute to school improvement, thereby acknowledging their ability to help create a learning environment conducive to learning. For example, two schools have surveyed students, parents, and staff members and asked them to identify areas of needed improvement.

Although the eleven schools revealed many similarities in how they incorporated this assumption into their school philosophies and practices, some unique strategies are highlighted here. In one elementary school, the principal acknowledged the importance of students by saying that they "are not empty vessels; we can learn from them." The following examples illustrate this stance:

- Giving students the opportunity to plan their own cafeteria menus
- Asking applicants for teaching positions to present lessons to students in class and using students' opinions in the final decision to recommend a suitable candidate
- Allowing students to offer suggestions for school improvement by writing letters to the school principal

All the above examples and many others gathered by this researcher indicate that the assumption of valuing students' ability and responsibility manifests itself in the practices of inviting schools.

Education Is a Collaborative, Cooperative Relationship

Purkey and Novak (1988) stressed the importance of involving people in the education process. Furthermore, they observed the moral and ethical issues involved in doing things with people as opposed to doing things to people. People are surely entitled to a voice in their own destiny.

According to this assumption, there are sound reasons for including the person involved in the education process. One of the schools in this study embraces a motto that begins, "Together we can...," an indication of the importance of involving many people in educational decisions. One administrator commented that if "we all work together we can produce good results" because "success in school is a result of cooperative planning and sharing of responsibilities." Successful education depends on the contribution of many people. The parents of students, parent organizations, peers, other staff members, and the community all

have important contributions to make. The involvement of all these parties illustrates that education is a collaborative, cooperative relationship.

The eleven schools in this study used a variety of practices to demonstrate their adherence to the assumption that education is a collaborative effort. These practices focused on the roles of the school principal, faculty, students and their peers, parents, and the community.

The Principal's Role

The principal has a vital role in the collaborative process. Interviews found that the principal acts as "facilitator and booster" and is responsible for setting the "climate in the school." In sum, the principal fulfills an indispensable role in creating an inviting atmosphere in the school.

The data gathered in these visits indicate that inviting schools place high value on the visibility and availability of their principals. Swymer's (1986) observation that "The time has come for American school principals to leave their offices and address the major stumbling blocks to the success of American schools—school tone and atmosphere" (p. 91) is reflected in these inviting schools. Many principals and their assistant principals were observed outside school buildings welcoming students, staff and parents on their arrival in the morning. This strategy has the dual purpose of ensuring the safety of others and at the same time establishing strong personal relationships. One principal reported that the bus driver is the first person to meet a child on the way to school and "I want to be the next." By establishing this type of posture, principals and other administrators are able to feel the "pulse of the school" and prevent difficult situations from inhibiting the educational mission of the school.

In the schools in this study, the principals were also regular visitors to classrooms. One Principal emphasized this visibility by commenting that "classroom visits are made daily." In this study, principals were observed receiving the smiles of students and staff members, and in the case of one elementary principal the hugs of several second graders. At no time was an uneasiness observed on the part of students or staff members towards these administrators. When visits to classes were made, teachers and students usually continued with their work as if no interruption had occurred.

Principals' regular visits to classes keep them informed about educational activities. During the visit, the author observed that principals knew exactly which teachers were responsible for what type of lesson, for which grade level,

and during what period of the day. Some of them were able to mention these details from memory without having to consult a school schedule. Surely this is the hallmark of an administrator who collaborates and cooperates with the school staff.

The Staff's Role

Collegiality and professional development are two important characteristics of inviting schools that reflect a spirit of collaboration and cooperation. In this study, each school created and implemented strategies and programs to foster collegiality and development. For example, in one elementary school, a program called "Peer Coaches" met monthly and teachers as coaches provided support for their colleagues. Also in this school, staff development is viewed as a collaborative effort to focus on essential knowledge and skills. According to one interviewee, "These programs have emerged because teachers have been supported and encouraged to try new programs, take risks, and use their strengths to teachers others."

One of the high schools had an "Incentive Committee," consisting of volunteer teachers who create, develop, and organize various activities and programs in the school to support their colleagues. Usually, teachers are isolated in classrooms and do not have much interaction with friends and cohorts. Through the Incentive Committee, teachers become the facilitators of change charged with enhancing the total learning environment of the school.

In another program, the "Teacher/Buddy System," every teacher in the school has adopted a student "Buddy," who may be at risk of dropping out of school. This Buddy System encourages relationships that go beyond the school campus. For example, a teacher calls when a student is absent from school and provides support and encouragement in a variety of ways.

The Parents' Role

Data from this study indicate that all the schools value parental participation in assuring the education of their children. The role of individual parents in the education of their children, as well as group activities for parents, is advocated by all these schools. One school noted the increase in parental involvement since receiving the Inviting School Award.

Two schools use folders to inform students and parents of programs, services and policies. Other schools provide parents with handbooks containing necessary information. This information includes important programs, services, and

policies, as well as information about parenting strategies and the importance of helpful home-school relations.

Some of the inviting schools are actively involved in recruiting parent volunteers. For example, one school provides a detailed volunteer handbook. A variety of projects in these schools are coordinated by parents. These include cultural arts activities, reading enrichment programs, and tutoring services. Parents also participate in decision making committees such as those responsible for cafeteria and nutrition, school rules, cultural programs, curriculum maters, and health and safety. At one school, the psychologist trained a Parent Support Group as an outreach team of parents to help and assist other families.

