1956

A Study of Methods to be Used in Developing a Handbook of Information on The Wyandotte, Oklahoma, Junior-Senior High School

Paul Wallace Holmes
Kansas State Teachers College

Recommended Citation

A STUDY OF METHODS TO BE USED IN DEVELOPING A HANDBOOK OF

INFORMATION ON THE WYANDOTTE, OKLAHOMA,

JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

A Problem Submitted to the Department of Education in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Course in Research Problems 390b

By

Paul Wallace Holmes

KANSAS STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

Pittsburg, Kansas

July, 1956

APPROVED:

Problem Adviser_____R. Wray Strowig_____

Instructor, Course 390b____R. Wray Strowig____

Head, Department of Education____John A. Black____

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer is indebted to Dr. R. W. Strowig, under whose supervision this study was made, for his suggestions concerning this study.

The writer wishes to express his appreciation to Mrs. A. B. York for her assistance.

The writer also wishes to thank his wife, Wilma, for her cooperation and encouragement while making this study.

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A STUDY OF METHODS TO BE USED IN DEVELOPING A HANDBOOK OF

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JUNIOR-SENILR HIGH SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

This study is being made in an attempt to gather and
evaluate data and information to be used in developing a
handbook for the students, patrons, and teachers of the
Wyandotte, Oklahoma, Junior-Senior High School.

Purposes of the Study

The purpose of this study is the future development of
a handbook for the Wyandotte Junior-Senior High School. The
primary purposes of the handbook will be to: (1) Inform
the teachers, pupils, and parents of the purposes and pol-
icies of the operation of the school; (2) Unify the school
and foster school spirit. In addition, the secondary pur-
poses are: (1) To give the students an opportunity for self-
expression and creative work; (2) To develop qualities of
cooperation, tact, accuracy, tolerance, responsibility, ini-
tiative and leadership.

Need for the Study

Sources of information at the Wyandotte Junior-Senior
High School have not been published for the past five years.
The students, parents, and teachers have expressed a need
for written information, to which they can refer, regarding

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the policies and procedures of the school. In the writer's opinion, this information should be made available to them.

A well-informed student body would be more united in purpose and have a greater feeling of security as a result of possessing written information on all matters pertaining to them concerning the operation of the school. They would enjoy a feeling of confidence upon being allowed to know the "inside" of things. New students would be more quickly oriented by having pertinent information readily available to which they could refer whenever necessary.

The need for a handbook and the functions it can serve are substantiated by McKown[1] as follows:

> Before he can become Americanized, the alien must know our language, our ideals, something about our history, traditions, and general organization. He cannot become a citizen until he does know these. In exactly the same way the new student cannot become a good school citizen until he knows about the school's ideals, history, traditions, and general organization, as well as his home room mates, classmates, schoolmates, teachers, and administrative officers.

In speaking of the value of a handbook, Grinnell[2] says: "For new pupils, especially, it is valuable, enabling them to assimilate quickly the rules and traditions of the school, and to adjust themselves to the curricular and extracurricular programs."

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[1]Harry C. McKown, Home Room Guidance (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1946), p. 227.

[2]J. Erle Grinnell, Interpreting the Public Schools (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1937), p. 190.

Research Design

Methods of Research. The documentary method of research
was the first method used in this study. This method con-
sists of collecting and evaluating all available information
concerning the problem being studied. It affords the re-
searcher an opportunity to obtain information which might
not be available to him through other methods of research.
It also gives the worker a greater selection of materials
with which to work. Good and Scates[3] have this to say con-
cerning library work:

> Knowledge of library techniques and tools, and
> skill in the use of the guides to the literature, can
> make at least three contributions to problem solving.
> (1) A carefully planned program of reading frequently
> is the source of significant problems. (2) A systematic
> canvass of the related literature is the means of
> determining whether the proposed study unnecessarily
> duplicates some earlier investigation. (3) The
> knowledge secured from such reading, in terms of
> sources, procedures, and results, represents essential
> orientation for definition of the problem.

