Education in small states

Growth of interest and emergence of a theory

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In purely numerical terms, the world is a world of small states. Over half of the world's sovereign states have populations below 5 million, and forty-seven have populations below 1.5 million. The states are scattered in all parts of the world, and some have considerable strategic significance.

Yet despite the numerical importance of small states, only recently have they attracted extensive study as a category in their own right. This paper charts the growth of interest in small states as a field of academic investigation. It begins with the general picture, before turning to the specific subfield of education. The paper highlights the major thrusts of the literature, and charts an emergent theoretical framework.

Definitions

A paper on small states should indicate at the outset what is meant by 'small'. The term is of course relative: Hong Kong, for example, feels small in comparison with neighbouring China, the Philippines and Indonesia, but feels large compared to Fiji. Likewise, Fiji might feel small compared to Hong Kong, but feels large compared with neighbouring Tuvalu, Tonga and Vanuatu.

Most of the existing literature on the subject recognizes that relative distinctions are important, but nevertheless uses absolute indicators. Population is usually the main criterion, although common alternative or supplementary indicators are area and size of economy. Some analysts combine the indicators into composite indices. Space here precludes commentary on the relative merits of different criteria, and for further discussion readers are referred to Shand (1980), Brock (1984*a*), Dommen (1985) and Clarke and Payne (1987).

For the purpose of this paper, population has been adopted as the main indicator of size. Following a common pattern in much of the literature, the cut-off point is entirely arbitrary, and it is often more appropriate to examine issues along a continuum of size.

It is also necessary at the outset to discuss briefly the term 'state'. Dommen (1985, p. 4) notes that according to many authors any entity which wishes to be regarded as a state 'should be endowed with the attributes of a territory, a permanent population, a government and the capacity to entertain relations with other states'. However, Dommen then shows that none of these facets is entirely straightforward, and ques-

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tions of where statehood begins and ends could be a focus for extensive debate.

For our purposes, this debate would be an unnecessary distraction. Since this paper is concerned with education rather than political science, it is possible to leave the boundaries of statehood vague. Indeed, for present purposes it is useful to stretch concepts to their maximum and to group the education systems of some territories which are not states. Thus, in the context of this paper, the issues facing the education system in Anguilla (a dependent territory with a high degree of autonomy) may be quite comparable to those facing neighbouring Saint Kitts and Nevis (an independent state). Shifting the geographic focus, it may be as illuminating to examine the education system of Macao (a colonial territory) as that of Brunei-Darussalam (an independent state).

To avoid entanglement in matters of political science, therefore, it seems appropriate merely to indicate the states and territories which the author had in mind when preparing this paper. Table 1 presents such a list. It shows all the world's sovereign states, plus a number of other territories which are not sovereign but which have a high degree of administrative autonomy.

The growth of interest in small states

REASONS

Interest in small states as a specialized field is still in its infancy. It is a complex subject, for

TABLE 1. States and territories with populations below 1.5 million

State/territory	Population (thousands)	State/territory	Population (thousands)	State/territory	Population (thousands)
1. Vatican City	1	28. Isle of Man	64	53. Solomon Islands	290
2. Falkland Islands	2	29. Kiribati	64	54. Maldives	298
3. Niue	2	30. Seychelles	66	55. Equatorial Guinea	300
4. Saint Helena	6	31. Bermuda	68	56. Cape Verde	334
5. Turks and Caicos Islands	7	32. Antigua and Barbuda	75	57. Malta	344
6. Nauru	7	33. Jersey	80	58. Qatar	369
7. Anguilla	7	34. Dominica	83	59. Luxembourg	370
8. Tuvalu	8	35. Federated States		60. Suriname	389
9. Montserrat	12	of Micronesia	86	61. Macao	429
10. Belau	12	36. Tonga	97	62. Bahrain	430
11. British Virgin Islands	13	37. Grenada	98	63. Djibouti	456
12. Wallis and Futuna	15	38. São Tomé and Principe	108	64. Comoros	484
13. Cook Islands	17	39. US Virgin Islands	108	65. Reunion	565
14. Northern Marianas	17	40. Saint Vincent		66. Swaziland	676
15. San Marino	23	and the Grenadines	111	67. Cyprus	680
16. Cayman Islands	24	41. Guam	126	68. Gambia	688
17. Liechtenstein	27	42. Saint Lucia	140	69. Fiji	715
18. Monaco	27	43. Vanuatu	145	70. Guyana	790
19. Gibraltar	29	44. New Caledonia	154	71. Guinea-Bissau	810
20. American Samoa	36	45. Western Samoa	159	72. Mauritius	1 040
21. Marshall Islands	41	46. French Polynesia	170	73. Bhutan	1 165
22. Saint Kitts and Nevis	44	47. Belize	171	74. Botswana	1 169
23. Faeroe Islands	47	48. Netherlands Antilles	172	75. Trinidad and Tobago	1 181
24. Andorra	48	49. Brunei-Darussalam	233	76. Gabon	1 206
25. Greenland	55	50. Bahamas	240	77. United Arab Emirates	1 206
26. Guernsey	55	51. Iceland	246	78. Namibia	1 262
27. Aruba	60	52. Barbados	254	79. Oman	1 334
				80. Mauritania	1 339

