CONSULTANCY WORK ABROAD
FOR POLICY RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

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Abstract:

This article is based on the premise that recorded accounts of Policy Research in Education (in less advanced countries) are not sufficiently clear and /or detailed enough about the different Tiers and Stages of the Policy Process that they describe, and about the complexity and diversity of Policy Research. The aim of the article then is to increase awareness of the Policy Process and of Policy Research among researchers and to promote discussions about policy issues among policymakers and among sponsors of Policy Research. The article presents summaries of three Policy Research studies (in Turkey, The Gambia, and Mali, respectively) that draw attention to the above points.

Keywords: Consultancy Work, Policy Research, Policy Process, Education

1. Introduction

A few years ago, I started thinking that reported accounts of educational research undertaken in less advanced countries were not always detailed enough (in particular regarding research instruments and data analyses) or sufficiently clear when describing the Policy development process. I then realised that such an information gap was largely due to the complexity and diversity of Policy Research.

1.1 The Aim
The aim in this article then is to illustrate this point and thus enhance the understanding of Policy Research (in Education) in less advanced countries and, in particular, the understanding among researchers who are contemplating going into the field of Policy Research. The objectives are:

a) To highlight the fact that the Policy Process is multi-tiered and progresses in stages; and hence, that Policy Research may be undertaken at various Tiers and Stages of the process — and not only at the National and/or Central Policy Tiers (see Figure 1).

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b) To raise the awareness of researchers about the research activities and procedures that may be involved in the conduct of Policy Research across the various Tiers and Stages of the Education Policy process — by giving concrete examples of Policy Research in three less advanced countries. The presumption is that such awareness would promote discussions among sponsors of Policy research, researchers and policy-makers (and thus contribute to the Policy Development process and to the development of research proposals).

The article presents the summaries of three Policy Research Studies which I undertook for my Consultancy work in, respectively, Turkey, The Gambia, and Mali. The three research studies were about:

(A) The Industrial Schools Project in Turkey;
(B) High-level workforce needs in The Gambia;
(C) CARE – International's intervention in Education in Mali.

The summaries follow after a brief introduction to the theoretical framework about Policy Process and Policy Research. The presentation of each study is in accordance with a format often adopted for Social Science research reports.

2. The Theoretical Framework

2.1 The Policy Process in Education

The Policy Process in Education is, in general, multi-tiered (Ritchie, 1996), that is, there is a whole complex of policy layers with interconnections between them. As Figure 1 shows, on the one hand, a Primary National Policy (such as the policy of basic *"Education For All"*) operates through the other tiers of the policy process.

Figure 1: Possible Tiers of the Primary National Policy Process for EFA

Central Policies	Those policies which stem from the National policy, such as a policy about lowering the school entry age.
Strategic Policies	Those policies designed to implement the Central policies, such as a policy to build more classrooms.
Operational Policies	Those policies which represent the practical workings of the policies formulated at the higher levels, such as a policy for the planning and designing of more classrooms.

On the other hand, what takes place at the lower levels can lead to a re-assessment and modification of the policies at the higher levels. Thus, a Central policy is not a precise document, "*a frozen text*" (Crump, 1992), as there are spaces and contradictions which can be exploited at various levels (regional, local, institutional).

Moreover, in general, the Policy Process progresses in stages after an initial definition of the principle or ideology behind the Primary policy (Hedges and Richie, 1987). The stages are as indicated in Figure 2:

Figure 2: Stages in the Policy Process

- Formulating the Problem: recognising and defining the educational problem in question.
- Formulating the Policy: considering and evaluating possible options to overcome the problem and defining a goal.
- Implementing the Policy.
- Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy.

2.2 The Policy-Research Interface

Looking further into the Policy Process, the Policy – Research Interface raises many questions, in particular about the Research component in this relationship.

In this regard, two contrasting models for Policy Research are well known and are vulnerable to much criticism (Trowler, 1998); they are:

a) the Engineering model;
b) the Enlightenment model.

With its "scientific" stance, the Engineering model conveys a view of social "reality" as static and external to the researcher. The model rather assumes that it is possible for educational research to access this social "reality", and to inform policy-makers about it, by providing them with "hard data" (often statistical), about such matters as enrolment ratios on courses. In stark contrast, the Enlightenment model is predicated on the assumption that social "reality" is to some extent socially constructed. In this model, the research aim is to enlighten policy-makers by providing insights and informed judgements. The strengths and weaknesses of these respective philosophical positions have been well rehearsed (see, for example, Bryman, 1995). However, it seems that the influence of the quantitative paradigm may have been "*paramount*" in "*many of the major international Development assistance agencies*" (Crossley and Vulliamy, 1996); but, whilst such quantitative information is crucial for the higher tiers of the policy process, it does not obviate the need for qualitative research, particularly in less advanced countries, because of its "*increased attention to local contextual factors*" (Crossley and Vulliamy, 1996).

It also transpired from the relevant literature (Richie and Sykes, 1996) that four main types of Policy Research have been identified, as shown in Figure 3; although "*there is inevitably an overlap between these four types*" (Hedges and Ritchie, 1987).

Figure 3: Types of Policy Research

a) Contextual research concerned with describing what exists: its form, nature, and so on.
b) Diagnostic research concerned with the reasons for what exists.
c) Strategic research concerned with the development or formulation of plans for future action.
d) Evaluative research concerned with the effectiveness of the implementation of the actions.

3. The Three Research Studies

The above theoretical framework for Policy Process and Policy Research opened the possibility of broadly categorising the three Research Studies in terms of the descriptive statements in Figures 1, 2, and 3; and this categorisation resulted in the diagram shown in Figure 4, thus bringing into relief the differences between the three studies during the policy-making process.

In doing the Summaries, a large proportion of the research findings has had to be jettisoned. Importantly too, the research methodology used in the three studies was a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods.