Inviting schools believe that it is important to help parents develop effective parenting skills. Many of the schools in this study held parent awareness meetings and workshops on a variety of timely topics. At one school, these programs are coordinated by a local pediatrician and his staff. Another school had a display cabinet that contains materials for parents. These materials cover a variety of topics about parenthood and home-school relations. This school also has a special bulletin board with copies of selected articles, which are available free to parents.

The findings of this study show that inviting schools strive to create an environment where parents feel welcome and are encouraged to participate. These schools acknowledge the vital importance of parental participation in school and the valuable contribution they make to a child's learning at home and school.

The Community's Role

As with the other elements that illustrate collaboration and cooperation, the community has the potential to make a valuable contribution to the educational process. The inviting schools in this study recognize this potential and create procedures and programs that include community participation. In many of the reading classes in the elementary schools, people from retirement centers volunteer as helpers and tutors. These retirees have the time and patience to share with children, which in turn makes their lives more meaningful. Some of these older citizens become substitute "grannies" for the school children. For example in one elementary school an association of retired citizens adopts children who need extra attention, and members bring children's gifts on holidays, birthdays and other special occasions.

The inviting schools in this study rely on the active involvement of the community. Some examples of ways in which these schools involve community groups and agencies include:

- A trainer from a county Drug Free Association who leads classes in special "rap" sessions to keep the school drug free.
- Varsity athletes against drug abuse conduct class meetings and assemblies.
- Guests from local agencies and businesses share information with students. For example, a chemical company, a poison control center, the police department, an alcohol prevention program, and the fire department all presented programs in one school during the year.

A school is part of a community, and every community is a reflection of the schools in it. Data from this field study supported the belief that close cooperation between the schools and the community is essential in inviting schools.

The Students' Role

Inviting schools value the cooperation and collaboration of students, both individually and in groups. Although the role of principals, teachers, parents, and community is important, the role of students in helping students cannot be overlooked.

Students' contributions in inviting schools take many forms. For example, making use of "Big Brothers," "Peer Helpers," and "Peer Pals" programs is a popular practice found in many of these schools. Students are trained in helping new students, tutoring others, and lending an empathic ear when classmates are in need. Students usually feel more comfortable when talking to peers about less serious problems. These helping relationships benefit both the peer helper and the student. They also establish a referral network for school counselors. Peer helpers offer the first line of assistance and encourage their classmates to seek additional help from the school counselor.

All the facets of cooperation and collaboration described above pull together in creating beneficial school environments. Each of these elements of the school community is a valued partner in the total program. As such, education is a cooperative venture that capitalizes on the potential of everyone and every institution to help children learn. This study found that administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the community all share a vital role in an inviting school.

Conclusion

This article highlights a few findings from a field study of eleven schools awarded the Inviting School Award. Specifically, the findings describe programs and practices established by these schools to address two assumptions of invitational theory. Through questionnaires, interviews, and observations this study found that inviting schools are successful in creating environments where

people, especially students, are welcomed and invited to realize their boundless potential. In these schools the beliefs that people are able, valuable and responsible, and that education is most effective as a cooperative relationship, are paramount to their mission.

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Total Quality Management and Invitational Theory: Common Ground

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Since the early 1980s there has been growing dissatisfaction around the world, but especially in the USA with existing school practices and procedures that have alienated schools from students and communities. This general dissatisfaction has precipitated the development of alternative education models. These models that have resulted largely from paradigm shifts in how people view the purpose and function of education.

The invitational model emerged as a reaction to existing educational practices and as an approach for altering patterns of interaction at all school levels (Purkey & Novak, 1984; Purkey & Schmidt, 1987). The invitational model examines the qualities of messages that teachers and students send, receive and act upon in the school setting. The global aim of the invitational approach is "to make school the most inviting place in town" (Purkey & Novak, 1984, p.2).

Another approach to the educational process that has emerged in current literature is Total Quality Management (TQM), developed by the American physicist and statistician, W. Edwards Deming. TQM has been applied in business and industry for several years and recently has received attention of educators.

In this article, I propose that invitational theory and Total Quality Management are not mutually exclusive approaches for education. Rather, on close examination of the two, clearly these two philosophies share many common concepts and beliefs. To understand the points of comparison of invitational education and TQM, it is necessary to know the basic assumptions of both theories.

Invitational Theory

Briefly, invitational theory advocates for personal and professional practices that transform and energize the people, places, programs, processes and policies involved in educational and other types of helping

relationships. Its goal is to establish environments that intentionally invite people to realize their full potential. Invitational education is the specific application of this theory of practice in school settings.

The invitational approach encourages empowerment, growth and development by invitations, which are defined as the process of extending positive messages to oneself and others (Combs, Avila & Purkey, 1978; Purkey, 1978). As such, it rejects the psychoanalytic belief that behavior is the result of unconscious forces, as well as the traditional behaviorist view that behavior is caused by stimulus, response, reinforcement and reward. Invitational approaches operate according to four fundamental assumptions common to helping relationships as well as the beliefs of perceptual psychology and self concept theory: trust, respect, optimism and intentionality (Purkey & Schmidt 1987). These four characteristics provide a consistent "stance" by which people create and maintain environments that encourage the optimal development of empowered individuals.

