

BAR-ILAN UNIVERSITY

**School Logos as a Reflection of Declared Policy and
Actual Policy: Principals' Perceptions**

Geva Iftach

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master's
Degree in the School of Education, Bar-Ilan University

Abstract

The field of educational administration deals extensively with everything concerning formation and implementation of educational policy. One of the main important tools in designing and reflecting school policy is the school's written vision that merits extensive attention. However, by contrast, the school's logo is marginalized in this context, and the knowledge existing about its function and contribution is sorely lacking.

The goal of this study is to examine whether there are gaps in the educational policy of state schools in Israel as reflected by the logo, the written vision, and actual policies and principal's declaration, according to the following division:

- Discovering unique characteristics in school policy that are expressed by the school logo, by examining different aspects: academic, traditional, national, organizational, and social ethics.
- Testing the fit between written vision characteristics and school characteristics as expressed in the logo.
- Testing for the existence of a gap between policy as expressed by the school's written vision and the actual existing policy as perceived by the principal.
- Testing for the existence of a gap between policy as declared by the school's logo, and actual existing policy as perceived by the principal.
- Testing for the existence of a gap between the policy declared by the school's principal and actual policy as he/she perceives it.

In this study qualitative research methods are employed according to the Confirmatory Data Analyses approach (Onwuegbuzie, 2003). Twenty-four schools were examined from the three educational levels in Israel: elementary, junior high and high school. Relevant documents were analyzed (the logo and written vision of the schools), and semi-structured in-depth interviews were also conducted with school principals. Analyses of the logo and written vision enabled an

understanding of the declared policy of the school. The interview with the principal enabled investigation of the policy as it actually exists, as well as to understand the school policy as perceived by the principal. The study will be based on a comparative analysis while crosschecking information that arose from the interviews and from the written documents.

Study findings showed that for each of the four dimensions through which school policy is reflected (the logo, written vision, actual policy and principal's declaration) five main characteristics are expressed: academic characteristics, characteristics of Israel's tradition, national traits, organizational traits and social ethics traits. Furthermore, it was found that whereas there is a fit between policy reflected in the written vision, actual policy and the principal's declaration, the logo reflects school policy partially and less exhaustively. Beyond that, even though the gap exists between policy reflected in the logo and the other dimensions, most principals checked cited that the logo does in fact reflect school policy. Similarly, various metaphors were found that represent the way in which principals perceive school vision.

The study's conclusions determine that the school logo has an essentially important role in fashioning school educational policy, and that research efforts should be extended regarding this connection. Furthermore, the study reveals a new moral aspect reflected by the logo – social ethics. Similarly, the current study offers a model that will enable the Ministry of Education and the schools themselves to examine their educational policy, their culture and their organizational identity.