Figure 4: The Research Studies *by* Country,
Policy Process Tier and Stage*, *and* Type of research*

Country	Research Study	Policy Process Tier	Policy Process Stage	Type of Research *(in broad terms)*
Turkey	The study about the Industrial Schools Project	Operational	Policy Implementation	Evaluative
The Gambia	The Study of the High – Level Manpower Needs	Strategic	Problem Formulation	Contextual
Mali	The Study of CARE- International's Intervention	Central	Problem Formulation	Strategic

Key: *see Figures 1,2,3 about these terms

3.1 The Study about the Industrial Schools Project in Turkey
3.1.1 The Context
This two-week consultancy for this World Bank/British Council sponsored project in 1990 focused on the Centre for Technical and Vocational Education Research and Development (METARGEM) in Turkey. Under Article 42 of the Apprenticeship and Vocational Training Act 1986 in Turkey, "*subjects regarding the establishment, management, operation and revolving fund services*" of the Centre and its "*principles and methods of work*" would be defined in a bye-law; and the purpose of the Centre was to undertake "*planning, research, development and production services required by the Ministry of National Education on subjects concerning Apprenticeship, Vocational and Technical Training, or to provide that these services are undertaken by others*".

3.1.2 The Problem Statement
In the event, the establishment of the Centre had still not been officially approved at the time of this consultancy, and as one informant put it, "*there is no 'cadre' because nobody says you are in charge of this or that*". The staff were consequently very conscious of the fact that, apparently, they were still Industrial Schools teachers on secondment to the Centre — no more, no less!

The Centre was still waiting for "the regulations" concerning its work. However, apparently under pressure from the Ministry of National Education, the METARGEM staff, in collaboration with the four relevant Directorates of Technical/Vocational

Education in the country, had published a document which detailed the aims of the Centre, provided an organisation chart for the Centre and, by so doing, clarified its hierarchical structure and the professional accountability chain. The chart showed that, in addition to the Director, there were two Deputy Directors: one for 'Technical' matters and the other for 'Administrative' matters.

3.1.3 The Aim

The aim of this consultancy was to provide the project sponsors and METARGEM / PIU with recommendations for the remaining man-months of Consultancies and Fellowships in connection with the Industrial Schools Project.

3.1.4 The Methodology
3.1.4.1 The Data Collection Procedures

The data collection methods used were the following:

A. a desk study of relevant official documents; these were, for example:
   a) the document *"Education System in Turkey, March 1990"*. Ministry of National Education, Turkey;
   b) the METARGEM document, Ministry of National Education, 1988, Turkey.
B. individual, semi-structured, open-ended interviews of, respectively, the Deputy Director (Technical) of METARGEM, three METARGEM Heads of Technical Departments, and the Head of the Revolving Fund Department;
C. a seminar which the METARGEM staff attended;
D. visits to:
   a) the Balgat Industrial School;
   b) the Faculty of Technical Education, Gazi University, Turkey.

The individual interviews and the seminar aimed in part at obtaining some understanding of what the METARGEM staff valued in their work and what assumptions they were making both about their work and about possible Consultancies and Fellowships for them.

3.1.4.2 The Data Analysis Procedures

The purpose of the data analysis was to appraise the extent to which the pre-determined objectives of METARGEM were being achieved. The information supplied by the documentary studies was linked to the data obtained by the other data collection methods indicated above, in order to yield a rounded account of the organisation of the Centre.

3.1.5 The Results

Figure 5 below illustrates the identified, complex, causal relationships at METARGEM. A key finding was that the Deputy Director (Technical) was responsible for six Technical Departments, namely, the Departments of (a) Curriculum Development (b) Research and Planning (c) Development of Design (d) Technical Publications (e) Testing and Evaluation, and (f) Educational Technology. The last-named department was responsible

for two 'administrative' departments, namely, the Revolving Fund Department and the Personnel and Communications Department; and the allocation of capital for the Revolving Fund of METARGEM was established with the 1986 Act for Apprenticeship and Vocational Training.

Another aspect of the organisational structure of METARGEM which came to light was that the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) of the Ministry of National Education had recently been transferred to the METARGEM site. Thus, the PIU came within the ambit of the METARGEM Directorate. This development seemed at first to confuse matters (to the outsider) but its effect had, in point of fact, been to breathe new life into the Centre; for, with the PIU came substantial funds for two large national projects funded by the World Bank, namely, the *Non-Formal Vocational Training Project* and the *Industrial Schools Project*. However, the other side of the story was that the work of METARGEM was now largely focused on the projects that were externally funded — with the notable exception of the *Computer-Aided Education Project*. To quote one interviewee, "*when we came from the PIU, we dominated METARGEM; everybody is concerned with projects now*".

For METARGEM to focus on externally funded projects (as a vehicle for its development) was a commendable strategy, not only because of the resources they attracted but also because of the commitment to research that they could generate. There was, of course, the risk that a concentration on relatively short–term projects might be to the detriment of a long–term plan for the work of the Centre.

The METARGEM staff valued highly their success in the purchase of new equipment in technology and audio-visual aids (with all the problems of procurement that this activity presented) but an inordinate amount of time was probably being spent on the administrative aspects of these activities (as against the professional aspects). The METARGEM staff could also point to other accomplishments, such as the surveys that they had conducted for Technical Education.

3.1.6 The Conclusion

The study concluded with recommendations made on the understanding that, in general, the training of teachers of technical subjects in educational research involves, to begin with, attending a one-year, Full-time (or two years Part-time) Advanced Diploma course in Education. The studies on such a course usually include a piece of educational research which forms the basis of a Dissertation. However, for teachers of technical subjects to become competent in the kind of work undertaken by National Centres for research in vocational/technical education requires undertaking specialised studies in subject areas and in educational research as such, and gaining more research experience. For example, Survey Research at the national level requires considerable skill in managing research projects that involve processing large amounts of qualitative and quantitative data — let alone advanced statistical analyses. Curriculum Research requires detailed knowledge of various national curricula, while Research in teaching and learning requires specialised knowledge of, for example, learning theory and intellectual development.