Total Quality Management

TQM is a leadership approach that conceptualizes organizations and the roles of their employees in new ways. Deming (1986) worked with post-war II Japanese industrial leaders. His aim was to boost Japan's crumbled economy by teaching the principles of quality management. "We see the result today, as the names of Japanese products have become synonymous with quality and a remarkably high degree of customer satisfaction" (Lockwood, 1992, p. 2).

The TQM process is more a philosophy than a blueprint for action. It rejects the concepts of competition, production ranking, performance evaluations, and hierarchical structures that pit management against workers. Instead, TQM promotes cooperation and a team approach that encourages employee input, a foundation for customer satisfaction, and the cautious use of statistical techniques. In this model, statistics simply provide data for decision making to promote a quality product as well as employee satisfaction.

Myron Tribus (1987), a colleague of Deming, provided a compelling argument for applying TQM principles in the school setting. In his words, "quality in education is what makes learning a pleasure and a joy" (Lockwood, 1992, p. 3). Tribus pointed out that while some measures of

student performance may increase as a result of threats and competition, these negative approaches will not produce a healthy attachment to learning. Furthermore, Tribus noted, "It takes a quality experience to create an independent learner" (Lockwood, 1992, p. 3). Independent learners in turn become motivated to steadfastly seek quality for themselves, and this process also creates increased self-esteem and confidence.

Deming (1986) listed 14 points for the effective application of TQM in businesses. Lockwood (1992) modified these original 14 points to form a framework for the application of TQM principles in schools. The following list is a facsimile of these 14 points. Quality schools:

1. aim at creating the best quality students who will take up meaningful positions in society.
2. have managers who become leaders for change.
3. abolish grading and the harmful effects of rating students.
4. provide learning experiences to create quality performance
5. minimize the total cost of education by working to improve the relationship with student sources and the quality of students coming into your system.
6. consistently strive to improve the service provided to students.
7. institute on the job training for all: teachers, administrators and students.
8. institute leadership rather than "boss management."
9. create an environment that is free from coercion and fear.
10. encourage team teaching and, by so doing, eliminate the barriers between teachers or departments.
11. eliminate competitive slogans, exhortations and pull-out programs since these breed adversarial relationships.
12. eliminate work standards (quotas) as well as adherence to the "normal curve" model.
13. change the focus in education from quantity to quality and by so doing remove barriers that deprive students, teachers and school administrators of their pride in workmanship.
14. involve everyone in transforming the school into a quality environment.

A Comparison of Invitational Theory and TQM

INVITATIONAL APPROACH	TQM APPROACH
Aims at promoting individual perceptions, attitudes and behaviors the individual's self-esteem.	Places students squarely at the center of, and in charge of, their own learning.
Aims at promoting individual perceptions, attitudes and behaviors that foster the acceptance and valuing of others.	Rejects the conventional role of the teacher as the sole authority and the dispenser of knowledge.
Reflects a philosophy of engendering the self-concepts of all people.	Reflects a philosophy of empowering people.
Uses a systematic approach that aims at inviting every individual to realize the boundless potential within.	Uses a systematic approach designed to enhance the individual's ability to learn and serve.
A holistic approach that focuses on everything and everyone in context.	A holistic approach that deals with both classroom practices and school management and the roles of all the various individuals involved in the education process, from parents to school administrators.
Adheres to the fundamental principle of respect; the practice of viewing others as capable, valuable, and responsible.	Rejects competition, pull-out programs, standardized tests and performance evaluations as processes that alienate people from each other.
Adheres to the fundamental principle of optimism; the basic belief that all children can learn and that all human	Encourages students to use their own own initiative. Believes that all children can learn provided they accept thebeings possess relatively boundless potential.

Adheres to the fundamental principle of trust; a collaborative, cooperative process, where process is as important as product.

Invites students to realize their potential.

Adheres to the fundamental principle of intentionality; meaning that students learn best with policies, processes, places, and people who intentionally strive to make the learning process an invitational one.

learning material into their "quality world."

Rejects the idea of schooling based on competition and ranking. The teacher is an enabler rather than a person who "does something to someone else."

Rejects threats and coercion to achieve educational aims.

Focuses on intentionally creating an educational environment in which students feel accepted into their quality worlds.

Conclusion

There are several similarities between invitational theory and Total Quality Management. First, both are holistic approaches that deal not only with classroom practices, but also with the broader issue of school management. Each also values the essential roles of all who are involved in the education process. Student input, teacher collaboration, and parental involvement are highly valued.

Second, both theories reject school practices based on coercion, threats, competition, and ranking. Instead they stress the cooperative nature of the education process, from student group projects to team-teaching.

Both approaches emphasize a teaching and learning process in which students are continually called upon to use their initiative. As such, the teacher becomes the facilitator instead of "someone who does something to someone else" (Lockwood, 1992, p5).

Fourth, invitational and TQM approaches to education stress the inclusiveness of the education process from the very gifted student to the educationally disabled student. Essentially what this means is a rejection of exclusivity, tracking, and pull-out programs that label students.

In essence, what we see in both of these approaches is a paradigm shift in the way that people view and value the education process. Instead of seeing students as vessels into which knowledge is poured, we view

students as "customers" of the education process, participating and cooperating in their own learning.