Note: Most population figures refer to the mid-1980s, though some variations may be found by referring to the source documents.
Sources: Europa Publications (1989); Paxton (1989).

small states display wide diversity in geography, economy and culture. Moreover, it is not always easy to discern which features of individual small states are reflections of small size and thus can be generalized, and which merely reflect the specific cultural, economic or other characteristics of the particular states in question. However, the steady growth in the literature over the last decade has shown that certain features of small states are indeed open to generalizations despite differences in geography, economics and culture. It is also clear that while many development features and processes are common to all states, some are exaggerated and assume greater significance in small states. This in itself makes the subject of small states an important field for study.

A second feature behind the recent growth of interest in small states is simply their increase in number. While the proportionate increase has been modest, the absolute increase has been dramatic. In 1939, sovereign states with populations below 1.5 million numbered only 18 out of 71 (25.3 per cent). By 1976 they numbered 42 out of 156 (26.9 per cent); and by 1986 they numbered 47 out of 168 (28.0 per cent).

The increase in the number of small states chiefly arose from the process of decolonization. In general, small states achieved independence later than large states. In the mid-1950s few people considered that the decolonization process would reach what are now called the microstates of the world. For example, the authors of United Kingdom Labour and Conservative Party documents believed that full sovereignty was not possible in the great majority of British colonies, and that even Sierra Leone was a borderline case (Labour Party, 1957; Blood, 1958). History has quite clearly proved them wrong, for today even Nauru, with 7,000 people, and Tuvalu, with 8,000 people, are sovereign states.

A third reason for the surge of interest in small states has developed from a series of political crises. Events in Grenada and the Falkland Islands during the 1980s demonstrated that small territories in parts of the world that seldom gain widespread attention can have far-reaching significance. The crisis in the Gulf which followed Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 made the point even more strongly.

In these cases the small states were invaded by external powers with far superior economic and political strength. In other cases, small states have threatened major political power bases by making their own overtures to larger countries with differing ideologies. In this context, the cases of Vanuatu and Kiribati may come to mind. For many decades the United States, Australia and New Zealand have taken it for granted that the South Pacific is a Western sphere of influence. However, when in the 1980s Kiribati and Vanuatu entered into fishing agreements with the Soviet Union, the major Western powers were shaken out of their complacency (Kiste, 1989, p. 42). These and similar examples have shown that small states have to be taken seriously, even by the superpowers.

SOME MILESTONES IN THE ACADEMIC LITERATURE

In the academic world, study of the specific issues facing small states may be dated to the late 1950s. In 1957 the International Economic Association held a conference on the economic implications of size, which subsequently led to a book edited by Robinson (1960). However, by today's standards the states examined in the book seem very large. The case-studies of so-called small states included Switzerland, Belgium and Sweden, and the European and other ministates which then existed were not even mentioned. Similar comments apply to a book by Fox (1959) entitled *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II.*

Thus the stage was still awaiting entry of a work dealing more specifically with ministates and microstates. This came in 1965 with a book by Demas. It focused on the economies of the small countries of the Caribbean, and is widely seen as a landmark in the development of the literature (see e.g. Jalan, 1982, p. 2; Bacchus, 1989, p. 11).