One of the principal disadvantages of this method is
that great amounts of time are spent in looking for infor-
mation which, in many cases, is not applicable to the immedi-
ate study. Another disadvantage is that, since we live in
an ever-changing world, the opinion of a writer of ten,
twenty, or thirty years ago may be of little or no value today.

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[3]Carter V. Good and Douglas E. Scates, Methods of
Research (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1954),
pp. 153-154.

The second method of research used in this study was the personal interview. Bingham and Moore[4] have stated that an interview is "a conversation with a purpose." From this viewpoint, a general conversation may or may not be considered an interview. Rapport, which is of great importance in any interview, may be more easily established in this type of interview than in one which is more formalized. Barr, Davis, and Johnson[5] state that: "If proper rapport characterizes the interview, the examinee may reveal himself more completely than he would in making his statements in writing."

In a carefully planned interview, an outline of the procedures to be followed is prepared in advance. In making his preparations, the interviewer should determine, as nearly as possible, what he wants to learn from the interviewees. In this type of interview, more definite information is likely to be forthcoming than in the type previously discussed. Care should be taken, however, to keep the interview from becoming too formalized.

The personal interview may be too time-consuming and expensive to be used in some studies. If the persons to be interviewed are not readily available, it may be hard to justify this method of research for a particular study. Another

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[4]Walter V. Bingham and Bruce V. Moore, How To Interview (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1941), p. 1.

[5]Arvis S. Barr, Robert A. Davis, and Palmer O. Johnson, Educational Research and Appraisal (Chicago: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1953), p. 63.

aspect to consider, according to Jahoda, Deutsch, and Cook,[6]
is that "what people say in answer to a questionnaire or in
an interview need not coincide with their thoughts and senti-
ments."

Sources of Data. A partial survey of the pertinent litera-
ture on handbooks, available in Porter Library, Kansas State
Teachers College, Pittsburg, Kansas, was made. This included
books on school public relations, extra-curricular activities,
and guidance. The information found in these books was
limited and, in most cases, consisted of only a few pages
dealing with handbooks.

Articles in education magazines found in the library were
also included in this survey. Many of these dealt with sur-
veys made of the use of handbooks in various schools and the
type of information found in most of these handbooks.

Several textbooks for courses in education were scanned
in the search for material concerning handbooks. This proved
to be of little value since most of these books touched on
this subject only briefly, if at all.

Student handbooks were obtained from thirteen schools.
A study was made of the size of the handbooks, methods of
duplicating used, who compiled the material used, and the
contents of the handbooks. This information was tabulated
to facilitate its use in this study.

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[6]Marie Jahoda, Morton Deutsch, and Stuart W. Cook,
Research Methods in Social Relations, Part I (New York:
The Dryden Press, 1951), pp. 9-10.

In securing more information for this study, a survey
of the Wyandotte community and school district was made.
Records of the Wyandotte Junior-Senior High School were also
consulted. These records included attendance registers,
transportation records, student transfer applications, and
maps of the district and transportation areas served by the
Wyandotte school busses.

Interviews were conducted with twenty-two people.[7]
The interview method was chosen because of the availability
of resource persons on the campus. Seventeen of the people
interviewed are taking work during the summer session. The
other five people are not on the campus.

Prior to conducting the interviews, a list of questions
to be asked the interviewees was made. The information desired
was kept in mind by the interviewer at all times. Because all
of the interviews were conducted in a conversational manner,
rapport was easily established in each case. Many of the
people interviewed made several interesting observations that
might not have been made in a more formalized situation.

Limitations of the Study

The most limiting factor in this study was the limited
time available. Because of this limitation, only a few of
the total number of people available on the campus were
interviewed. It is probable that much of the information
available in Porter Library was overlooked. Other sources

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[7]Infra, p. 19.

of information, such as other libraries, could have been used had more time been available.

Another limitation of this study was the scarcity of information pertaining to handbooks. Whitney[8] states as follows: "Attention is again called to the well-known fact that the basic material available for thought on any level of generalization is never adequate." Many of the articles found in periodicals either referred the reader to articles written by other authors or to reports of previous studies of handbooks which were not available for study.

