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During the last decade, inservice education has become a major issue within the educational community. In the favorable climate which now exists, the desire by many teachers for inservice education can be sustained. Several factors contribute to this positive environment for inservice education. Among these are that teachers realize they are likely to remain in the same classroom for a number of years, that taxpayers demand that schools do a better job of educating children, and that universities realize that a shrinking preservice market requires an adaptation to the needs of certified teachers (Clarke and Traverso, 1977). Despite this climate, educational literature is replete with reports that inservice is a bankrupt enterprise. In fact, Rubin (1971) describes it as a "virtually lost cause" (p. 245). Thus, one must ask why inservice education is perceived as not fulfilling its potential for renewing teacher motivation and ability.

One vehicle for analyzing this failure is through the organizational structure of inservice education. Frequently, organizational procedures are perceived to be rationally structured and highly interrelated. They are studied as if methods and goals were predetermined and agreed upon by all organizational members; tasks divided, programs instituted, and relative success evaluated. Organizations, however, do not always function rationally nor are stated objectives always traced to specific outcomes. In general, educational organizations do not differ from other organizations in this regard, and an analysis of how they function, based on this model of highly organized goals and procedures, does not fully explain the highly

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complex functions of inservice education. Innovative concepts must be utilized which enable new insights to be gained through viewing inservice from other than a perspective of a highly structured program. In this way, characteristics become visible that are not readily observable when looking through a highly controlled organizational model.

The concept of "coupling" (Glassman, 1973; Weick, 1976) allows a new perspective in the investigation of inservice education. Coupling connotes an image of variables which exist within the same system but are loosely or tightly linked together. This may be due to the frequency with which the variables interact, the length of time spent in interaction, or the amount of influence of one variable over another. According to Weick (1976), the variables are responsive to each other yet maintain their own identity and are physically and logically separate. The concept of coupling is useful in that it sensitizes and provides a vehicle for the investigation of the structure of inservice education. Analysis centers on the logical linkage between goals and actions. For example, an inservice program focusing on classroom management and dealing with techniques to keep students on task would be tightly coupled to the goals of teachers in a variety of content areas. Another example could be an inservice program in secondary reading. Although it would be tightly coupled to the goals and objectives of reading teachers, it would be loosely coupled to other content area teachers since their interactions with the course objectives and content would be infrequent.

Tight coupling between inservice programs and administrative categorizations and loose coupling between inservice programs and teacher behavior and needs have resulted in the perception of inservice education as a failure. Administrative control of programs often centers on the organization and categorization of inservice experiences rather than on the implementation and evaluation of these programs. Precise rules are devised by the controlling agency to insure the worth of inservice. However, in this case, worth is defined as number of teachers participating in a program, number of programs offered, and the

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qualifications of the instructor. Yarger and Yarger (1978) support this contention by suggesting that the various educational groups are more concerned with who controls inservice programs than with substantive programs, which, in turn, has led to an emphasis on bureaucratic and political aspects. Unfortunately, categorization and record keeping do not necessarily result in experiences which are useful to teachers in the improvement of instruction. The real worth of inservice is measured in the changes it brings about in teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors and the effect these changes have on student achievement. Without evaluation of these measures, inservice programs cannot be validated for teacher use.

Tight coupling between inservice and administrative categorization is due perhaps to support given in educational literature and, as a result, the belief by administrators that they must provide inservice education. Teachers believe that central office administrators and boards of education have largely formulated school district-supported inservice education (Yarger, Howey, and Joyce, 1980) and that "the implementation of innovations presented in inservice programs is often a function of the support received from school administrators" (Brimm and Tollett, 1974, p. 522). From the teachers' perspective, inservice programs are too often imposed on them. Seldom are teachers invited to participate in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of administratively conceived programs. In addition, most inservice programs lack continuity. Typically, they are sporadic, shotgun affairs offering little relevance to teachers' immediate classroom needs (Bell and Peightel, 1976).