Demas' book was followed in 1967 by a

work edited by Benedict and entitled *Problems of Smaller Territories*. The book emanated from a seminar on this theme organized by the Institute of Commonwealth Studies of the University of London. It contained both general papers and case-studies. The former covered aspects of demography, politics, sociology and legislative-executive relations, while the latter covered British Honduras, Luxembourg and Swaziland. The book also devoted chapters to Polynesia and to the minute island of Tory in Ireland.

Two other notable works in this period were by Lloyd (1968) and de Smith (1970). The former was a general work entitled *International Trade Problems of Smaller Nations*. The latter was more specific in geographic focus, examining the problems faced by American territories in Micronesia.

The study of small states gathered further momentum during the 1970s. Space here does not permit review of each item, but Selwyn's (1975) book was of particular importance. Entitled *Development Policy in Small Countries,* it was based on a 1972 conference held in Barbados and organized by the Institute of Development Studies of the University of Sussex. Individual chapters focused on the prospects for industrial development, problems of planning and administration, potential for establishing autonomous monetary policies, and the difficulties in responding to offers of development aid.

Plischke's (1977) book is also noteworthy. It was mainly concerned with the nature of diplomatic processes and the place of small states in international organizations. As well as noting the recent growth in numbers of small states, Plischke charted possible future proliferation.

The 1980s brought even more dramatic development in the literature. Key broadly based works included Dommen and Hein (1985), Harden (1985), Georges (1985), and Clarke and Payne (1987). Also, Shand (1980) prepared a book on the island states of the Pacific and Indian Oceans, Jalan (1982) wrote on the economics of small states, Lyon (1985) collected papers on vulnerability and other matters, and Connell (1988) prepared a monograph on sovereignty and survival.

The study of education in small states

Study of the education systems of small states lagged behind study of economics and politics. One doctoral thesis on the topic was presented in 1972 by Harrigan. The author is a native of the US Virgin Islands, and the bulk of his thesis focused on that territory. Beginning with a general point, however, he suggested (pp. 2-3) that small states 'have the potential to evolve a distinctive identity by recognition of their limitations, a reordering of their priorities and a restructuring and redesigning of their institutions'.

Perhaps surprisingly, Harrigan's work was not followed up with further studies until the 1980s. Then the main thrust for development of the education literature came from the Commonwealth Secretariat. Among the forty-nine members of the Commonwealth existing in the mid-1980s, twenty-nine had populations below 1.5 million (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1986, p. 1). In addition, a further sixteen small dependencies and associated states came under the Commonwealth umbrella and displayed many similar features (Bacchus and Brock, 1987, p. 160). The Commonwealth thus had a special interest in small states. Moreover, the twenty-nine small sovereign states of the Commonwealth considerably outnumbered the fifteen small sovereign states outside the Commonwealth.

In 1983, the Commonwealth Secretariat commissioned Colin Brock, of the University of Hull (United Kingdom), to undertake a survey of education in the small member states of the Commonwealth (Brock, 1984*a*). Brock had previously worked in the Caribbean, and his existing publications included two seminal articles on small countries (Brock, 1980, 1983). The findings of the commissioned survey were published in a report entitled *Scale, Isolation and Dependence: Educational Development in Island Developing and Other Specially Disadvantaged States*.

The next step for the Commonwealth Secretariat was the organization of a pan-Common-

wealth meeting of small states, held in Mauritius in 1985. The meeting brought together participants from small states in the Caribbean, Europe, the South Pacific, Africa and the Indian Ocean, and was the first event of its kind. Despite the wide diversity of cultures and economies in the countries represented, the meeting demonstrated that small size was a determinant of common features in education systems. An edited version of the proceedings was prepared by Bacchus and Brock and published in 1987.

Since the 1985 conference, the Commonwealth Secretariat has proceeded with several more specialized projects. A 1987 meeting in Fiji focused on the supply, training and professional support of education personnel in multi-island situations (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1987); a 1988 meeting in Saint Lucia focused on post-secondary colleges in small states (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988); and a 1989 meeting in Malta focused on the organization and management of ministries of education in small states (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1989). The Secretariat also commissioned work on the work and training of multi-functional administrators (Farrugia and Attard, 1989).