Figure 5: Diagram illustrating the identified cause-effect relationships at METARGEM
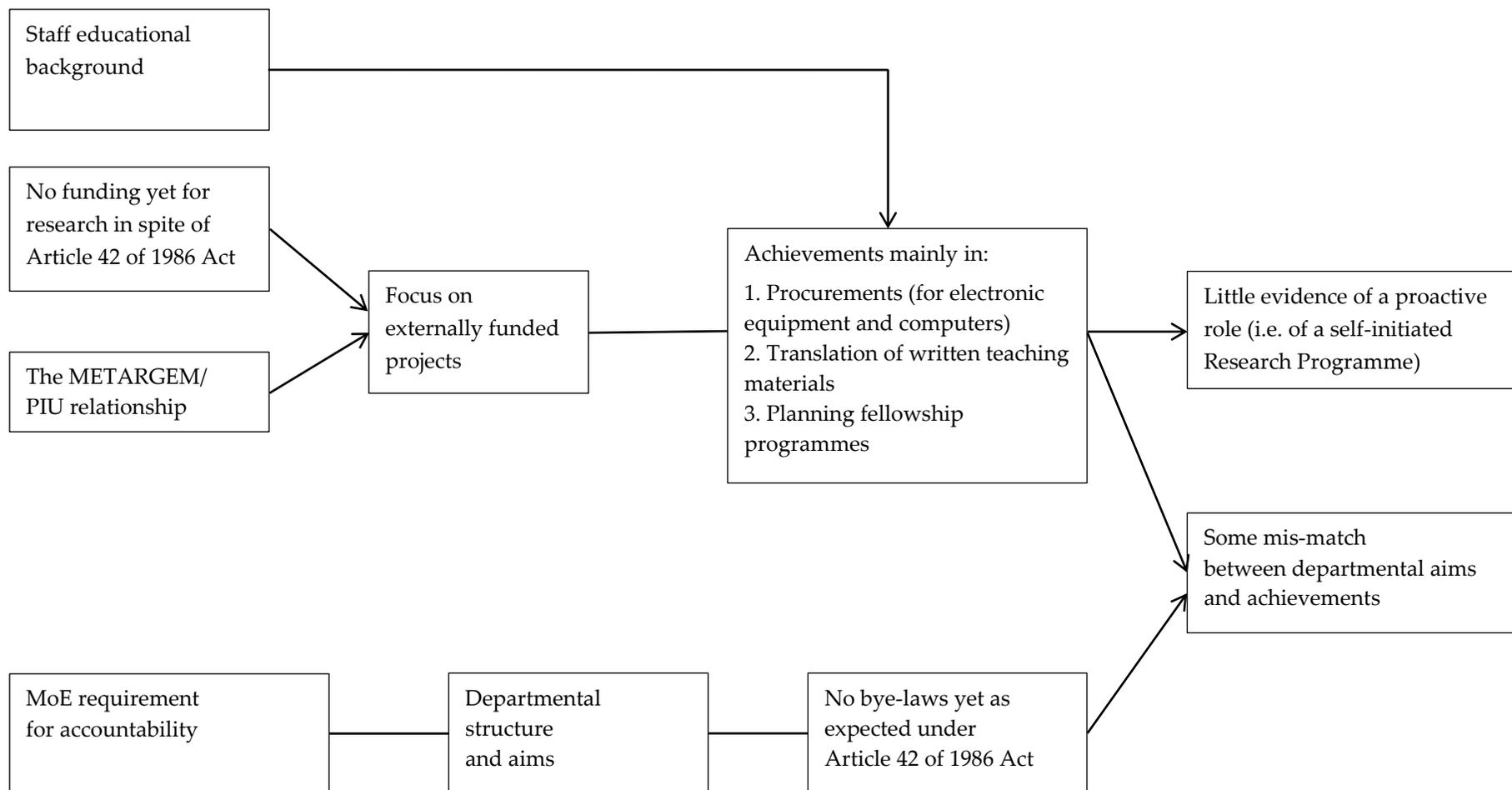
The Recommendations included the two-stage programme of Fellowships and Consultancies summarised below

At Stage I:

The Recommendations for the Fellowships Programme focussed on Curriculum design and development and on research methods and educational measurement. The Recommendations for Consultancies included looking into the feasibility of developing a Management Information system for METARGEM, installing a statistical package on each existing personal computer at METARGEM, and installing a computerised system for the online search of the literature about vocational and technical education.

At Stage II:

The Recommendations for Consultancies and Fellowships included:

- A Consultancy for a comparative analysis of the operation of each METARGEM Department's research activities - thus providing a picture of the necessary further training for METARGEM staff
- A Fellowship Programme with arrangements to be made subsequently to attach selected METARGEM staff to appropriate research Units/Centres abroad.

3.1.7 The Selection of Fellows for Stage II

A recommended criterion for the selection of Fellows was that they should have a capacity for reflection and analysis and an ability to write accurate research reports quickly and clearly.

Another recommendation was that as arguably a Research Centre for technical and vocational education would benefit from having Social Science graduates on its staff (as researchers), consideration should be given to attracting individuals with such a background in technical and vocational education as a field of research.

3.2 The Study of The High-Level Workforce Needs in The Gambia
3.2.1 The Context

This two-week study was undertaken (in 1997) in the context of the then-existing proposal for University Education in The Gambia (Williams *et al*, 1992) and of the strategies for national Development enunciated in the Government's document entitled Vision 2020 (GG, 1996). However, the Williams *et al.* (1992) report had acknowledged that information about The Gambia's workforce (for the purposes of planning Higher Education) was 'deficient'. Indeed, the last manpower survey in the country had been conducted some 20 years before and the report had recommended that the country *"should survey its high-level manpower resources at regular intervals and monitor changes"*. The present study represented therefore an attempt to implement this recommendation by looking at employers' needs for a high-level workforce (that is, employees with a university degree/sub-degree or an advanced professional qualification) in The Gambia.

