### Project 4: Processes in Establishing Slum Educational Centers (Full Version)

Over the past 50 years, ethnographic research has been applied to education and helped us understand how schools operate in culture and society. It has created a basis for critiquing purely behavioral (psychological) explanations of teaching and learning by widening the framework of data collection and analysis to include family, community, and organizational (socio-cultural) factors. Our limited ethnography will be informed by experience in the field (practicum) and knowledge of issues (course-related reading and video-viewing) as they result in organizational analysis. Through the practicum, you will have learned ethnographic research observational approaches and ask questions as a means of serving with certain contextual understandings. Alongside the ethnographic research phase, you will use a more explicit set of questions as an idea base from which to comprehend various educational processes in the development of (a) a slum pre-school, school or (b) a vocational school.

***Aim:*** The learning goal is to maximize your understanding of the processes of developing a school in the slums. You can choose to focus on preschool, primary, secondary or vocational schools.

The output goal of this assignment is to collectively integrate reports from multiple schools of progressions involved in the formation of schools for, or of the poor across your cities. If there are sufficient learners in the class, those working with vocational training will integrate their reports into a final proposal, those with preschools integrate theirs etc.

***Procedure***

There are several assignments that feed into this main assignment:

**1. Practicum**. Identify a school serving slum-resident children or adolescents—either **private** or **public as** your practicum school. Set up your practicum to accomplish as much as you can of the following.

As you set up your practicum, do so with a discussion as to whether your analysis for this class can be used by the school administration to advance their own evaluation of their progressions - how can you be most helpful to them? Are there areas they would appreciate you doing some research on that would assist them. Don't over-commit more than 40-60 hours, but if you are contributing, then they are likely to help you in turn. Be advised that in public schools we have often found there is significant resistance to any involvement like this, sometimes because of fear of exposure, sometimes because of a sense of not being very effective. (Graded in Project 1).

**2. Readings:** Identify 5 pieces of literature in your country that defines processes of school development. There are normatively legal, governmental, financial requirements on school development. Integrate ideas from these and the required books into your paper to demonstrate your familiarity with these. Also list the number of pages read, which should be around 6-900. These processes you read about in the literature may or may not work in urban poor schools, but they still tend to set expectations. Global literature may also feed into this process but you collectively will have to evaluate which aspects are most useful. As a team you may attach key readings as pdf's to your final report to flesh out key ideas - but you need to evaluate how significant those articles are.

**3. Collective Definition of Categories for Investigation**: (Submit by end of first month) (In 2020. Professor will define categories for you, but you should still review these books) Work from the three resource books for the course sifting through their ideas to prioritize ideas that relate either to the target of that team: pre-school, elementary or high school or vocational schools. Though these relate to preschools, many of the categories are equally useful for vocational schools.

* Jack, Gail H. (2004). *The Business of Child Care: Management and Financial Strategies*: Cengage Learning.
* Talan, Teri N., & Bloom, Paula Jorde. (2011). *Program Administration Scale: Measuring Early Childhood Leadership and Management,* (Second Edition ed.): Teachers College Press.
* Harms, Thelma, Clifford, Richard M., & Cryer, Debby. (2004). *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Revised (ECERS-R)* (Revised ed.).

In addition, the text on vocational schools will add categories for vocational schools. (You may find better indigenous listings to start with as the literature on the web tends to be first world oriented).

* Hoffman, Nancy. (2011). *Schooling in the Workplace: How Six of the World's Best Vocational Education Systems Prepare Young People for Jobs and Life.* Harvard Education Press.

For example the PAS analysis has 10 sub-scales and 23 or 25 variables. Are these the variables of most significance in the slum context? What is the best approach to collecting the data on these. For example, the following list has been used. It is not as good as PAS but is has several additional perspectives. And Gail Jack's book and CD has a very advanced set of ways of looking at both financial issues. Whereas Reno and her website cover 15 aspects. Delete those that seem insignificant. Focus on 20 items at most.