Research on the perceptions of inservice supports the theory that it is perceived to have failed because of loose coupling between inservice and improved instruction. A survey of Tennessee teachers found that 44 percent perceived inservice programs to be poorly planned generally, and that 31 percent agreed that most inservice was virtually useless. It is not surprising, therefore, that a vast majority of teachers believed that many inservice activities were not relevant to their needs.

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This data is supported by a study of teachers, higher educators and parents involved in federally funded urban/rural projects in California, Georgia and Michigan (Yarger, Howey, and Joyce, 1980). Nearly three-fourths of the teachers reported that the quality of inservice in their region was inadequate. Higher educators were even more critical--85 percent viewed inservice as being ineffective. On the other hand, parents tended to be slightly more positive as approximately one-third judged inservice to be good or excellent.

As a result of the aforementioned data, the quality of inservice appears suspect. If this is true, one must seek solutions to correct this situation. Unfortunately, research on inservice education reveals a lack of evaluative evidence of what results in successful inservice. An initial review by Lawrence (1977) measured success in terms of program objectives, i.e., changes in teacher concepts, behaviors, attitudes and values, or expanding teacher information/knowledge. Not surprisingly, inservice programs attaining a higher rate of success were those measuring changes in teacher concepts or information and in teacher overt behavior and attitude rather than changes in pupil behavior. In addition, data revealed that inservice programs having the greatest chance of success were those involving teachers in the planning, goal setting, implementation and evaluation processes.

Unfortunately, evidence suggests that little attention is given to the criteria suggested by the Lawrence study. The vast majority of the teachers surveyed by Brimm and Tollett (1974) agreed that most inservice programs do not arise from the needs and problems of teachers, that the program objectives are not specific, and that no adequate follow-up exists to determine the effect of inservice activities. Consequently, loose coupling appears prevalent between inservice programs and identified criteria for inservice success.

The perceptions of teachers support the contention about loose coupling and inservice education.

Brimm and Tollett (1974) found that 93 percent of the teachers believed that they needed to be involved in the development of goals, activities and methods of evaluation for inservice education, while 89 percent agreed that they should have the opportunity to select the type of inservice which will strengthen their professional competence. The lack of teacher involvement in the planning, implementation and evaluation of inservice programs supports the thesis that the perceived failure of inservice is a function of the loose coupling between inservice programs and teacher behavior and needs. Teachers seem to agree since ninety-four percent believe the real test of an inservice program is whether it helps the teacher cope more successfully with professional tasks.

It would appear that for inservice programs to be perceived as successful, they must begin to be tightly coupled with the need to improve instruction. Perhaps the major step toward this goal is the realization that inservice education is not solely an administrative responsibility. Both teachers and administrators must share in the planning, implementation and evaluation of programs that focus on teacher needs. Thus, administrative categorizations would be more loosely coupled with inservice education. In addition, school districts should avoid the "shotgun" approach that features many "one-shot deals." Inservice programs should be structured so that teachers receive adequate instruction and proper follow-up support in the classroom. Therefore, tight coupling between inservice education and teacher behavior and needs result not only in a successful inservice program but also in successful teachers.

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TABLE 1

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES WITHIN THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
AND PROPERTIES OF THE PROFESSIONAL INTRODUCTION PROGRAM

Organizational Changes		Properties of the Program Which Promote Culturally Pluralistic Perspectives
From	To	
Individual teacher-preparation programs	Interdisciplinary-faculty structure	Integration of several disciplines (human development, sociology, urban education, etc.)
		In-service experience for faculty (cross-fertilization of ideas with other faculty and renewed - or initial - contact with school settings)
		Valuing of educational equity
Separate courses	Block program	Integration of field, laboratory, and classroom experiences
		Public and non-public educational perspectives are reflected
		Focus on urban, multicultural settings
Different experiences depending upon program	One common experience for all pre-service teachers	Diverse student backgrounds and perspectives used in the course
		Student valuing of educational equity is enhanced
		Frame of mind for experiencing future university courses and training is provided
		Knowledge and processes for promoting educational equity once in the school setting are provided