

HANDBOOK FOR EDUCATIONAL SUPERVISORS (TRIAL EDITION)

111. Following the series of short regional workshops for educational administrators, held between 1973 and 1975 by the Commonwealth Secretariat, a trial edition of the Handbook for Educational Supervisors was prepared by the Commonwealth Secretariat in an attempt to offer guidance to supervisory personnel and act as a sourcebook for staff engaged in training them.

112. In Nairobi and in Suva participants were asked to react to the intent and the content of the trial edition. The recommendations of the Pacific regional course are reported below following an outline of the questions which were put to the participants at the end of the course.

Summary Report of the Discussion on the Proposed Commonwealth Handbook for Supervisors

Three main questions were put to the participants:

- (a) Would the final handbook be useful to you in your present role?
- (b) If yes, which parts of the Handbook would be useful? What improvements would you suggest?
- (c) If no, what alternatives would you suggest, assuming that the idea of a handbook is a good one?

In answer to these three main questions the following points emerged:

- (a) While all answered yes, the response included many reservations.
- (b) The Handbook should be more interestingly written in a format more appropriate to a handbook.
- (c) Material relating to specific roles should occupy a more central element in the Handbook.
- (d) The Handbook was seen as a general source of reference; a handbook of suggestions.
- (e) The Handbook was insufficiently related to the specific needs of the Pacific region.
- (f) A possible conflict existed between a role specific handbook and one centred on principles of administration.
- (g) A series of handbooks might be more appropriate than a single volume.

These and other points were taken into account when framing the recommendations of the Pacific Training Course to the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Three main alternatives were proposed:

Alternative 1:

A handbook with a theoretical base on management, administration and supervision for all levels. Topics might include leadership, communication, supervision, planning, decision-making, group process, policy-making, problem solving etc.

Alternative 2:

Handbooks with suggestions and guidelines for:

- (a) Headmasters
- (b) Principals
- (c) Inspectors, etc.

Alternative 3:

A Handbook which seeks to combine a theoretical framework with objectives and operational guidelines for administrators in a variety of task situations.

The participants proposed that the Education Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat might follow the following strategy:

- (a) Revise and re-write the trial edition.
- (b) Organize a seminar to consider the revised production.
- (c) Trial the Handbook, in selected countries.
- (d) Monitor the trial process
- (e) Report on the trial process before wider publication.

These proposals should be considered by the Education Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat in concert with opinions expressed on other training courses and by experts in the field of educational administration. This procedure has and is being followed by the Education Division.