1. **Environment:** Conduct a series of broad, “big picture” observations on eight dimensions of organizational life (below). Take detailed notes. Convert these notes into a rich **description** (approx. 3 pages for each school).
   1. *Space:* the physical plant
   2. *Actors:* the people involved as learners, teachers, administrators, parents, volunteers, etc.
   3. *Activities:* the typical set of related acts that school actors do
   4. *Objects:* the physical things which are present in the setting for educational purposes
   5. *Acts:* single acts that people do that have special meaning
   6. *Events:* a set of related activities that people carry out (e.g. a “lesson”)
   7. *Goals:* the main things people are trying to accomplish
   8. *Feeling:* the emotions that are felt and expressed by actors
   9. *Classroom resources*
   10. Playground capacity
   11. Staffrooms/ Administrative rooms
   12. Technology
2. **Leadership:** Conduct semi-formal interviews with **school leaders** and either **teachers or parents** to analyse the decision-making processes and leadership dyanmics of the school .
   1. *School leaders*Collect information related to the following questions: (1) When and how was the school founded? [Probe for the steps taken to develop an educational center-- from original vision to actual student enrollment. What were the political, financial, and human resource (finding competent leaders and teachers) obstacles?] (2) How did they overcome the many forces that discourage schooling among slum children (see readings)? (3) Is their *primary* goal to improve school attendance (increase # of learners) or to improve school quality? What strategies do they have in place to make progress in either area? In particular, what indicators do they use to track improvements in school quality?
   2. *Teachers or parents*
   3. Arrange interviews with at least 2 teachers or parents from each school. (1) Ask teachers/parents at the private school: *Why are parents willing to make a considerable financial sacrifice (i.e. pay fees) when “free” public schools are available?* (2) Ask teachers/parents at the public school: *What are the main reasons children enroll in public schools rather than private schools?*
3. **Participation and Academic Quality:** Analyze the observational and interview data for the key factors—individual, family, cultural, community, and school-- that explain
   1. school participation (student home life, how parents partner with school) and
   2. learning productivity (academic quality) in both the private and public school. (The table below can help you mentally organize the data.) Include references to the articles (see 'Preparation') that explain why many slum parents and kids make a rational choice *not* to attend school.
4. **Management**: Use the questions in the forums about financials, management style and about teacher training in the schools. Do they have a strategic plan? Budget plan for next years? Board functioning at a strategic and policy level or dealing with nuts and bolts? Finances are sensitive, so you may not be able to ask about these. Start with whether the school has an annual financial report with assets and liabilities and income and expense summaries. You may need to ask the principal if these are available. If you are doing a funding proposal or report to a donor then these are much easier to access. Who are the stakeholders? How much are the community stakeholders?
5. **Curriculum:** Local, government or Christian imported? How is it developed? What is the involvement of the teachers in its development or funding from third party stakeholders?
6. **Funding:** Stakeholders - how much do they control processes? How are teachers paid? What % are scholarships and what 5 are fees? How do they set the fees? What is critical to keep the school afloat financially? What is the marketing strategy? How is that funded? Partnerships?
7. **Finances and Accountability**: Who makes financial decisions? Where are accountabilities? Income and expense reports for last three years ; balance sheets; cash flows. Salary level? Benefits? scheduling and finances? Substitute teachers?
8. **Educational Assessment**
9. **Teacher training**: Selection? Qualifications? Ongoing training? Supervision? Motivation? Espirit de Corps? teacher handbook?

**4. Report ( You have two - one report on your school for the administrator, one for the class)**

1. Write a 4-6 page, single spaced report of your observational and interview data. Organize the report into three sections: (a) **Introduction**: overview of slum community and research methods used to collect data. (b) **Description** of the dimensions of organizational life for the school. (c1) **Analysis** of the factors that facilitate and/or impede the access of urban poor kids to a quality education, and what could be done in order for a high-quality education to be broadly available to them. or (c2) Alternatively and preferred, focus on the development of the school from birth even using a Gannt chart to identify how all of the elements were developed sequentially, and what appear to be the next steps.
2. Formatting: Give the report a title, occasional graphics. Include sub-heads and page #s. Spell- and grammar-check prior to submission. Attach appendices if need be.
3. [Required step] Present a copy of the report to the lead administrator at the school. Ask them to correct any inaccurate data and suggest any revisions (additions, deletions) that would strengthen the report. Schedule a meeting to review the recommendations and to discuss related issues. Revise the report based on this feedback.
4. **Submit the initial personal report to your administrator, to Populi**.
5. Submit the final report (It is recognized that this course has had the most difficult practicums as often school administrators are more bothered by someone coming in than welcoming. Work with your city leader and connections to get good recommendations and seek to communicate how you can contribute. Where difficulties ensure, please be sure to discuss these with me early - so that adjustments can be made.

* Evaluation: Innovation, content of each above, layout, usefulness.

**An additional approach:** Use the free GanttProject software off the web, and develop a Gannt flow chart process of setting up a slum school. Involve several people in your discussion either those with expertise, or local parents who might want to implement this idea in setting up a new school, plus the teachers you are working alongside. Make sure you get the major issues in there, like logistics, administration, resourcing, cash flow, teacher recruitment and training, student recruitment etc. Plus items that answer the issues above. Essentially follow the process above but focus it on initiation of a new school.