As schools struggle with issues of student achievement and teacher accountability, educators have been more receptive to new approaches such as TQM and invitational education. According to Horine (1992), "More and more educators are embracing the principles and tools of TQM as a basis for achieving excellence in America's schools" (p. 38). Similarly, the invitational approach offers another viable alternative to traditional, outdated educational practices.

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Gender Differences and Instructional Discrimination in the Classroom

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Sharlene George had done exceptionally well in school. She had straight A's, had 99th percentiles on her GRE, and had published as an undergraduate. She applied to several graduate science programs, among them Stanford. At the culmination of her interview there she was interrogated by the head of the department, who was at the moment a "famous man." "Miss George, do you know why I'm interviewing you?" Sharlene replied that she presumed it was because her records were superlative and she was so clearly a fine candidate for graduate school. "No," the star said. "That's not why at all. It's because this year (it was 1967, the height of the Vietnam War) I'm reduced to the lame, the halt, the blind and the women" (Gornick, 1990, pp. 96-7).

While many occupational barriers have fallen, the US. work force is still almost entirely sex-segregated. Women are clustered primarily in low-status and low-paying clerical, retail sales, and service jobs often termed the "pink-collar ghetto" (Ehrhart & Sandler, 1987). Women are underrepresented at the other end of the occupation spectrum. At least 75% of the jobs in the higher paying professions are held by men (Bureau of the Census, 1984). The percentages of women in nontraditional fields have increased but often this has occurred in lower level positions within a category (Bureau of the Census, 1984). For instance, about 60% of white males but only 17% of white females work in what the Census Bureau terms "professional and technical" jobs. This 17%, however, work primarily in only five of the fifty jobs that comprise the "professional and technical" category.

A majority of females have not elected to pursue careers in science oriented professions (National Science Foundation, 1988). By the time they are sophomores, only 10% of the girls compared with 25% of the boys express interest in the natural science. By the end of high school, about one-fifth of the boys but only one-twentieth of the girls continue to indicate a potential career interest in these fields (Shakhashiri, 1990). In academia, women are underrepresented on both science and mathematics faculties, even in relation to the number of women trained in graduate programs (Koshland, 1988, Oakes, 1990). Among academic scientists, men are far more likely than women to hold tenure track positions, to be promoted to tenure, and to achieve full professorships (National Science Board (NSB), 1987). This is true even when analysts control for factors such as field of specialization, quality of graduate

school attended, and years of experience beyond their doctoral degrees (NSB, 1987). Women are also underrepresented in the science, mathematics, and technology work force. Women scientists are underutilized in the work force compared to their male counterparts. Among scientifically trained women in 1986, 25% of the women, compared with 14% of the men, were employed in work unrelated to science (National Science Foundation, 1988).

One way to decrease these discrepancies is via education and teacher encouragement to enter in the highly paid and often prestigious professional fields including science, engineering, law, computer science and technical fields, medicine, and mathematics. To accomplish this, many educators need to examine and modify their current classroom practices.

Disinviting Behaviors of Teachers

Many of us, as faculty members, treat men and women differently. Faculty members may communicate limiting preconceptions about appropriate and expected behavior, abilities, career directions and personal goals which are based on sex rather than on individual interest and ability (Hall and Sandler, 1982). Faculty members of both sexes may ask questions and look at men students only for response (Thome, 1979). Some faculty tend to ask women lower order factual questions while reserving higher order critical thinking questions for men (Sadker & Sadker, 1982). Some professors interrupt women students more often than men students or allow women to be easily interrupted by others during class discussions (Hall & Sandler, 1982) while praising female students for being polite and waiting their turn (Eccles & Jacobs, 1986). In addition to the subtle forms of discrimination enumerated above, more overt behaviors discourage female students. These may entail disparaging comments about women as a group and the use of sexist humor or demeaning sexual allusion (Hall & Sandler, 1982).

Discriminatory teacher behavior does not begin in the college classroom but rather with the advent of schooling. Most K-8 teachers, almost all women, suffer from inadequate preparation in science so that they fear teaching science and lack confidence in their ability to do so (Weiss, 1989). These teachers model for females a fear of or feeling of helplessness with science or mathematics thereby saying to them that it is natural for them not to like or be good at these subjects (Vetter, 1992).

Research from the past twenty years consistently reveals that males receive more teacher attention than do females (Brophy & Good, 1974; Jones, 1989; Lockheed, 1984; Lockheed & Harris, 1989; Sadker & Sadker, 1986b; Spaulding, 1963). The pattern begins in preschool with teachers conferring more attention, more instructional time and more hugs to male students and persists through the twelfth grade (Ebbeck, 1984). According to Ebbeck (1984) this pattern occurs, in

part, because males exact more attention from teachers by calling out answers eight times more often than females in the elementary and middle grades. Teachers typically listen to boys' comments when they call out but girls are usually corrected (Sadker, Sadker, & Thomas, 1981). Sadker & Sadker (1985) found that even when boys do not proffer answers, teachers are more likely to request responses from them.

The quality of teacher contacts varies between the genders. Boys receive more teacher reactions of praise, criticism and remediation (Sadker & Sadker, 1986a). Baker (1986) reported that in secondary science classrooms more precise teacher comments were rendered to males than to females in terms of both scholarship and conduct.

Most studies on the interaction between teachers and students do not differentiate among subject areas. However, Kahle (1990) has recently documented that teacher student interactions in science classes are particularly biased in favor of boys.