3.2.2 The Problem Statement

The "problem" that the present study addressed could be encapsulated in the question: what were the needs/requirements for a high-level workforce in The Gambia at the time, and what were they likely to be in the near future?

3.2.3 The Aim

In accordance with the Terms of Reference for this study, the aim was to 'carry out a market survey with a view to identifying the immediate high-level manpower needs/requirements for the socio-economic, political and cultural development of The Gambia' and to 'make recommendations for the establishment of continuous Labour Market forecasting, and for an Information and Analysis system in The Gambia'.

3.2.4 The Methodology
3.2.4.1 The Data Collection Procedures

The approach to collecting relevant data was to undertake the following studies:

a) Documentary studies;
b) Field studies;
c) Statistical studies.

3.2.4.2 The Documentary Studies

These studies drew on a wide range of documents, for example, on:

a) other reports in connection with Tertiary Education in The Gambia, such as, *Proposals for the development of Higher Education programmes in Engineering, Computing and Teacher Training at the GTTI* (Melville, 1996);
b) Statistical reports, such as, *Education Statistics 1995/96* (MoE, 1998).

3.2.4.3 The Field Studies

Face-to-face, individual interviews of Personnel Managers and/or other Senior Management staff were conducted in targeted organisations. For these interviews, the research strategy consisted in selecting a variety of organisations in the industry, commerce, and public services, and developing questionnaires based on a simplified model of the relationship between labour supply, labour demand and the labour market.

3.2.5 The Sample of Surveyed Organisations

A purposive sample of 30 organisations was drawn from the various occupational sectors of the economy with the advice of designated senior staff of MDI, GTTI, and Gambia College (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: A short list of the selected organisations in the sectors of the economy

Public Sector Organisations	Parastatal Organisations	Private Sector Organisations	NGOs
Ministry of Agriculture	Civil Aviation Authority	Badala Park Hotel	ACTION AID
Ministry of Education		Gambia Chamber of Commerce	Nusrat High School
Ministry of Health and Social Welfare	National Agricultural Research Institute	Gambia Workers' Union	Roman Catholic Mission (Education Secretariat)
Ministry of Tourism and Culture	West African Examinations Council	Medical Research Council	
Ministry of Trade, Industry and Employment (Human Resource Development Unit)		Meridien Bank	
		Radville Farm	
Women's Bureau (Women in Development Project)		TAF Construction	

3.2.6 The Statistical Studies

Statistical data were obtained at two levels:

- at organisation level (during the Field studies): e.g. the estimated number of employees with high-level skills that organisations would require in the near future, in specified subject areas.
- at the national level: the percentage of candidates who took the WAEC examinations in the years 1994 to 1996 and obtained:
  - at least 5 SC/GCE 'O' level passes, *by* Gender *and* Year;
  - at least 2 SC/GCE 'A' level passes, *by* Gender *and* Year.

3.2.7 The Data Analysis Procedures

The analysis consisted in identifying and describing the key themes and patterns that emerged (from the collected data) and working out their implications in order to make appropriate recommendations.

3.2.8 The Results

The results for the study of the High-Level workforce needs were reported in the following way:

a) in General.
b) in Specific sectors of the economy (taking each sector in turn).

3.2.8.1 The High-Level Workforce Needs — In General

In general, Personnel Managers and/or other Senior Management staff acknowledged that Planning based on an analysis of needs was important; and indeed, in the public sector, the Ministry of Health had come close to having a "*manpower development plan of substance*" (even in the early 1990s) (Williams, 1992). The Ministry of Trade, Industry, and

Employment had put in place a Human Resource Development Unit whilst the Planning Unit of the Ministry of Education aimed at implementing the policy of *'Education for All'* and was developing an Education Management Information System. The Ministry of Tourism and Culture was initiating an 'internal Human Resources Development Plan' to implement its first National Policy (MOTC, 1995) and the Ministry of Agriculture was in the process of making projections for a much-needed high-level workforce.

There was also evidence of Planning in the Parastatal organisations visited. Indeed, in the field of Telecommunications and Broadcasting, planned changes in personnel (at both Departmental and Occupational levels) had been made in 1991 for an eight-year period.

Turning to the Private sector and to NGOs, there had been "*a few Donor programmes targeted to sectoral projects in particular regions of the country*" (CoC, 1991), and there was some evidence of training needs assessments and of short-term workforce plans made at organisational level. However, it was difficult for small organisations in the private sector to make long-term plans because such organisations could 'fold up' at any time (a recent case in point having been, apparently, that of a fishing company).

Employers in all sectors of the economy expressed a marked preference for Higher Education courses and for short, high-level training programmes that had strong practical content (and opportunities for attachments to industry, commerce, or public services).

3.2.8.1.1 The Results of the Macro-level Statistical Analyses

Establishing statistically the need for a high-level workforce nation-wide proved to be difficult because, for example, the statistical data from the Central Statistics Department did not always differentiate between management levels and between technicians and technologists.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, the need for a high-level workforce was inferred from the data obtained about the occupations and qualifications of the labour force from:

a) The central statistics department;
b) The sampled organisations;
c) The documentary studies.

As a starting point, Table 1 highlights the great need for:

- Upgrading the academic qualifications of a substantial proportion (79%) of the present high-level workforce in two Occupational categories across all the sectors of the economy.
- Paying particular attention to the gender imbalance nationwide among the qualified personnel.

Table 1: The Number of Diplomates, Graduates and Postgraduates among the high-level Workforce in The Gambia *by* Gender *and* Occupation

Occupational Category	N° of Graduates/ Diplomates		N° of Post-graduates		Total N° of Diplomates, Graduates and Postgraduates in the Occupation	Total high-level workforce in the Occupation	% of Diplomates, Graduates and Postgraduates in the high-level workforce in the Occupation
	M	**F**	**M**	**F**			
Legislators and Managers	236	46	132	34	448	1173	38%
Professionals	662	185	279	94	1220	6623	18%
Totals	898	231	411	128	1668	7796	21%

Source: Central Statistics Department, 1993

From a different database Table 2 showed that the gender imbalance was particularly a matter for concern in the Private sector, as was the proportion of expatriates in the high-level workforce (Males: 25%; Females: 17%).