Still another limiting factor in this study was the number of handbooks available. A more accurate and complete evaluation could have been made with a greater number of handbooks. With a more varied assortment of handbooks, more valid conclusions might have been forthcoming.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Survey of Local Conditions

The Community and the School. Wyandotte, Oklahoma, is a small rural community of eight hundred population located in the extreme northeast section of the state on the banks of Grand Lake. The town, besides its one hundred fifty residences, has five churches, a bank, a post office, two grocery stores, one hardware store, one variety store, and two service stations. Although the chief occupation is farming, the

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[8]Frederick Lamson Whitney, The Elements of Research. (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1950), p. 6.

occupational trends of the people are changing. Several
residents of the community are now employed by the B. F.
Goodrich Company of Miami, Oklahoma, the Milnot Company of
Seneca, Missouri, and the lead and zinc mines near Picher,
Oklahoma.

The enrollment of the junior-senior high school is two
hundred thirty-five pupils. Grades seven through nine are
enrolled in the junior high school and grades ten through
twelve in the senior high school. The junior and senior
high schools are housed in two buildings connected by a
hallway. There are eleven junior-senior high school
teachers in the school system.

One hundred ninety of the two hundred thirty-five pupils
enrolled are transported in school busses. The transportation
area being served by seven school busses consists of fifty-
four square miles in the district and fifty-five square miles
outside the district. The length of the average bus route
is sixteen miles.

Orienting New Students. Approximately thirty per cent
of the freshman class of the school are transfer students
from neighboring, rural, elementary schools. These, and
other students who enter the school for the first time, are
not familiar with the policies of the school. Although these
new students are well received by the faculty members and
student body, the orientation program of the school is inade-
quate to meet the needs of these students. Once the student

is enrolled in school by his home-room advisor, he is left
to find his way about the buildings. Some students have dif-
ficulty in locating their classrooms for the first week of
school.

It is noticeable that students entering school for the
first time are slow in becoming acquainted with all their
classmates. These new students form attitudes similar to
those of the student with whom they become associated shortly
after entering school. This may be due to the lack of infor-
mation available to them.

Orienting New Teachers. Wyandotte is similar to other
communities of its size. It is small and friendly. The
churches and civic organizations are active. However, as
in thousands of similar communities in the United States,
the teacher turnover is very high. Teachers new in the
school system receive much the same treatment as the new
student. There is very little written material, concerning
the policies and practices of the school, available to them.
In conferences with the superintendent and principal as many
"do's" and "don't's" as can be recalled are passed on to the
teacher.

Teachers new to the system are introduced to the other
faculty members at the first faculty meeting. The principal
informs the faculty members of class schedules, room assign-
ments, hall duties, et cetera. The meeting is dismissed and
the teachers are asked to confer with the principal when they

are confronted with problems. Rather than ask the principal
about problems that confront them, as they are instructed to
do, they usually ask one of the students or one of the other
teachers about these matters.

It usually requires a year or two for the new teachers
to become oriented to the school and to be able to render
their best services to the school and community.

Informing the Public. There is no organized plan for
giving information to the public concerning the school, its
purposes and policies. School news is released through the
school newspaper each month and to the local newspaper only
occasionally. Report cards are sent to parents every nine
weeks. The school annual is published in alternate years.
There are but few civic clubs where announcements can be
made and practically all information concerning the school
is passed from person to person by word of mouth.

Informing the Student Body and Teachers. Many questions
are asked by students and teachers that, in a properly informed
and oriented student body and faculty, need never arise. There
seems to be an undue amount of uncertainty among the students
and teachers of the school, especially those who are entering
for the first time.

Activities are done one way one term and another way the
next. Classes are interrupted by announcements being made over
the inter-communication system. This would be unnecessary
with a properly informed student body and faculty. Quite
clearly, there is inconsistency in the manner, time, and

reason for doing things. No one but the superintendent and principal seem to be quite sure just when, where, how, or why anything is to be done, or if it is permissible to be done. Apparently, the administration is assuming that the teachers and students can be told or expected to find out and remember these facts for themselves. There is a definite need for improvement in this area.