Research has demonstrated that, from preschool on, the activities chosen for classes appeal to boys' interests and the presentation formats selected are those in which boys excel or are encouraged more than are girls (Fennema & Peterson, 1987). Investigators have found that during lectures teachers ask males academically related questions about 80% more often than they question females. The patterns are mixed in laboratory classes (Baker, 1986). Science teaching at all levels, and increasingly from elementary to secondary levels, is dominated by textbooks, teacher lectures, workbook exercises, and writing answers to questions (Goodlad, 1984). These strategies generally focus on presenting knowledge and skills in isolation, rather than in the context of real life problem solving. Johnston and Aldridge (1984) suggested that the abstract character of instruction may be a fundamental problem in science and mathematics education. Women tend to have a greater interest in people than in things and respond more positively to ideas in context (field dependence) than in isolation (field independence) and would, therefore, respond more negatively than white males to the typical type of instruction found in science classrooms (Oakes, 1990).

There is also direct evidence that boys benefit from conventional teaching strategies (e.g., whole class instruction and competitive reward structures), and girls benefit from strategies using cooperative and hands on activities (Eccles, Maclver, &

Lange, 1986). Peterson and Fennema (1985) found that competitive classroom activities contributed to boys' mathematics achievement, but were detrimental to girls' achievement. In contrast, cooperative activities contributed to girls' acquisition of basic math topics and skills and to their achievement on high level

math tasks. These cooperative activities did not hinder boys' attitudes or achievement.

Limiting Preconceptions in Postsecondary Education

Colleges and universities ideally provide an environment that differentiates between students on the basis of merit. The participants in the postsecondary institution are not exempt from the limiting preconceptions held by the larger society or from the everyday behaviors by which different perceptions of men and women are reinforced and expressed. Despite the increasing presence of women on campuses, college is still often considered a masculine endeavor and success is believed to be based on skills and abilities such as intellectual argumentation (Parker, 1973) and proficiency in mathematics, areas in which many persons believe females lack competence despite recent research to the contrary (Linn & Hyde, 1989). Academic work produced by men may be valued more highly than that of women. A female student may have to outperform her male peers to be taken seriously by her professors. This general tendency to devalue women and their work is illustrated by a series of related studies (Nieva & Gutek, 1980) in which two groups were asked to evaluate articles, paintings, resumes, and other similar products. The name on each item was clearly masculine or feminine. The sex of the originator of each item was switched for the second group of evaluators. Regardless of the type of item evaluated, those ascribed to a male were rated higher than those ascribed to a female. In all trials, female evaluators were as likely as male evaluators to downgrade those items ascribed to women.

Because many women may consciously or unconsciously share this circumscribed view of women's abilities, some female faculty (as well as some male faculty) may expect less of their women students. These narrow expectations may become self-fulfilling prophecies. As women move through their college careers they often have less confidence about their capacity to achieve academic and professional success. Research has indicated that female postsecondary students are more likely than male students to doubt their abilities and to attribute their success to luck or hard work rather than to skill (Erkut, 1979).

Following is a partial list of some of the behaviors faculty members exhibit that discourage participation by women (Hall & Sandler, 1984):

- calling on male students most of the time
- asking female students easy questions; asking male students more difficult
- questions that require higher order thinking

- looking at male students to answer questions before females (or males) even can raise their hands
- referring only to male contributions to science
- calling women by their first names; calling men "Mister"
- utilization of whole class lectures as the dominant teaching strategy the use of competitive reward structures
- presentation of abstract subject matter largely devoid of practical applications (e.g., abstract science "factoids" with no applications or relevance to society and its problems)

Inviting Female Participation

Research shows that the students who participate actively in the classroom setting benefit the most from the instructional experience (Sandler and Hall, 1986). Following are some strategies faculty can use in all classes to encourage women to participate more in the classroom and to enhance their confidence in themselves and their abilities. The use of such strategies is especially critical in such male dominated areas as science:

- be aware of who you are looking at; make eye contact with all students
- ask questions that require higherorder thinking of both males and females (e.g., "What are the implications for evolutionary theory if the theory of punctuated equilibrium is correct?")
- increase "wait time," and endure the silence for a while; call on a student only when hands are raised from both genders
- use examples that include women as well as men
- call all students by name, using first names for all or use last names for all; do not use Ms. and Miss for females while using only Mister for men
- take a poll on a particular question; asking the class to vote encourages the sense of participation for all students
- eliminate sexist language and avoid using the generic "he" (e.g., use the plural "they")
- avoid sexist humor as a classroom device
- use "connected knowing" in classrooms which will allow girls to empathically enter into a subject they are studying; present knowledge and skills in the context of reallife problemsolving (e.g., textbooks usually present an adequate list of the steps in the scientific method as a list of rules but do not provide opportunities to actually apply these models for scientific inquiry)

- emphasize collaboration and reorganize the competitive structure of classrooms (e.g., use cooperative learning and handson activities in classes and eliminate or sharply decrease public criticism)
- emphasize the relevance of the content to reallife situations and endeavors intervene in communication patterns among students that may shut out women (e.g., male students interrupting female students in class discussions)
- avoid reference to female students' appearance withou similar reference to male students' appearance

Conclusion

Gender inequities exist from elementary to postsecondary classrooms. Most instructors are unaware that they treat women and men differently in the classroom and, when they become aware of the problem, they can change their behavior (Sadker and Sadker, 1986b).