Table 2: The Number of High-level Employees in the Private Sector in the Greater Banjul Area *by* Occupation, Gender *and* Nationality

Occupational Category	Gambians		Non-Gambians		Total		Grand Total
	Male	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	
Managerial and Administrative	291	92	64	13	355	105	460
Professional and Technical	590	168	117	31	707	199	906
Total	881	260	181	44	1062	304	1366

Source: CSD, 1996.

3.2.8.2 The High-level Workforce Needs in Specific Sectors of The Economy
3.2.8.2.1 The High-level Workforce Needs in the Public Sector

The high-level workforce employed in the public sector had increased by some 25% between the years 1992/93 and 1996/97, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: The Increase in the Number of Employees in the High-level Workforce in the Public Sector *by* Occupation

Occupational Category	1992/93	1996/97
Managerial and Administrative	319	400
Professional and Technical	1,745	2,194

- The Civil Service had made significant efforts during the period 1993 to 1996 to upgrade the academic qualifications of its workforce by granting study leave to some 110 Civil Servants to enable them to attend award-bearing courses overseas. Also, there were opportunities for Civil Servants to acquire high-level skills locally; for example, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Employment, revealed an emphasis on sponsoring employees for Master's degree (or second degree) level.

- In Education, some 11 serving school teachers obtained leave to study for a university degree during the years 1993 to 1996 (PMO, 1996) and the MOE's (1997) training plan was for 210 serving teachers to graduate at Bachelor's degree level between the years 1998 and 2006 (in addition to the 45 expected to obtain the MEd degree during the same period)
- The gender imbalance was considerable in the Education sector. For example, the number of female graduate teachers in the Senior Secondary Schools was only about 9% of the total number of graduate teachers in these schools (n=346). Whether the "Remedial Initiative for the training of Female Teachers" (RIFT) could alleviate the gender problem in the long-term was a moot point.
- In the Health sector, 47% of medical doctors were non-Gambians. Yet only five 'open scholarships' had been awarded for medicine since 1995, and in Social Welfare the successful pilot projects about *Women in Development* would be taken on by the appropriate ministries although there were no 'gender specialists' in the ministries.

3.2.8.2.2 The High-level Workforce Needs in a Parastatal Organisation
In the Civil Aviation Authority, the dependency on overseas training characterised the pattern of training for its high-level workforce; and staff had benefited from awards made either by the Gambian Government or by overseas governments.

3.2.8.2.3 The High-level Workforce Needs in the Private Sector
In the private sector also, the low proportion (22%) of women in the high-level workforce was a matter of concern – as was the high proportion (16%) of expatriates; and many of the graduates in the sector were qualified in subject areas such as Arts, Economics, or Law but relatively few in technical subject areas like Engineering, Construction, or Agriculture.

The Construction industry was male dominated and only some five percent of those who worked in the industry (n=9600, approximately) had been educated at post-secondary level. For the programme of road construction, consultants had to be 'hired all the way from Cyprus'.

In the Hotel industry, most of the senior management roles were still filled by Europeans, although there were a few Gambian managers trained abroad (Guerrier 1997).

In the Horticultural sector, some 80% of the high-level workforce on the farm visited were expatriates, mostly from Senegal (which had 'many training institutions for horticulture'). Other expatriates had come from, respectively, Brazil, Denmark, Holland, India, Lebanon and Zimbabwe. The high-level workforce need on the farm was for Agronomists, Agricultural Business Managers, and Financial controllers.

In Journalism, the membership of the Gambia Press Union had been rising fast in recent years to about 100; yet, only three of the members were graduates. The Gambian Institute for Journalism offered a training programme which led to the award of a

Diploma in Journalism (with the possibility of progressing to a Bachelor's degree course in Ghana). India and Germany too offered Diploma courses in Journalism.

3.2.8.2.3 The High-level Workforce Needs in a Research Organisation

In the Medical sector, the British based Medical Research Council (MRC) funded the laboratories which provided 'the only medical research facility in The Gambia' (MRC, 1995). Some 70% of the medical doctors were expatriates. However, Laboratory technicians who possessed an appropriate Higher National Diploma could be granted scholarships (by agencies such as the World Health Organisation or the World Council of Churches) to study for the degree of MSc, after which they could be appointed as Scientific Officers.

3.2.8.2.1 The High-level Workforce Needs in a Non-Governmental Organisation

ACTION AID is one of the largest NGOs in The Gambia. It is a development charity committed to helping rural communities to help themselves. ACTION AID focused on six 'intervention areas' among which were *Education and Literacy, Food and Agriculture,* and *Health.* The organisation was fully Gambianised. High-level management skills were required for activities, such as improving farmers' skills in utilising agricultural resources and technologies and providing advice and support in, for example, family planning, environmental sanitation, and AIDs prevention; and there was an awareness of the need for Research Capacity Building in Agricultural research and in Educational research.

3.2.9 The Conclusion

The main conclusion was that the establishment of a National Labour Market Information System had become a necessity because, in the economic climate created at the time, adjusting to change became increasingly a key to productivity and required forward-looking workforce plans and training plans.

A major recommendation that followed was that the Government should appoint a National Task Force to advise on the formulation of a strategic policy for developing an efficient and effective National Labour Market Information System, and the Task Force should make specific proposals about the kind of agency required for operating such a system in the Gambian context.

3.3. The Study of Care-International's Intervention in Education, In Mali
3.3.1 The Context

In the 1990s some 67% of Mali's inhabitants were under 25 years of age, the population was growing at the rate of about 3.7% per year, and the economy was based essentially on Agriculture, Farming and Fishing. The GNP *per capita* was only US$270 in 1993 (Eurostat, 1996) and Aid from Development agencies totalled about US$459 millions in 1994.