Evaluation of Literature

During World War I, business and industry made use of handbooks for imparting information to their employees and customers. This method of conveying information proved to be a great time saver. Universities had been making use of handbooks, for the orientation of new students, for some time. It was from these handbooks that educators got the idea of using handbooks in the secondary schools.[9]

Increased school enrollment, the increase in educational and social offerings, and the changes in the organization and administration of the schools left less time for the proper orientation of new students. To meet this challenge, secondary schools began publishing student handbooks. This method of orientation was used more in the larger schools than in the smaller ones. Since the end of World War I, the publication of handbooks by the schools has become a common practice. Even though larger schools still lead the

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[9]Harry C. McKown, Extra-Curricular Activities (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), pp. 480-481.

way, small schools are making use of handbooks in ever-increasing numbers.[10]

Equal enthusiasm was expressed in favor of handbooks and their use in orienting new teachers. Most of the information pertinent to students should also be quite familiar to teachers. It is suggested that a great saving of time would be afforded the principal and that this time could be more effectively used in supervision. As Hubbard[11] says:

> Multiplicity of routine demands is cited by principals as a handicap to the supervisory program. Sometimes these demands are so numerous as to give the principal little opportunity for consistent attention to supervision. Although the principal cannot always reduce the number of demands, he can often avoid giving them personal attention. The initiative in reducing the amount of time devoted to routine duties lies with the principal himself. He may delegate responsibilities to others and adopt various time saving devices. Among these time-saving devices is the teachers' handbook. Such a handbook contains the rules and methods for handling the school's routine. In preparing a manual of this type, the wise principal will enlist the interest and help of his teaching staff.

Although the handbook was designed primarily for students, it was believed that teachers and parents could benefit from the information it contained. Attention was given to studies of handbooks designed especially for teachers, such as the one described above, and parents. In discussing handbooks

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[10]Loc. cit.

[11]Frank W. Hubbard, "Obtaining Time for Supervision Through the Teacher's Handbook," Elementary School Journal, XXIX (June, 1929), 753.

for parents, Taba[12] states:

> An important phase of school-community relation-
> ships is the intelligence of the clientele about what
> is going on in the school. Often the education of the
> parents is thought of as a one-way road, namely, that
> of acquainting the parents with the program of the
> school. Frequently also the exclusive motive of such
> education is to gain public support, financial and
> otherwise.
>
> The handbook is intended for the use of study
> groups and is devoted to answering questions 'fre-
> quently raised by parents and other interested persons...
> and by teachers'.

In recent years, the purposes of publishing a handbook
have changed from the strictly orientation approach to one
of educational value for the students. To facilitate this,
the students are given the responsibility of collecting
information, arranging and editing the material, and pub-
lishing the handbook. Kershaw[13] is more emphatic about this
when he says that "the handbook should come from the citizenry
of the school and not be imposed from the outside by superior
authority."

The publication of the handbook can become a project of
one of the student organizations, such as the student council,
or of one of the regular departments such as the English
department or the Commercial department. The preparation of
a handbook, under the direction of a skillful sponsor, can

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[12]Hilda Taba, "A Handbook Informing Parents About the
School," Elementary School Journal, XLII (October, 1941), 84.

[13]William L. Kershaw and Clarence H. Barback, "The High
School Student Handbook," School Review, XXXII (October,
1924), 594.

be a valuable educational experience for the pupils of a school. Suggestions made by pupils, concerning the content and form of the handbook, can be of considerable value. Pupil interest in the handbook may become greater and they may learn a great deal from the actual planning and preparation of the handbook.

Evaluation of Handbooks

In securing information for this study, thirteen student handbooks were examined. This revealed many differences in the methods of duplication, the responsibility for collecting, preparing and editing the material, the size of the handbooks, and the material contained in them.

Three different methods of duplicating were used. Seven of the handbooks were printed by commercial printing companies, one by the school printing department, four were mimeographed, and one was printed with a spirit duplicator.

In seven of the handbooks studied, the material was prepared by the school administrators. In four others, the student council did the work, and two of the handbooks were prepared by the honor societies in the schools.