During the same period, awareness of the specific needs of small states increased within UNESCO. In 1984 the Organization opened an office in Western Samoa to serve the states of the South Pacific, the majority of which were small (Higginson, 1987, p. 140); and in 1986 UNESCO Headquarters commissioned a manuscript on educational planning in small countries (Bray, 1987). In 1990 small states were the focus of a special round table at a UNESCO-sponsored international congress in Mexico on the planning and management of educational development (UNESCO, 1991, pp. 27-9).

In parallel, an increasing amount of work was being conducted by scholars in various universities. Bennell and Oxenham (1983), for example, prepared a paper on skills and qualifications for small states; Brock and colleagues prepared several papers on a wide range of aspects (e.g. Brock and Parker, 1985; Brock and Smawfield, 1988; Brock, 1988*a*, 1988*b*); the British Comparative and International Education Society organized a mini-conference on the topic in 1984 (Brock, 1984*b*); Bray and colleagues prepared papers on Montserrat, Macao and Brunei-Darussalam (Bray and Fergus, 1986; Bray and Hui, 1989; Attwood and Bray, 1989); Atchoarena (1985, 1988*a*, 1988*b*) prepared a doctoral dissertation and various papers on the Caribbean; and Smawfield (1988) and Smith (1988) wrote doctoral theses on the British Virgin Islands and the Falkland Islands, respectively.

Education in small states was also a focus for a special panel in the 1990 and 1991 conferences of the Comparative and International Education Society in the United States, and for a 1990 event hosted by the University of London Institute of Education. The London meeting focused on education in small systems rather than small states, but the focus on systems did permit analysts to note many points of overlap between the issues confronting small states and those confronting subsections of larger states. For instance, one paper at this conference linked the literature on education in small states to analysis of outer islands in Scotland (Smith, 1990).

Elements of a theory

The nature and place of theory in the field of education is to some extent controversial. Scholars disagree even on the meaning of the word 'theory'. Discussion in this case is complicated by the fact that study of education in small states also requires insights from other fields.

As noted by Barrow and Milburn (1986, p. 224), the word 'theory' derives from the Greek *theōria*, meaning 'speculative thought'. Theory, in this basic sense, marks the distinction between the observation of particulars, and the attempt to form general observations and hence, ultimately, explanatory systems.

It is this meaning of the word 'theory' that is used here. It is recognized that theory in the social sciences stands up poorly against the standards of the natural sciences. However, it is clear

that social scientists can formulate general observations and construct explanatory systems. One may agree with Miller and Wilson (1983, p. 112) that social scientists can and should develop theories composed on the one hand of concepts and on the other of propositions which express the relationships between concepts. It is on this model that the remaining part of this paper is based.

Theory on education in small states uses elements from many other fields of inquiry. The most prominent elements are from political science, economics, sociology and public administration. These will be introduced here in turn. These perspectives can be used to contribute to and enrich what Olivera (1988) has called the science of 'educology'. Olivera's basic model is as useful for the study of education in small states as for other fields of inquiry. It shows how education may be made a central focus while perspectives are nevertheless drawn from other fields. This is illustrated diagrammatically in Figure 1.

POLITICAL SCIENCE

Politics and nationalism

Beginning with the broad international picture, the first section of this paper highlighted the numerical emergence of small states during the last few decades. It is also true that many states have disappeared. However, no fewer than 123 of today's sovereign states are products of the present century, and 74 have been created since 1959. Many of these states are very small.

Among the consequences of the transition of a territory to statehood is the standing that the new status confers. Because of their statehood, the 8,000 people of Tuvalu, the 44,000 people of Saint Kitts and Nevis and the 66,000 people of the Seychelles have a much greater prominence in international affairs than do territories with comparably sized populations but which are mere parts of larger countries. The sovereign states are marked on international maps, send their representatives to international meetings, and have a voice which is out of proportion to their small size. Many non-sovereign territories also benefit from this feature, especially if they are distant from their 'mother' countries. This may be illustrated by the role in international affairs of Bermuda and of the Cayman Islands.