3.3.2 The Problem Statement

To ensure economic take-off, the Government of Mali had put in place its 1998-2008 ten-year Program for Educational Development *"Programme Décennal de Développement de l'Éducation"* (PRODEC) which provided a framework for the direction which Education must take; and the Government had adopted the worldwide 1990 Jomtien policy of *Basic Education for All*. Yet, regional and gender differentials in education persisted in the country, and the International Statistics about Education put Mali as one of the Francophone countries in sub-Saharan Africa with low access rates in Primary school education (DAE, 1996).

3.3.3 The Aim

In 2000, CARE - International in Mali (in short, CARE-Mali) decided to develop a strategic policy for its own intervention specifically in Education, and to base this development on a Situation Analysis of Education which would include an appraisal of its interventions so far — and hence the present study.

The aim of this study was to provide answers to the following questions:
a) in what ways did NGOs, in general, intervene in Education in Mali?
b) how effective were the various forms of CARE-Mali's interventions in schooling at the local community level?
c) what had been the impact of CARE-Mali's Educational Programmes on the communities that it had targeted?

3.3.4 The Methodology
3.3.4.1 The Data Collection Procedures

The approach to gathering the necessary data about the educational institutions shown in Figure 7 below was to combine a study of some relevant documents (including PRODEC and the published educational statistics) with the following:
a) the administration of self-completion questionnaires to officials of selected NGO;
b) individual, semi-structured interviews of key officials who worked in Mali for various Partners in Development;
c) on-site meetings in four villages with groups of Parents, APE officials, and School Committees (in addition to individual interviews of school Teachers and school Heads) in the "Cercle" of Macina;
d) Telephone Conferencing with APE officials and Education officials, respectively, in Tombouctou.

Among the other relevant official documents studied were the *Indicateurs du système Educatif du Mali* (Ministère de l'Education de Base, 1998) and the *Lois et Décrets de la Décentralisation* (Mission de Décentralisation et des réformes institutionnelles, 1999).

Figure 7 shows the different types of educational institutions included in this research study and the different levels of education.

Figure 7: The Targeted Types of Educational Institutions and Levels of Education

Levels of Education		Types of Educational Institutions
Pre-school education		Nursery schools
Fundamental Education	First Cycle	Institutions for the First Cycle (for 7-12 year olds) (Terminal examination for the CFEPCEF)
	Second Cycle	Institutions for the Second Cycle (for 13-15 year olds) (Terminal examination for the DEF)
Adult Literacy		Adult Literacy Centres
Apprenticeship Training	Years 1 to 3	Centres of Education for Development (CED)
	Year 4 (trade apprenticeship)	
Secondary Education (General)		Lycées for General Education (Years 10 to 12) (Terminal examination for the Baccalaureate)
Secondary Education (Technical and Professional)		Technical Lycées (Years 10 to 12) (Respective terminal examinations for the BT and the CAP)
Teacher-Training		Teacher-training Institutions (ENSEC and IPEG)

3.3.4.2 The Data Analysis Procedures

The quantitative data analysis focused on the Frequency Distributions brought to light in the following published Education Statistics:

a) The Pre-school Education Statistics;
b) The Fundamental Education Statistics;
c) The Secondary Education Statistics;
d) The Teacher Education Statistics;
e) The Non-Formal Education Statistics.

A Content Analysis of the qualitative data about CARE-Mali's intervention (and that of other NGOs) in Education was also undertaken.

3.3.5 The Results
3.3.5.1 The Published Education Statistics for Mali
3.3.5.1.1 The Pre-school Education Statistics

There was a rise in the Enrolment Ratio from 0.5% in 1993/94 to 1.74% in 1997/98; however, the data did not take into account the number of children in the Community child-minding groups of, for example, *World Vision* and *Save the Children.*

3.3.5.1.2 The Fundamental Education Statistics

- **The Gross Enrolment Ratios**

Table 4 shows the trend in the Gross Enrolment Ratios in recent years and also the continuing Gender imbalance.

Table 4: The Gross Enrolment Ratio (%) in Schools *by* Year, Age Group *and* Gender

School year	Gross Enrolment Ratio (%) for 7-12 year olds			Gross Enrolment Ratio (%) for 13- 15 year olds		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1993/94	44.9	27.9	36.4	17.0	8.5	12.7
1994/95	46.9	31.3	39.1	18.0	9.3	13.6
1995/96	51.3	33.4	42.3	19.3	9.9	14.5
1996/97	57.0	36.5	46.7	20.8	10.7	15.8
1997/98	59.9	40.3	50.1	**23.4**	**12.3**	17.9
1998/99	**63.8**	**44.4**	53.9	—	—	—

The marked increase in the overall Gross Enrolment Ratio for the 7-12 year olds might well be linked to factors such as:

   a) the building of new Community Schools;
   b) the implementation of the *Double Shift System* (although teachers and parents disapproved of the system) (MEB, 2000).

The disparity in enrolment data between regions for the same Age Groups (see Table 5) was no less striking with Bamako's achievement in enrolment outstanding, and the enrolment in Kidal, Tombouctou and Mopti extremely low, particularly for 13 – 15 year old girls.

Table 5: The Net Enrolment Ratio (%) in schools *by* Region *and* Age Group (for 1997/98)

Region	Enrolment Ratio (%) for 7-12 year olds		Enrolment Ratio (%) For 13-15 year olds	
	Boys	**Girls**	**Boys**	**Girls**
Kayes	44.5	26.7	25.5	12.0
Koulikoro	57.3	35.9	35.5	18.1
Sikasso	45.9	29.3	30.3	15.0
Ségou	41.4	27.6	28.6	15.5
Mopti	26.1	17.4	15.1	8.2
Tombouctou	27.9	19.3	12.4	6.6
Gao	36.3	22.9	19.5	11.5
Kidal	25.7	16.4	5.7	2.7
Bamako	100.0	100.0	96.1	60.1

- **The Efficiency Indicators**

a. The Repetition Rate

Conspicuous among the Education Statistics was the lowering of the Repetition Rate by almost half, over a period of four years (from 27.1% in 1993/94 to 13.6% in 1996/97). There were almost no Gender differences in the Repetition Rates.

b. The Pass Rate

Table 6 gives the respective proportions of school pupils who received the "*Certificat de Fin d'Études du Premier Cycle de l'Enseignement Fondamental*" (CFEPCEF) at the end of the First cycle, and the *"Diplôme d'Études Fondamentales"* (DEF) at the end of the Second cycle. The salient feature of Table 6 was the marked increase in the proportions of pupils who

qualified for the DEF (and who might consequently progress to Secondary Education) and the downward trend in the Pass Rate for the CFEPCEF.