Few teachers are intentionally disinviting to female students. Many, however, are unintentionally disinviting. According to Purkey (1992), people functioning at this level lack consistency in direction and purpose and so behave in disinviting ways. Those of us who function at this level need to evaluate our behavior and change it so that we reach out to our students with a summons to grow and develop all their talents physically, intellectually, and emotionally. Otherwise, women will continue to be excluded from full and fair participation in the educational process and we will perpetuate an educational system which pays only lip service to real equality.

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Inviting Parents to the Middle. A Proactive Stance for Improving Student Performance

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When teachers and administrators express concerns about middle schools, they frequently cite a lack of parental involvement as a major problem. (Office of Educational Research, 1992). As students enter middle school, parents become less involved. The end of the elementary years seems to coincide with a decreasing attendance by parents in school activities as well as a general decline in their school involvement. The question is, "Do parents drop out, or are they pushed out?"

In this article, we explore the challenge of keeping parents involved in their children's education beyond the elementary school years. We also suggest the invitational model (Purkey & Novak, 1984; Purkey & Schmidt, 1987) as a proactive approach for keeping parents involved in the lives of their children, particularly during the transition years of middle school education. Before examining this approach, it is helpful to understand the nature of the pre-adolescent and parents' frustrations with this period of their children's development.

Nature of the Pre-Adolescent

The pre-adolescent stage is one of change and growth. During this period, the person who used to be a child is now coping with a seemingly ever changing new body, a sometimes confusing set of new feelings, and a strong need to belong to a peer group. Each child wishes to be included and may feel a reduced need to be academically successful in school. Consequently, there is less need to please teachers and other adults. Preadolescence calls for understanding and diligence on the part of all adults who deal with this age child. In general, this group of students, ages 10-14 years old, represents such a broad range of emerging

characteristics and behaviors that no other time in life offers so many same age individuals who are so different from each other (Messick & Reynolds, 1992).

Middle school children assert themselves more and become increasingly less dependent on their parents (Berla, 1991). During this time, students try to declare their individuality by looking and behaving like everyone else in their peer group. This contradiction extends beyond dress and includes attempts to separate from families in public settings. At the same time, however, students seek assurance from adults that their decisions are wise and acceptable. This conflict between the need to separate and win acceptance simultaneously from adults is a hallmark of preadolescence. Even though young people attempt to pull away during this time, there is strong evidence they benefit from continued involvement with families in the same way they did as children in their early school years.

Often, pre-adolescent children verbalize their movement towards independence by issuing restrictions to parents regarding parental interactions with the middle school. It is common for teachers to hear parents say that children do not want them at school. These factors, combined with the nature of the pre-adolescent, tend to frustrate many parents as their children enter middle school and progress towards adolescence. A common parental response is to drop out of school activities. Hence, the challenge for schools is to develop approaches that encourage more parental involvement, rather than less.

Keeping Parents Involved

The excitement and novelty of having children start school often are enough incentive for parents of elementary age children to stay actively involved during these early years. At this time, children are still dependent on their parents and enjoy seeing them play an active role in the school. The nature of the elementary child and the elementary curriculum lend themselves to a high degree of teacher and parent interaction. For example, it is relatively easy to develop a close relationship with the teacher at the elementary level, because the child is generally assigned to one self contained classroom. Who would know children better than an elementary teacher who sees each child as many waking hours as the parent?

Though there has been a great deal of study and research about the involvement of families in the education of children, it has been a relatively new endeavor in middle schools. Most information about parental involvement at this level did not appear until the mid-1980's (Myers & Monson, 1992). Briefly, the literature concludes that many factors change when children enter their middle school years. Not only do parents become weary of the schooling process by the time the child has been in school for six years, but the novelty of school is often

replaced by fatigue with school and exhaustion from work (Chavkin & Williams, 1989). If one parent has stayed home during the elementary years, it is more likely that this parent will begin working in the middle school years. Similarly, single parents typically work outside the home.

In addition to the weariness of parents, organizational elements of middle and junior high schools often inhibit an open door policy toward parental involvement. Less personal structure at the middle school and the reality that parents may see as many as seven teachers to get a picture of the child's progress create demands on both time and patience. Another example of how middle schools are depersonalized is the larger number of students, typically 150 students per day, with whom teachers interact each day. It is difficult to be personally involved with each of 150 children in addition to each child's family. This arrangement is challenging for both teachers and parents.

Effective middle school teachers and administrators understand students, recognize the benefits of parental involvement, create a welcome environment, and invite parents as colleagues in the educational process. To accomplish these goals, educators begin by assessing the current level of parental involvement that exists in their schools.

The State of Parental Involvement

Parental involvement in middle schools is related to the level of encouragement that schools offer. Studies by the John Hopkins University Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools (1989) found that parents are more involved at school and at home when they perceive that schools have strong programs and encourage their involvement. According to these studies, the "data are clear that the school's practices to inform and to involve parents are more important than parent education, family size, marital status and even grade levels in determining whether inner-city parents get involved with their children's education in elementary school and stay involved through middle school" (1989, p. 10).