The medium-sized and large states do not always welcome this situation. They often consider the prominence of small states undeserved, and sometimes resent having to treat small states as equal partners in certain international meetings. Yet medium-sized and large states also have another perspective. The fact that small states receive disproportionately large per capita amounts of external aid (UNCTAD, 1985;

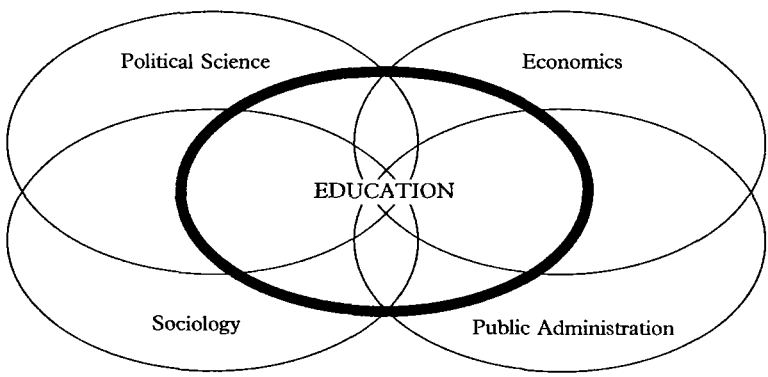

FIG. 1. Overlapping fields in the study of education in small states.

Connell, 1986; Maglen, 1990) only partly reflects the greater needs of the small states. More strongly it reflects recognition by the medium-sized and large states that the small states do have sovereignty, and that in the international world the friendship even of small states can be valuable.

It should also be noted that at least some small states gained their sovereignty not because this had long been envisaged but rather because several alternatives to independence were tried, found wanting and proved impermanent. This may be illustrated by reference to the Caribbean, where for some small states neither continuance as a colony, nor membership in a West Indian federation, nor even associated status proved to be sustainable alternatives to independence. As observed by Harden (1985, p. 19), this frustrating record of fruitless searches for 'alternatives to independence' should be borne in mind before hasty and dismissive judgements are passed on the appropriateness and viability of small states as ostensibly independent units.

Moreover, once having gained their sovereignty, few small states are willing to compromise it. The fact that their peoples have a strong sense of national identity has considerable implications not only for the broad ecology of small states but also, more specifically, for their education systems. For instance, strong national identity requires school curricula to reflect the specific history, politics, geography and social circumstances of the small states. The criteria for local relevance in textbooks made by the peoples of small states are much more stringent than the criteria made by populations of comparable size who live in suburbs of cities of larger states, or even those who occupy islands on the periphery of larger states.

This feature has several further implications. The first concerns human and financial resources. On the human side, it may be difficult for small states to find sufficient local talent to actually write textbooks for the whole range of subjects and levels of the education system; and, on the financial side, even in an era of laser printing and low-cost photocopying the unit costs of small print runs can be high. Such factors contribute to extreme types of situation. Small states which can manage to arrange production of textbooks for their local needs can at one level achieve a measure of relevance that is far greater than that likely to be achieved by school systems operating as mere parts of larger countries. This may be illustrated by reference to an excellent social studies book produced in Anguilla with UNESCO assistance and entitled *Anguilla: Our Island* (Vanterpool et al., 1990).

Yet, on the other hand, small states which fail to secure specially prepared textbooks feel the loss more severely. Here one may highlight the case of Macao, where almost no school books have been produced locally (Bray and Hui, 1989). Most schools rely heavily on books from Hong Kong, with the result that their students read much more about the history, transport, economy and politics of Hong Kong than of Macao. Textbooks for larger states are unlikely to have the same degree of microlevel relevance that is demanded for small states; but the microlevel inhabitants of larger states are not likely to feel the lack so keenly.

Strong nationalist tendencies also have implications for regional and other forms of co-operation. While it is easy to find examples of very successful co-operation among small states, most forms of co-operation operate under considerable tension, and some have collapsed altogether. This is true of co-operation in education as much as in other spheres (Payne, 1980; McCall, 1984; Crocombe and Meleisea, 1988; Packer, 1989). Many proposals for co-operation which seem to make sense from an external viewpoint have foundered on the realities of small-state nationalism and politics.

Finally, under the heading of nationalism, it is useful to note that the governments of small states are under strong pressure as far as possible to employ only citizens of those states. Sometimes this is simply not possible, in which case expatriates are employed for longer or shorter durations of time. But the pressure to employ locals has implications for education as much as for other spheres of government activity. In particular it means that individuals may be

employed even when they lack strong qualifications and aptitudes for the jobs they are expected to perform. Of course the same nationalistic tendencies are also found in medium-sized and large states. But the difference is that small states have much more limited pools from which to recruit the personnel that they need. Once again, politics and nationalism have a substantial impact on the ecology of small states' operations.