Table 6: The Proportions (%) of School Pupils who
Obtained the CFEPCEF and the DEF, Respectively

School Year	Proportions of school pupils who obtained the CFEPCEF (%)	Proportions of school pupils who obtained the DEF (%)
1993/94	60.5	41.7
1994/95	59.3	48.0
1995/96	55.3	59.0
1996/97	54.5	53.1
1997/98	55.9	**66.9**
1998/99	50.0	—

- **The Other Performance Indicators**

a. The Pupil/Teacher Ratio

The overall Pupil/Teacher ratio for the First Cycle countrywide was 80:1 (ME, 2000) but there were classes with a Pupil/Teacher ratio of about 100:1 in the villages visited. Notably, the overall Pupil/Teacher ratio for "Primary education" in Mali was one of the highest in the francophone countries of Sub-Saharan Africa (DAE, 1996).

b. The cost of Fundamental Education

The high Pupil/Teacher ratio in Mali meant that the cost of Fundamental Education was probably low in comparison with other francophone countries in Sub-Saharan Africa; yet the annual proportion of Government expenditure on Fundamental Education in Mali averaged about 55% of the Education budget (MEB, 2000).

c. The Indicators of Quality

The quality of school education in Mali may be inferred from such key indicators as the Pupil/Teacher ratios and the Pass Rates given above, but other factors may also contribute to delivering quality education and some of these are:

    (i)   The number of books, per pupil: this ratio was 1:3 in Mali (ME, 2000).

    (ii)   Access to a library at school: almost all the schools in Mali were without a library (ME, 2000).

    PRODEC's policy of "convergent pedagogy" (according to which the national languages in Mali as well as French, were to be used as a medium of instruction) raised many questions. However, pupils read and wrote well in 46% of the classes that had adopted this policy in 1997/98.

3.3.5.1.3 The Secondary Education Statistics

- **The Gross Enrolment Ratios**

The proportion of 16-18 year olds who enrolled in General Education at the Secondary level had increased in the recent past, but it was still very low (6.4%) and the Gender imbalance was being maintained (see Table 7). Even worse was the proportion (2.4%) of

16-19 year olds who attended Secondary Technical and Professional institutions where there was an imbalance of young women, with only 1.6% of them enrolling in 1996/97 and in 1997/98.

Table 7: The enrolment of young people in Secondary Education *by* Gender

School Year	Gross Percentage of 16-18 year olds in General Education at Secondary level			Gross Percentage of 16-19 year olds in Technical and Professional Secondary Education		
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
1993/94	5.9	2.3	4.1	2.8	1.2	2.0
1994/95	7.1	2.6	4.8	3.7	1.5	2.6
1995/96	7.6	3.0	5.3	2.9	1.8	2.3
1996/97	8.7	3.5	6.0	3.2	**1.6**	**2.4**
1997/98	8.9	3.9	**6.4**	3.2	**1.6**	**2.4**

- **The Efficiency Indicators**

In the CAP examinations there was a higher Pass Rate (82.3%) in the "Industrial" subjects (such as, Mechanics, Plumbing and Joinery) than in the "Tertiary"/Business subjects (such as Accountancy, Banking and Distribution) at 53.7%; and in the BT examinations, the Pass Rates were respectively, 96% for the "Industrial" subjects and 83% for the "Tertiary"/Business subjects.

3.3.5.1.4 The Teacher Education Statistics

The decline in the level of recruitment to initial Teacher-Training (from 1,760 in 1988/89 to 323 in 1994/95) had led to the recent closure of four Teacher-Training institutions. However, in 1997/98 recruitment went up to 1,546 students (of whom 32% were women) and it was envisaged that two more teacher-training institutions would be built.

Staff development was provided for school Teachers and school Heads, and was supported by various partners in Education. The Staff Development programmes concentrated mostly on Teaching Methods (in connection with such matters as the "*Pédagogie Convergente*" and the teaching of Reading) rather than on studies of Education (as a subject) in the context of socio-economic development in less advanced countries.

3.3.5.1.5 The Non-Formal Education Statistics

- **Adult Literacy**

What stood out from the statistical data about adult literacy was the success of the campaigns against illiteracy among adult women, although the Gender difference, in particular, still posed a great challenge, given that the ratio of functionally literate men to functionally literate women in Mali was 4:1.

- **Apprenticeship Training**

The "problem" of illiterate 9-15 year olds had led to the establishment of 97 "*Centres d'Éducation pour le Dévelopement*" (CED) in 1995/96, through the partnership of the

Ministry of Basic Education with NGOs and Village Communities in Kayes, Koulikoro and Sikasso; and there were at the time CEDs in 159 villages (ME, 2000).

- **The Cost of Non-Formal Education**

The expenditure for Non-Formal Education, as such, was not given in the official documents consulted (MEB, 2000; ME, 2000). However, Basic Education (that is, Formal Education and Non-Formal Education taken together) accounted for 59% of the Education budget (MEB, 2000). Given, as already indicated, that the proportion of Government expenditure on Fundamental Education was about 55%, and assuming that the other expenditures on Education had remained fairly constant at about 3% in recent years, Government expenditure on Non-Formal Education probably accounted for some 1% of the Education budget.

