

dent who also saw consolidation as a school reform. For that alone, I thank Alan DeYoung.

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Integrating Education, Health, and Social Services in Rural Communities: Service Integration Through the Rural Prism. R. D. Bhaerman. Philadelphia, PA: Research for Better Schools, Inc., 1994, 137 pp. ISBN: 1-56602-058-1.

Review by
Carol E. Mertens
University of Iowa

The integration of education, health, and social service to enhance efficiency and effectiveness is once again being embraced by policy makers and those involved in the delivery of human services. The fragmentation of the human service system has created a lack of coordination of services and artificial, but real, barriers for the individuals the system is designed to serve.

The concept of service integration requires collaboration among human service providers. The concept assumes that the needs of individuals are frequently interrelated. For example, crisis assistance may lead to family assistance, health service, or even protective services. The proponents of integrated human services assert that coordination and collaboration is necessary among educational programs, social services, crisis assistance, recreation, employment assistance, protection services, and health services.

While integrated human service initiatives have intuitive appeal, conceptualization and implementation of the concept is complex and formidable. In this monograph,

Integrating Education, Health, and Social Services in Rural Communities: Service Integration Through the Rural Prism, Bhaerman (1994) aspired to "provide information and insights for rural schools and communities interested in integrating services in order to maximize positive impact on children, youth, and their families" (p. 1).

Bhaerman focused primarily on educators in rural schools as well as social service and health personnel who "need to address unresolved problems and unanswered questions regarding service integration" (p. 1). This review will focus on the stated intent of this monograph.

To accomplish this ambitious task, Bhaerman examined selected dimensions of the concept and suggested guidelines for the implementation of integrated human service programs. Throughout the monograph, Bhaerman engaged the reader in a structured dialogue by using a question and answer format. Part I provided an overview of service integration. This section included a brief discussion of the resurgence of interest in the concept, a consideration of the various definitions of the concept, and an examination of the needs of rural communities. In addition, this section examined the rationale for integration of human services, barriers to integration, recommended legislation, models for implementation, and the implications for educators. The section concluded with a plea for action.

The implications of integrated human services for rural communities was addressed in Part II. Bhaerman structured this section of the monograph around two questions: (a) What are some educators saying about the rural context? and (b) What are reactions of educators in a rural context to the implementation of the integrated human service concept? The response to the first question is based on vignettes, whereas in responding to the second question, Bhaerman appeared to solicit responses of educators in a somewhat more structured manner. He "identified and contacted a random sample of twenty rural service integration practitioners" (p. 40). The methods and procedures used to gather information from these individuals are unclear; it is inferred that a mailed survey was employed. While the monograph is directed towards the practitioner, who may or may not be interested in methodology and procedures, some explanation seems to be in order. After all, the results of this "study" provide the basis for a major portion of the monograph. It seems that a more detailed description of the methodology would allow for a more adequate evaluation of the discussion of this "study."

Bhaerman concluded Part II with a foreseeable conclusion that "certain aspects of life in rural schools and communities need to be considered in order to make service integration work" (p. 59). Finally, the reader is offered the rural prism that reflects the need for financial, technical, knowledge, and human resources for integration of human services in a rural context. Although Bhaerman

painted a bleak picture about the availability of the resources, he asserted that "vision" and "commitment" are fundamental to the implementation of the concept. This faith, although admirable, ignores some of the basic systemic issues endemic to achieving the "vision."

In Part III, Bhaerman detailed a rather extensive list of principles and guidelines, as well as the processes, used to implement the integrated human service concept. The relationship between this list and actual practice is not clearly demonstrated and, as a result, the list seems hollow. Bhaerman's application of these principles, guidelines, and processes to his rather extensive descriptions of the initiatives in New Jersey, Kentucky, and Delaware would have enhanced the credibility of the direction advocated in the monograph. Although the descriptions of the states' effort support the belief of the author that there is no "need to reinvent the wheel" (p. 87), such an analysis would provide practitioners insight into potential issues embedded in the implementation of integrated human services. Such careful analysis and synthesis of material re-

lated to the implementation of the integrated human service concept is simply lacking in the literature (Knapp, 1995).

In summary, Bhaerman gathered a wide range of information about the implementation of integrated human services. With a gentle style, he guides the reader through a summary of selected resources related to a complex topic. Bhaerman provides a foundation on which more careful analysis and synthesis of this complex initiative can be accomplished.

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