The internal politics of small states

Some generalizations may also be made about the internal politics of small states. For example, Lowenthal (1987, p. 30) suggests that the very smallness of small states gives their inhabitants an influence *vis-à-vis* their leaders denied to most people in larger entities: 'Rulers known personally even to the poorest are unlikely to seek, let alone to succeed, to ignore or exclude any group from consideration. And the leaders themselves are apt to retain and promote an ingrained sense of communality and equity, even egalitarianism.'

This view partly echoes that of Diggines (1984, p. 192), who suggests that: 'It may well be, for example, that the very closeness and intimacy of a small society produces a feeling of identity of the individual with his whole community which is more difficult to achieve in larger nations. . . . In politics, a small population can often more easily judge and choose its political and other leaders from personal knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses than in a large society, where judgements of this kind have necessarily to be based mainly on television and other media which distort or conceal the true personalities of the individuals being judged.'

These observations influence the role of education decision-makers as much as other people. Planning in small states can never be an anonymous activity, but is inevitably highly participatory. Most observers would consider this a desirable feature of small states, but it does require special skills to ensure that participation is balanced and productive.

However, the rather positive image portrayed in the quotations from Lowenthal and Diggines is not always valid. Benedict (1967*b*) pointed out that although theoretically a small territory with an informed electorate should be able to operate a representative democracy very well, in small territories with powerful élites it may be difficult for an opposition to develop. Partly as a result, single-party states and dictatorships are far from unknown in small territories. Lowenthal also recognizes (1987, p. 29) that 'intense class divisions and highly visible extremes of wealth and poverty, privilege and squalor, power and impotence, make consensus and democracy in many small states more pious principles than practical realities'.

This analysis indicates that education planners and managers in small states may find themselves operating in either extremely democratic or extremely autocratic circumstances. The exaggerated personalism of small states may also have other consequences which, adapting from Sutton (1987, p. 15) may be summarized as follows. In small states, it may be suggested that:

The role of the individual takes on greater significance.

The individual, as a member of a group, is more susceptible to pressures, both internal and external.

Politicians exercise greater influence over administrators, frequently based more on personal than on party factors.

Top political leaders are more likely to communicate directly with one another and directly to oversee the actions of their lieutenants.

There is less functional specialization among politicians, and both they and senior administrators are likely to accumulate roles.

Criticism of political leaders and senior administrators may be muted, often informal, but where it does appear is likely to be personal in form and strident in tone.

All these points stress the need to develop perspectives for educational planning and management which are different in small states from those in large states.

ECONOMICS

The majority of small states have very open economies, highly dependent on other states for economic trade and for supply of goods. Also, some small states rely on remittances from migrants as a source of external revenue, and many small states are highly dependent on tourism (Ward, 1975; Galbis, 1984; Connell, 1988).

These features combine to make small states very conscious of external linkages in their education systems. Dependence on other countries requires pupils to learn international languages, perhaps to the detriment of local ones. It may also require extensive training in commercial and trade-oriented subjects. Governments actively promoting emigration have to ensure that the qualifications earned by school leavers are recognized in the destination countries, sometimes at the cost of local curriculum relevance. Governments wishing to promote tourism may deliberately structure school syllabi to inform pupils about the expectations of tourists and about the countries from which the tourists come (Crocombe, 1987, p. 31).

A further aspect of economics with implications for education concerns the small size of labour markets. Small states need most of the basic types of specialist personnel required in medium-sized and large states, but they need them in smaller numbers. The greatest problems arise in the 'all or none' cases where important specialist work needs to be done but where there is insufficient work to employ an individual full time. One example, given by Selwyn (cited in Bennell and Oxenham, 1983, p. 29) is of the hospital in Anguilla which on average needs to take fewer than five X-rays a month. In this case it is difficult to justify employment of a full-time radiographer, but it is both expensive and inconvenient for patients to travel outside the country to be X-rayed. The recommended solution was to train a nurse to operate the X-ray equipment. This was certainly feasible, but is worth noting because it shows the ways in which both training programmes and conditions of employment may differ between small and larger states (see also Taylor, 1990).