Students' perceptions of their parents' involvement often are dramatically different from parents' perceptions of their own involvement. A survey of 25,000 eighth graders and their parents conducted by the US Office of Educational Research and Improvement (1991) showed that three fourths of the parents said they talked regularly with their children about school experiences. By contrast, half of the students said they had such discussions less than twice since the school year began. There were similar contradictions about the amount of help students received with their homework. In this study, the data show that only half of the parents had attended a school meeting since the beginning of the school year, and fewer than 3 in 10 had visited their children's classes. Nearly half of the

parents said they had not contacted the school about their child's academic performance and nearly two-thirds of parents said they never had talked to school officials about the academic program being pursued by their eighth-grade child.

A study conducted by the National Association of Secondary School Principals surveyed 1,365 students and found 6% of the students said their parents were not at all involved in their education, 24% said they were rarely involved, and 44% were somewhat involved (McGowan, 1992). Only 14% of the students said that their parents were heavily involved. These findings highlight the need for schools to consider the benefits of involving parents, and to plan ways of increasing parents' participation in their children's education.

Benefits of Parent Involvement

Comer (1986) and others have described the benefits of parental involvement. When parents and professionals share responsibility for the outcomes of formal schooling, children improve their academic achievement, school attendance, and discipline (Flaxman & Inger, 1992). Parental involvement is related to increased homework completion and improved attitudes and performance of students (Bauch, 1990). In addition to higher achievement, other positive effects include: an improved sense of wellbeing, enhanced student behavior, better parent and student perceptions of classroom and school climate, higher aspirations among students and parents, increased educational productivity of time that parents and children spend together, and greater parental satisfaction with teachers (Myers and Monson, 1992).

There is ample research to demonstrate that parental involvement is a correlate of children's success in school (Henderson, 1988; Kagan 1985; Bloom, 1985; Dornbusch & Ritter, 1988; Cotner, 1986). Parental involvement "in almost any form appears to produce measurable gains in student achievement" (Henderson, 1988, p. 149). Henderson's (1988) review of a number of studies concluded that parental involvement was a key component in student performance. This finding is consistent regardless of the child's ability or family conditions. Henderson (1988) reported that children whose parents collaborate with the school achieve higher than children with similar aptitudes and family backgrounds whose parents are not involved.

Since parents are the first and most important teachers of children, a continuous bond between home and school ensures high achievement and success. For this reason, there have been a number of statewide efforts across the country aimed at increasing parental involvement (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1991). Keeping parents active in the middle school is an important part of a continuous effort to form collaborative relationships that benefit all children. The question is not whether or not to involve parents at the middle school, but

rather how to involve parents. The invitational approach (Purkey & Novak, 1984) offers one framework by which beneficial programs can be created to encourage parental participation in schools.

An Invitational Approach

What makes the invitational approach the appropriate model for inviting middle grades' parents into the schools? The four major tenets of the invitational stance, respect, trust, optimism and intentionality, underlie the belief that helpful and cooperative relationships in life are critical to productivity (Purkey & Schmidt, 1990). Without these ingredients, all relationships are at risk. The intentionality of a school is best expressed through people, places, policies, programs, and processes that illustrate its beliefs and commitment to education. These five "P's" provide a structure by which schools can assess their current status and develop specific plans to invite parents to become more involved.

The Five "P's"

The first step to increasing parental involvement is an internal diagnosis of the five powerful "P's" (Purkey & Schmidt, 1990; Purkey & Schmidt, 1987; Purkey & Stanley, 1991). An examination of the five "Vs" gives middle school professionals a concrete starting point for assessing climate, attitudes, and other factors that influence parental involvement.

The first P, places, refers to the school facility. The entrance way, offices, classrooms, waiting areas, and hallways are all a reflection of the how the school feels about visitors. The often read sign "All Visitors Must Report to the Office," for example, could read "Welcome to Your School--Please Come by the Office for Assistance or Direction," and might elicit more positive responses. Additionally, the front entrance should be clearly marked. School renovations often make the "front entrance" difficult to determine. How can parents and other visitors be involved if they cannot find their way in?

A comfortable place for parents while they wait to see principals, teachers, counselors, or other school personnel is another example of inviting places. Parents will quickly sense if their presence is appreciated through an initial assessment of the appeal and comfort of the school facility.

Closely related to places are the policies established and maintained by schools. (Purkey and Schmidt, 1990). These policies refer to written and unwritten guidelines, the framework that outlines school rules, and the organizational structure that allows the school to function efficiently. Policies often communicate strong messages and need to be reviewed in light of the multiple interpretations that can be made of any type of guideline. For example, many schools tend to form their policies by using negative language. It is just as

easy to establish rules that are stated in positive terms. Rather than saying, "No running in the halls," a sign may say, "Please walk and respect the safety of others in the hall." The more negative the rules appear to be stated, the more likely the school will be viewed as an unfriendly, cold place. In addition, the number of rules established by a school is a reflection of its regulatory posture. For every rule there is procedure to enforce the rule. It stands to reason that people would shy away from a place that is constantly enforcing its many rules and policies. A school that limits its policies to essential regulations has more time to foster helpful and cooperative relationships.

The third P relates to the programs that are offered within a particular setting. In this instance, analysis of the types of programs offered to parents and their children is important. Programs that are available to parents need to be broad, varied, and accepting. They should offer a variety of time schedules, include appropriate information for a range of educational levels, and encourage a wide spectrum of roles for parents. Whether a parent orientation night is planned, or a parent training seminar for at risk parents is developed, all programs should provide equal access. There should be equal and consistent treatment of all parents in school programs with the message always reading, "Welcome."