A wide range in the sizes of the handbooks was noted. Table I shows the different sizes of the handbooks and the number of each size. The smaller sizes seem to predominate.

TABLE I

DIMENSIONS OF THIRTEEN HANDBOOKS STUDIED

Dimensions in Inches	Number of Handbooks
4 x 6	4
$4\frac{1}{2}$ x 7	4
$5\frac{1}{2}$ x $8\frac{1}{2}$	3
$8\frac{1}{2}$ x 11	2
Total	13

The analysis of the material contained in these hand-
books showed a great variation in the number of items and
types of information found in them. A total of seventy-six
items appeared in the thirteen handbooks. None of these
items were found in all of the handbooks. Only five of the
items were discussed in as many as nine handbooks and twelve
of the items appeared only one time. Table II shows the
frequency of items appearing in four or more of the handbooks
and Table III shows the items appearing in less than four
handbooks.

Ten of the handbooks examined had no definite plan of
arrangement. They seemed to be merely unorganized collections
of miscellaneous information. This appeared to be one of the
main weaknesses of the handbooks. A systematic arrangement of
material would make it more readily accessible.

TABLE II

FREQUENCY OF APPEARANCE OF EACH ITEM IN FOUR
OR MORE OF THIRTEEN HANDBOOKS STUDIED

Item	Frequency
Cafeteria Regulations	9
Departmental Clubs	9
Honorary Clubs	9
National Clubs	9
Requirements for Graduation	9
Absences	8
Advisors-Homeroom	8
Awards and Honors	8
Faculty	8
Foreword	8
Leaving School	8
Library Regulations	8
Athletics	7
Pep Clubs	7
Program of Studies	7
School Songs	7
Student Council	7
Grading System	6
Schedule of Classes	6
Welcome by Principal	6
Board of Education	5
Report Cards	5
School Calendar	5
School Creed	5
School Paper	5
School Yells	5
Tardiness	5
Work Permits	5
Book Exchange	4
Car Regulations	4
Change of Schedule	4
Classification	4
Damage to Property	4
Floor Plans	4
Hall Permits	4
Historical Sketch of School	4
Lost and Found Exchange	4
School Annual	4
School Cheers	4
Student Elections	4

TABLE III

ITEMS FOUND IN LESS THAN FOUR OF
THIRTEEN HANDBOOKS STUDIED

Items	
American's Creed	Office Staff
Assemblies	Opening of Buildings
Auditorium Regulations	Parent-Teachers Association
Book Identification Stickers	Permanent Records
Bicycle Regulations	Pupil Load
Change of Address	Requirements for College
Class Organizations	Entrance
Class Plays	School Bus Regulations
Clinic	Short Schedules
Contagious Diseases	Signal Bells
Enrollment	Social Etiquette
Examinations	Student Code of Ethics
Excuses	Student Directory
Failures	Study Halls
Fees, Deposits, and Rentals	Summer School
Fire Drills	Telephone Regulations
Flag Salute	Transcripts
Junior-Senior Banquet	Withdrawals
Lockers and Locks	

Three of the handbooks studied followed definite plans
of organization. Although the sections were not always in
this order, the handbooks followed a general plan of organ-
ization such as this:

     I.   Introduction

    II.   Administration

  III.   Organization of the School

   IV.   Awards and Scholarships

    V.   Activities and Organizations

   VI.   School Spirit

<u>Results</u> <u>of</u> <u>Interviews</u>

In making this study, twenty-two people were interviewed. Of these twenty-two, four were school superintendents, seven were secondary school principals, and eleven were classroom teachers. Sixteen of these people are employed in schools with an enrollment of four hundred students or less. The other six are employed in schools having enrollments of from four hundred to seven hundred students.

In nine of the schools where these people are employed, handbooks are available for students, patrons, and teachers. In eight of the other schools, some information, of the type found in handbooks, was furnished to teachers and students on mimeographed sheets passed to them during the school year. In the other five schools, practically all of this type of information was given to the teachers and students orally.