3.3.5.2 NGOs' Intervention in Education in Mali

A crucial aspect of policy-making in Education, in Mali, was that the Government normally consulted its many partners at all stages when developing its projects in Education.

Taking the Fundamental Education sector first, all the NGOs shared PRODEC's vision of Education and the scale of their operations was in some cases amazing; for example, since 1992 *Save the Children* had supported the construction of 786 Community Schools in one region (Sikasso).

The achievements of *World Education* were also impressive; thus, by December 1999:
- 486 Community Schools had been built by this NGO;
- 889 teachers had been recruited in Koulikoro and Bamako.

Broadly speaking, in the Non-Formal Education sector, the NGOs focused on Skills Training for disadvantaged groups (such as women and young people in both rural and suburban areas).

However, even these efforts from the NGOs (laudable as they were) did not seem to quite match the range of interventions expected of NGOs for promoting female participation in education in Africa (see DAE, 1994).

3.3.5.3 CARE-Mali's Intervention in Education

A strong impression to come across during the visits to villages was that, by working with local communities, CARE-Mali had contributed to empowering them; and there was an unyielding determination to raise the level of education for their populations. Specifically, CARE-Mali's partnership with the local communities had been effective in contributing financial and material resources to a set of core initiatives, such as:
  a) the Sensitisation Campaigns for girls' education;
  b) the training of APE members in financial management.

All the aid that CARE-Mali gave to the local communities was highly valued (even if insufficient!); and in order to empower the local communities, CARE-Mali had built

productive partnerships with the Regional Education Authorities, with the Education Inspectorate, and with other NGOs (in particular with *PADI* in Macina).

   a) Interestingly, there emerged a consensus in the communities that CARE-Mali's intervention should be in the following order of priority (after Fundamental Education): Adult Literacy;
   b) Pre-school education;
   c) Youth Training.

Interestingly too, although Technical and Professional Education was mentioned only occasionally as a priority, the case for it was made clearly and with conviction, and respondents referred to the enhanced technical competence of the local agricultural workers as a result of the newly introduced techniques in Agriculture.

Importantly, it seemed that school teachers were being somewhat marginalised in the new structures of civic society and in the partnerships forged between NGOs, schools, and the local communities. The point was not lost on the school teachers and some would welcome opportunities to play their part in the new politico-administrative structure, in addition to teaching.

3.3.5.4 The Impact of CARE-Mali's Intervention

There can be no doubt that the impact of CARE-Mali's interventions in Education had already been considerable, as was evident from, for example:

   a) the rapid growth in the number of 7-12 year old girls enrolled in schools;
   b) the practical use to which the "graduates" of the Adult Literacy classes put their knowledge; for example, the "graduates" themselves mentioned (not without satisfaction!) that they were better at managing their small-scale enterprises.

It was not clear though how the approach to Adult Literacy (through Action Research), which CARE-Mali claimed to adopt, related to the "REFLECT" approach of ACTION AID (another NGO) which was based on the writings of Paulo Freire and which also aimed at empowering the poor (Benett, 1999).

3.3.6 The Conclusion

The study concluded by identifying a number of emerging issues from the perspective of Mali's standing and from CARE-MALI's new politico-administrative structure, and appropriate recommendations were made; these were mostly about the following:

   • mounting a strategy for promoting Pre-school education in regions outside Bamako;
   • adopting the Tombouctou modular training programme for APEs in other region(s) where CARE-Mali had intervened already;
   • ensuring that Staff Development programmes achieved an understanding of concepts, such as participatory school management and curriculum development
   • promoting Secondary Technical education for girls;
   • collaborating with the Government's social and economic Planning Ministries/Departments and developing Memoranda of Understanding with them

4. Overall Implications for Policy Research

The differences between the three Research Studies (in terms of the Policy Tiers, Stages, and Types of research covered) are evident. The implications then are that more attention should be paid to the following regarding Policy Research in Education:
- Policy Research proposals and reports should articulate clearly the Policy Tiers and Stages covered in them and the Types of research adopted.
- Taught programmes about Policy Research should cover the different Tiers and Stages in the Policy-Making process and give due regard to the corresponding Types of Policy Research.

Acronyms

APE	Association des Parents d'Élèves
CED	Centre d'Éducation pour le Développement
CFEPCEF	Certiticat de Fin d'Etude du Premier Cycle de l'Enseignement Fondamental
CoC	Chamber of Commerce
CSD	Central Statistics Department
DAE	Development of African Education
DEF	Diplôme d'Études Fondamentales
EFA	Education for All
ENSEC	École Normale Secondaire
GTTI	Gambia Technical Training Institute
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPEG	Institut Pédagogique d'Enseignement Général
MDI	Management Development Institute
ME	Ministère de l'Éducation
MEB	Ministère de l'Éducation de Base
METARGEM	Centre for Technical and Vocational Education Research and Development (in Turkey)
MRC	Medical Research Council
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoTC	Ministry of Trade and Culture
MPhil (Ed)	Master of Philosophy in Education
NAB	National Advisory Body for Public Sector Higher Education
NCTEVT	National Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PADI	Partenaires au Développement Intégré
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PMO	Personnel Management Office
PRODEC	Programme Décennal de Dévelopment de l'Éducation
RIFT	Remedial Initiative for the Training of Female Teachers
WAEC	West African Examinations Council

Conflict of Interest Statement
The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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Yves Benett was born and educated in Mauritius. He started his school teaching career in 1952. Benett studied in England and obtained the BSc (London) degree in the physical sciences and the Postgraduate Certificate in Education. He taught for nine years in his home country as an Education Officer. After obtaining the MA (London) degree in Education, he next worked as Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, and Principal Lecturer at the Huddersfield College of Education (Technical), and later, with a PhD in Education, got the Readership in the School of Education at the University of Huddersfield – a position he held until he retired in 1996. As an International Education consultant Dr. Benett has undertaken sponsored research projects in England and in developing countries and has been for many years the Scientific Adviser to ERNWACA, (Gambia). Benett has published journal articles and books about Education.

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