The fourth powerful P stands for processes that either develop or destroy the school's rapport with parents and students. Processes involve all the procedures and plans that help to establish on-going and long term development of parental participation. In creating inviting schools, the "how" is as important as the "what." How the professional staff interacts with parents is crucial in encouraging parents to accept the invitations offered by the school.

The fifth P signifies people, and represents the level of understanding that people have for each other, and the effort they make to establish relationships based on mutual trust and integrity. Professional staff members who understand and accept their responsibilities in developing relationships with parents will determine appropriate and effective means of dealing with each family. This level of understanding establishes the school's willingness to invite families to participate. The goal is clear and attainable.

Levels of Functioning

Once the diagnosis of the five "P's" is complete and the foundations of respect, trust and optimism are in place, the middle school staff can begin consciously, systematically, and continuously issuing invitations to parents. According to invitational theory, the messages that schools create and send to parents take countless forms and are extended at different levels of functioning (Purkey & Novak, 1984). The best way for middle schools to successfully involve parents is to be intentionally inviting (Purkey & Schmidt, 1990).

In the absence of intentionality, schools are sometimes unintentionally disinviting. Phones may be answered in a disinviting way, parents and visitors may be received by the office staff too casually, or parents' concerns and comments may be overlooked or minimized. Only through an organizational consciousness of being intentionally inviting can a middle school faculty and staff be sure that parents always feel welcome and a part of the school. To function at the intentionally inviting level for all parents is the desired outcome for an effective middle school. By consistently inviting all parents to become involved, schools assure that equitable relationships will be established. All parents are treated in ways that value their role and affirm their ability to be a positive force in their children's lives.

Invitations that involve all parents take numerous forms. Specific invitations that could be sent to parents from an invitational middle school might include a variety of types and approaches. The following is a starter list for schools interested in establishing an invitational climate:

- *Training opportunities (workshops, seminars, classes) on issues in parenting, schooling, technology and education.* These opportunities should be structured to support the needs and interests of parents. The workshops, seminars or classes would be scheduled at flexible times that will maximize the opportunity for parents to participate.

- *Homework helplines for both parents and students.* Often students will proceed with homework, only to find that they did not understand the directions or have all the information. Other times parents may be unclear about the expectations of the homework, or who assistance in helping the child understand the assignment. This type of helpline benefits the parent, the school, and ultimately the performance of the student.

- *Directories with the numbers of all professional personnel who are responsible for student assistance.* This type of directory is an easy guide to create and well worth the time involved to make it available to parents. The message sent with this type of system is one of inclusion as opposed to exclusion. It says that we are all here to help, just call.

- *Promotion and recognition of all parent efforts.* Recognition of parents truly represents an advocacy effort to support the work that parents do with their children, both in and out of school. Ceremonies, luncheons, pins, business recognition, certificates, and newspaper announcements are but a few of the countless ways schools can promote and recognize the efforts of parents.

- *Casual social affairs that involve parents in opportunities to discuss their interests.* In addition to being pleasant celebrations, social activities provide a relaxed atmosphere in which parents can better get to know the people who

work with their children during the day. The types of social events that can be planned include morning coffee gatherings, luncheons, early evening get-together, pot luck suppers, open house tours, orientations for parents of children of a specific age or grade, fall harvest feast or celebration programs for both the students and parents. Weekend and holiday events can be planned when the entire family can participate. Leisure activity plans can be a great way to get whole families out together and be involved with school personnel in activities such as tennis tournaments, bowling, picnics, lake or river extravaganzas and evening star gazing adventures.

- *Surveys of needs and interests*. Current needs should be updated through assessments and surveys. This will assure that the plans are not only relevant, but practical.
- *Communication bulletins and newsletters to inform and share news about students, the school, parents, teachers, and the community*. Though many schools use bulletins to send information home, they often miss opportunities to use this form for great public relations. This type of newsletter or bulletin can highlight the efforts of parents, can be the primary vehicle for recognizing voluntary service, and it should highlight all the social activities, school business, and student successes. This type of communication should be regularly scheduled and delivered to insure that the information gets to the parents at home.
- *Telephone trees and chains to share information*. Establish different types of communication devices for committees and groups to organize their information so that the responsibility is shared and spread by many.
- *School "welcome wagon" packet with treats, coupons and surprises, as well as, important information.* This kind of special treatment can emphasize to parents how important they are in the overall educational program. By being given special treats and "welcome" information, parents will experience a liaison with the school that is open to all.

Conclusion

Recent research and initiatives in school reform in the United States have stressed the importance of parental involvement and its relationship to student success. Parental involvement seems particularly crucial in middle schools where a correspondingly decreasing role for parents appears to be the rule rather than the exception. In this article we have advocated the invitational approach as a framework for developing strategies to improve and increase parental involvement in middle schools.

Schools that want to embrace the invitational model might begin by training teachers and staff in the some of the elements presented here. These include the four tenets of optimism, trust, respect, and intentionality, the five "P's," and the four levels of functioning: intentionally disinviting, unintentionally disinviting, unintentionally inviting, and intentionally inviting. Through this training and by assessing their current levels of functioning across the five "P's," schools will be better able to encourage parents to become a productive and welcomed part of their child's middle school program. Inviting middle schools benefit by having parents as true colleagues of teachers and other professionals who together face the challenge of educating preadolescents.

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