In the schools having handbooks, four of the handbooks were prepared by the students. In the other five schools, the handbooks were prepared by the administrators of the schools. The average time elapsed, before the handbooks were revised, was three years. Six of these handbooks were printed and three were mimeographed. The interviewees, from the nine schools having handbooks, felt that the handbooks benefitted them and their students. They also felt that all expenses involved in making the handbooks were justifiable.

The interviewees, from the thirteen schools not having handbooks, thought that a handbook would help them and their students. They also thought that expenses incurred in making the handbooks would be justifiable.

Eleven questions were used as a guide in conducting the interviews. The first two questions were asked of all the interviewees. Questions three through eight were asked the interviewees from schools having handbooks. Questions nine through eleven were asked the interviewees from schools not having handbooks. The questions used are listed below.

1. How many students are enrolled in your school?

2. Does your school have a student handbook?

3. Who was responsible for developing the handbook?

4. How often is the handbook revised?

5. Is the handbook printed or mimeographed?

6. Is the handbook of benefit to you?

7. Do the students benefit from the handbook?

8. Is the expense of making the handbook justifiable?

9. Would a handbook help you in your work?

10. Would a handbook help your students?

11. Could the expense of making a handbook be justified?

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary and Conclusions

This study was made in an attempt to gather and evaluate material to be used in developing a handbook for the students, patrons, and teachers of the Wyandotte, Oklahoma, Junior-Senior High School. The purposes of the handbook are as follows:

I. Primary:

    A. To inform the pupils, teachers, and patrons of the purposes and policies of the operation of the school.

    B. To unify the school and foster school spirit.

II. Secondary:

    A. To give the students an opportunity for self-expression and creative work.

    B. To develop qualities of cooperation, tact, accuracy, tolerance, responsibility, initiative, and leadership.

A review of the information concerning the Wyandotte Junior-Senior High School clearly indicates the need for an effective orientation program for the students and teachers of the school. A handbook would be a valuable aid in this program.

A handbook would also serve as a source of information and would help develop desirable public support for the school. If a handbook were available, a better school spirit would develop; the students and teachers would become less individualistic; and a more cooperative attitude toward the school administration would develop.

The authors of the articles read by the writer in making this study all agree that handbooks can be valuable instruments in the orientation of new students in the schools. Many of them also agree that the students of a school should take an active part in the development of a handbook for their school. They also said that the development of the handbook by the students, under the supervision of a skilled teacher, would be a profitable educational experience.

In developing a handbook, care should be taken in determining the size of the handbook. The consensus of opinion is that the size of the handbook should be such that it could be easily carried or could be slipped into a shirt or jacket pocket. With a handbook of this size, the student would be more apt to make use of it.

The color and design of the handbook cover should be carefully considered. An attractively designed cover will influence the use of the handbook by the students. The colors should be attractive, but they should be such that they will not show soil with extended use.

The advantages and disadvantages of the various methods of printing should be considered. Even though, in all probability, mimeographing would be cheaper, having the handbook printed has certain advantages. In most cases, a printed handbook is more attractive and more easily read. It is hard to justify the use of students' and teachers' time in mimrographing the handbook. However, the amount of money

available for printing the handbook will undoubtedly influence the choice of printing method.

Care should be taken in determining and arranging the contents of the handbook. The material should be attractively and systematically arranged to facilitate its use. The headings should be clear and in large type. The material should be written in a simple, easily understood manner, and only materials of importance to those who will use the handbook should be included.

Recommendations

More information should be obtained and evaluated before definite conclusions, concerning the development of a handbook, are drawn. Opinions from more people in other schools should be obtained by means of personal interviews or questionnaires. Faculty members, bus drivers, patrons, and students in the local school should be asked for suggestions concerning the handbook. A greater number of handbooks from other schools should be obtained in order to have more information available for study and evaluation. These should include handbooks from schools most nearly the size of the local school.

The development of a handbook should be a project of a selected group of students and faculty members. This group should make use of the advice and assistance of the administrators, patrons, and other faculty members and students of the school.