Finally, questions of economics and finance are at the core of decisions on the range of educational provision in small states. This includes both vertical and horizontal dimensions, i.e. on the one hand, the range from pre-primary to post-secondary, and on the other hand, the range of types of education which can be provided at any one level. In both cases, the lack of economies of scale is a critical constraint on small states. Financial considerations prevent small states from running universities with full complements of subject specialisms (Bray, 1990). They also prevent small states from providing as much diversity as they would like for children of different abilities and cultural backgrounds.

SOCIOLOGY

One of the earliest and best analyses of the societies of small states was made by Benedict (1967*b*). He began (p. 45) by distinguishing between a small society and a small territory. He pointed out that small societies do not exist only in small states, for they may also exist in large states that are highly segmented. Nevertheless, much of the sociological theory that has been developed for small societies in large states is also applicable to small states, and it has as much importance in education as in other fields.

The main criteria of size for societies are the number and quality of role-relationships. In a small society individuals interact with each other over and over again in a wide range of social situations. In a large society, individuals have more impersonal or 'part-relationships'.

Just as it is possible to have a small society in a large territory, it is also possible to have part of a large society in a small territory. The two examples of the latter presented by Benedict were Luxembourg and Monaco, the peoples of which have strong relationships with peoples in neighbouring states. The sociological features of Luxembourg and Monaco are clearly very

different from those of more isolated states such as Cape Verde and Tuvalu. However it is arguable that some differences are only of degree, and that many of the basic features are found in all small states.

Following Gluckman (1955), Benedict (1967*b*, p. 47) describes social relationships in small states as 'multiplex' in that 'nearly every social relationship serves many interests'. This has important implications for economic and social development, for it means that the decisions and choices of individuals are influenced by their relations with other individuals in many contexts. Thus, for example, it may be difficult to remove inefficient employees on grounds of inefficiency alone because they may be attached to their employers by kinship or political ties. Impersonal standards of efficiency, performance and integrity are modified by the myriad relationships connecting the individuals concerned.

Benedict also builds on the work of Parsons (1949), pointing out that social roles in small societies tend to be particularistic, i.e. that standards of judgement depend on who people are rather than on what they do. In large societies, by contrast, roles are more likely to be universalistic and based on fairly fixed standards and criteria. Shopkeepers in large societies treat their customers fairly uniformly, and doctors do the same with their patients. Such relationships, at least ideally in terms of a model, are affectively neutral. They also have limited time spans, though they may be repeated at intervals. The standards of judgement are based on criteria of achievement: what a person does, rather than who he or she is.

Universalistic and particularistic role-relationships, Benedict continues (p. 50), involve values. A person playing a role on universalistic criteria is using one set of values, e.g. whether one's brother-in-law needs the money one loaned him. In a small society one's customer is likely to be one's brother-in-law. Inhabitants in small societies grow up within interdependent networks in which the same individuals figure many times. Relationships in small societies seldom concentrate on single acts or specific functions, but tend instead to be diffuse and to last for a long time. This is likely to influence the processes of education planning and management as much as other sectors of life.

Benedict's analysis was built upon by Lowenthal (1987, pp. 38-9). The small size of the social field, together with ingrained awareness of ecological and social fragility, fosters what Lowenthal calls 'managed intimacy'. Small-state inhabitants learn to get along, whether they like it or not, with people they will know in many contexts over their whole lives. To enable the social mechanism to function without undue stress, Lowenthal suggests, they minimize or mitigate overt conflict. They become expert at muting hostility, deferring their own views, containing disagreement, and avoiding dispute in the interests of stability and compromise. In large societies it is easy to take issue with antagonists you need seldom or ever come across again; but to differ with someone in a small society, where the two of you share a long mutual history and expect to go on being involved in countless ways, is another matter.

Another point emerging from the particularistic nature of roles in small societies concerns the place of expatriates. Many small states recruit expatriates not only to acquire expertise which is not available in the local population, but also to reduce particularity and gain more 'neutral' staff.

However, even this arrangement cannot guarantee universalism. The longer individual expatriates remain in a country, the more difficult it becomes for them to preserve a universalistic orientation. As time goes by, the expatriates become involved in a series of highly particularistic relations with other outsiders who form a small clique with limited contact with the local population and/or with the local population itself. Thus it is only with short-term consultants that a high degree of universalism can be fully expected; but the drawback then is that such consultants are unlikely to be familiar with local conditions and personalities.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

These and other comments which have already been made about public administration are further evidence of the fact that fields of study overlap. Nevertheless it is still worth making a few additional points.

The first point concerns linkages between bureaucracies and politicians. Even in medium-sized and large states, it may be suggested, the concept of the politically neutral civil servant is highly questionable (Harris, 1990, pp. 73-7). The concept is particularly untenable in smaller states – a fact that becomes increasingly obvious as one proceeds down the scale. In small states, it is simply essential for many people to be multi-functional; and that includes mixing politics with bureaucracy as much as it includes mixing other functions (Murray, 1985). To give some specific examples from the education sector, in 1990 the Director of Education in the Maldives was also a Member of Parliament; the same was true for the Sub-secretary for Education in Suriname; and the Minister of Education in Brunei-Darussalam was also Vice-Chancellor of the University.

Observations may also be made about the internal organization of ministries of education. One aspect concerns the range of specialist positions. As might be expected, some specialist functions are less common in the smallest states, but more common in the larger ones. They include planning, inspections, guidance and examinations. However, the ministries of the smallest countries still have some functions which are not found in the ministries of some larger countries (Bray, 1991). This fact reinforces the observation made earlier that although tendencies may be observed, relationships between country size and bureaucratic organization are far from uniform.

Another generalization concerns the extent to which officers in small ministries have to be multi-functional. Certainly a degree of multi-functionalism is also required of officers in medium-sized and large ministries. However, the fact remains that multi-functionalism becomes more pronounced as the scale diminishes (Farrugia and Attard, 1989).

These features of small-state societies affect the nature of education as much as everything else, and represent both an asset and a weakness. On the positive side it means that administrative processes are personalized. As noted by one forum on small states (UNESCO, 1990, p. 28), the 'faceless bureaucrat' so commonly decried in medium-sized and large states simply does not exist in small states. But it is also true that the highly personalized nature of small states can cause major problems for education administration (Bray, 1991).

Another aspect concerns reform. On the one hand, education systems in small states may be tremendously responsive laboratories in which decision-makers can easily identify resources and constraints, and can easily have a strong personal influence over the whole system; but, on the other hand, education administrators and practitioners may be inherently cautious and conservative, knowing that if their actions go wrong they will have nowhere to hide. The transparent nature of small societies makes some administrators very careful to protect themselves by always operating 'according to the book' in a highly formal way (Frederick, 1991; Bray, 1991).

The main purposes of this paper have been to chart the growth of the literature on education in small states and to develop a theoretical model. It must be admitted that the theoretical constructs are still in an emergent stage, but it is hoped that the paper has nevertheless achieved several goals. Chief among them is the assertion that small states are worthy of study as a category in their own right and that, despite the diversity, it is possible to make some generalizations about the environment and the dynamics of educational development in small states.

In this respect, it is useful to quote from a 1985 Commonwealth Secretariat publication. The document stated (p. 5) that: 'The style of educational development . . . is too frequently modelled on what is appropriate and fashionable in large states. Small countries are not simply scaled-down versions of large countries. They have an ecology of their own. We believe that

there is a cluster of factors which suggest particular strategies in the smaller states of the world.' This paper has certainly supported that statement. It has also extended analysis of the nature of the ecology of small states and of the implications of that ecology for the development of education.

One emphasis of the paper has concerned relationships between small size and the politics, economies, societies and public administration of small states. In making this analysis, the paper has also affirmed another point. This is that it is both legitimate and useful to place education at the centre of a study while at the same time drawing on the conceptual frameworks of other fields. It will be noted only that the concepts from political science, economics, sociology and public administration overlap with the study of education, but also that they overlap with each other. No doubt it would be useful to extend this list to include other fields and disciplines; but that will have to be a task for future research and analysis.

It was also noted at the beginning that different criteria for scale may be adopted. In this paper, population has been made the chief criterion, but much fruitful work remains to be done on the implications of other criteria, including geographic area and the size of GNP, and on the interaction between these variables. Meanwhile, it is important to stress again that the cut-off point of 1.5 million adopted for this paper is entirely arbitrary, and that in many cases it is more fruitful to examine issues along a continuum of size. Certainly the issues facing the smallest of the small may be slightly different from those which are in the middle and upper ranges. ■

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