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PART II

RESEARCH PLANS FOR STUDYING THE ORIENTATION

PROGRAM OF THE WYANDOTTE, OKLAHOMA,

JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

A PROPOSED PLAN FOR MAKING A CASE
STUDY OF A NINTH GRADE CLASS

Statement of the Problem

This study is an attempt to determine the inadequacies of the present orientation program of the Wyandotte, Oklahoma, Junior-Senior High School.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to present a plan, for making a case study, to determine the weaknesses of the present orientation program of the school.

Research Design

The Case Study Method. In making a case study, the following procedure is suggested.

1. Determine the present status of the situation under investigation.

2. Collect all relevant data concerning the situation.

3. Check all previous happenings thought to apply to the situation.

4. Adjust circumstances to improve the situation.

5. Remeasure the situation to ascertain any changes produced by modifications made.

A case study takes into consideration all aspects of a situation. Good and Scates[1] state: "The essential procedure of the case study method is to take account of all pertinent aspects of one thing or situation, employing as the unit for study an individual, an institution, a community, or any group considered as a unit."

In many case studies, treatment is not included. Concerning this, Traxler[2] writes: "Nothwithstanding the fact that treatment is not included in some case studies, it should be clearly understood that every case study implies treatment; otherwise there would be no point in making the study."

According to Maxfield,[3] the desirable characteristics of the case study are as follows:

1. Completeness of data.

2. Validity of data.

3. Continuity.

4. Confidential recording.

5. Scientific synthesis.

Many limitations may be encountered in making a case study. These may occur in defining the problem, formulating

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[1]Carter V. Good and Douglas E. Scates, Methods of Research (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1954), p. 726.

[2]Arthur E. Traxler, Techniques of Guidance (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1945), p. 285.

[3]Francis N. Maxfield, "The Case Study," Educational Research Bulletin, IX (March 5, 1930), 118-120.

the hypothesis, developing and using the instruments of
measurement, classifying and analyzing the data, and organ-
izing the system for recording and reporting.[4]

Suggested Plan for the Case Study. This case study is
to be made of the 1956-1957 Ninth Grade Class of the Wyandotte,
Oklahoma, Junior High School. The teachers of these students
will be asked to participate in this study. These teachers
will be asked to make and record observations of these stu-
dents. Particular attention would be given to the difficulties
encountered by the students in becoming oriented to the school.

A study will be made of the school records of former
students to try to determine what factors influenced the
attendance and drop-outs of these students. Factors that
might have influenced their participation in school activi-
ties would also be considered.

Interviews will be conducted with the students. They
will be asked to discuss the difficulties they have encount-
ered in becoming oriented to the school, and to make sugges-
tions for improving the present methods of orientation.

During the latter part of the school year, the teachers
will be asked to participate in evaluating the data collected
throughout the school year. They will also be asked to make
a tentative diagnosis of the problem and to suggest tentative
plans for improving the situation.

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[4]Good and Scates, op. cit., pp. 771-772.

Limitations of the Study

The fact that an entire class is to be used in this study presents a possible limitation. Large amounts of data will need to be collected and evaluated. For this reason, difficulties might be encountered in recording and reporting the information.

The use of teachers in making the study might be another limitation. Their work on the study might be influenced by the degree of their interest in the problem, the amount of time available for work on the problem, and their ability to collect and evaluate information.

A PROPOSED EXPERIMENT TO TEST THE USEFULNESS OF A HANDBOOK

Statement of the Problem

This study is an attempt to determine the effects of the use of a handbook of information on the Wyandotte, Oklahoma, Junior-Senior High School in orienting students to the school.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to present a plan, for a proposed experiment, to determine the value of a handbook for students. It should, also, help determine what additions to the handbook, or changes in the contents of the handbook, should be made to make the handbook a more useful tool in the orientation of students.

Research Design

The Experimental Method. The experimental method of
research was originally used only in laboratory situations,
in which the conditions could be kept as uniform as possible.
Under these conditions, only one factor was varied at a time
and the effects of this factor were determined. In speaking
of situations for experimentation, Jahoda, Deutsch, and Cook[5]
have this to say: "Natural situations may provide the desired
experimental contrasts. They are, however, rarely uncompli-
cated and precisely relevant to well-defined hypotheses. As
a consequence, created situations are usually superior to
natural situations for experimental purposes."

In conducting an experiment, in which people are used
as subjects, there are three techniques which may be used.
These are: (1) the single group technique, (2) the parallel
group technique, and (3) the rotation group technique.

In the single group technique, a single group of subjects
is used in the experiment. Routine procedures are followed
by the group for a definite period of time and then the experi-
mental factor is introduced for an equal period of time. An
attempt is made to keep all other factors in the experiment
constant at all times. This method is usually considered to
be the least valid of the three.

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[5]Marie Jahoda, Morton Deutsch, and Stuart W. Cook,
Research Methods in Social Relations, Part I (New York: The
Dryden Press, 1951), p. 59.

In the parallel-group technique, two groups of people are used. These people are paired, with each pair containing one person from each group. The people in each pair are as nearly alike, in all respects, as possible. One group is the control group and the other is the experimental group. In the control group, routine procedure is followed, while the experimental factor or independent variable is applied to the experimental group. The greatest difficulty in using this method is in equating the two groups accurately.

The rotation-group technique and the parallel-group technique are basically alike. The principle difference is that, in the rotation-group technique, the two groups are reversed at intervals. The two groups act as the control group and experimental group alternately. The greatest limitation in this method is that a carry-over effect from one experimental procedure to another may become evident.

In setting up any experiment, the utmost care should be taken to insure the validity of the experiment. Jahoda, Deutsch, and Cook[6] state: "Even with a carefully devised experiment, there is no way to be completely certain of the validity of experimental inferences."

Criteria for determining the effects of the experiment must be established. These criteria must be applicable to all groups used in the experiment. If the measurements used are not equally appropriate for the groups, it will become

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[6]Ibid., p. 61.

impossible to determine the true effects of the experiment. The experimenter should also keep a complete record of all events throughout the experiment.

Suggested Plan of Experimentation. In setting up this experiment, the 1956-1957 Ninth Grade Class of the Wyandotte, Oklahoma, Junior High School is to be used as the control group. The Ninth Grade Class of 1957-1958 is to be used as the experimental group. Each group would contain approximately forty or fifty students. These groups are chosen because this writer feels that the students in these classes can be more easily equated and paired. To clarify the grouping of the students, since the students are in school during different years, the members of the two groups will, by necessity, be paired according to the information collected over the two-year period.

The two groups will be equated and paired according to the following factors.

1. Age of students.

2. Students new to the school.

3. Students formerly enrolled in the school.

4. Academic achievement of the students.

5. Intelligence of the students.

6. Courses students are enrolled in.

7. Assignment of teachers to classes.

8. Home background of the students.

9. Sex of the students.

The information necessary to equate the two groups, according to the above factors, is obtainable from the following school records: (1) student enrollment forms, (2) cumulative records of the students, (3) class schedules, and (4) attendance registers. This information may be supplemented with results of interviews with the students and their teachers, observations of the students made by the teachers, and home visitations.

The students in the control group will follow the routine that has been followed in past years.[7] Throughout the school year, the teachers will be asked to keep complete records of their observations of these students. In the spring, these students will be asked to participate in developing a handbook of information on the school to be used the following year.[8]

In trying to determine the effects of the handbook, the records of the observations made by the teachers, of the students in both groups, will be studied and compared. The school records of these students will also be studied and compared with particular attention being paid to the attendance, drop-outs, tardiness, and academic achievement of the students.

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[7] Supra, pp. 9-10.

[8] Supra, pp. 14-15.

Scope and Limitations

Since this experiment is to be extended over a two-year period of time, difficulties in equating the two groups may result. As Corey[9] says: "It is conceivable that the pupil populations in a school might change so radically under some circumstances that no given population for one year could be considered a random sample of a total population enrolled in the school over a period of years."

Any conclusions, drawn from the experiment, would probably be more valid if a greater number of students were available to participate in the experiment. Extending the experiment to include succeeding ninth grade classes might also provide a more sound basis for drawing conclusions, concerning the value of the handbook.

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[9] Stephen M. Corey, _Action Research to Improve School Practices_ (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953), p. 138.

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