

CHAPTER 1
METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The Mode of Inquiry

The qualitative, grounded theory methodology was chosen for this study to permit interaction between the researcher and selected adult educators in Israel (herein called: 'primary personnel'). It was the desire of the researcher to meet the primary personnel on a personal basis in order that they could tell how they perceive and assess adult education as a strategy for the development of National Identity - National Unity (NI-NU) within the modern State of Israel. The researcher wanted the data to emerge from the primary personnel rather than from pre-conceived theories or ideas.

The development of grounded theory is an inductive approach to research that focuses on social interaction and relies heavily on data from interviews and observations, from which one builds a theory grounded in the data rather than to test theory or merely describe empirical phenomena.¹ Grounded theory is an in-depth analysis of social systems based on collection of data from major actors in an ongoing naturalistic system.² This method requires an entry into the investigation with a minimization of preconceptions. The emphasis is on building explanations of social processes from an in-depth study of naturalistic social situations, the frequent use of observations and interviews of people involved, collection of detailed qualitative data and comparative analysis.³ The basic difference between an experimental study and a qualitative study lies in testing as

opposed to building a theory. Glaser and Strauss (1967) state in The Discovery of Grounded Theory:

In experimental studies there is an attempt to test a given theory, be it broad or specific. The experimental study uses basically quantitative methods to verify that the independent variable or variables account for the results of the experiment. In the qualitative method there is no pre-planned theory. (4)

It is the grounded theory which emerges from the comparative analysis of the data that eventually explains and predicts behavior in the substantive area under study. As Glaser and Strauss go on to explain:

The difference between an inductive exploratory method of research and the grounded theory approach is that the latter not only assembles data, analyzes it and crystallizes the emerging common patterns, but it also builds up a theory, grounded in the data, which explains and predicts. (5)

As Darkenwald says, the grounded theory approach has special problems for the researcher; however, it promises a rewarding experience.

Grounded theory research is more difficult to do than the typical descriptive or experimental study...there are special problems with grounded theory. Most vexing is the lack of easily understood, codified rules for the collection and analysis of qualitative data and the construction of theory....Another practical problem is the amount of effort required. Much time must be spent in the field collecting the data, a wealth

of data must be transcribed and analyzed, and writing grounded theory tends to be more onerous than reporting the results of conventional research. The caveats aside, grounded theory can be a rewarding experience both personally and professionally. Getting out of the library or computer center and into the world of educational practice can be exhilarating and enlightening, as can the opportunity to attempt something more than the often pedestrian study that passes for a 'contribution to knowledge'. (6)

Data Collecting, Coding and Analyzing

Theoretical Sampling

Glaser and Strauss assert that "theoretical sampling is the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges...the initial decisions are not based on a preconceived theoretical framework." ⁷ They distinguish between the theoretical and the statistical sampling by stating:

Theoretical sampling is done in order to discover categories and their properties and to suggest the interrelationships into a theory. Statistical sampling is done to obtain accurate evidence on distributions of people among categories to be used in descriptions or verifications. (8)

Theoretical sampling is the 'heart' of the grounded theory approach to collecting and analyzing the data. This researcher collected data from interviews and personal observations. The data was coded and placed in common categories based on content

analysis. As tapes were transcribed and data added to the coded categories, a concentration of material began to cluster around specific sections or topics. By continuous analysis of the categories it was possible to establish patterns of content development and where more data was required. Table 1 in Appendix A shows the agency/area of competency of the primary personnel and the number of interviews conducted with individuals from that agency/area of competency.

Data Collection

The techniques of data collection were relatively straightforward. The selection of the primary personnel was guided by Dr. Israeli, who served as a 'resident advisor' to the researcher on behalf of the OISE thesis committee. The decision was made by the researcher, after consultation with Dr. Israeli, to choose primary personnel who were able to fulfill the following criterion. First, it was desired that each one have a historical association with adult education as a contributing policy maker to the field through writing, pioneering programs or administrative leadership. Second, each one had to represent one or more of the primary historical adult education agencies in existence during the period of time under study. It was agreed that additional personnel would be considered as their names emerged from referrals by the initial contacts, or as a need arose to investigate their contribution to adult education.

Contact was made with the primary personnel by a letter of introduction or telephone call (often made by the advisor on behalf of the researcher) to explain the purpose of the project. The willingness with which the primary personnel participated in the project was a major factor in acquiring the necessary data. The majority of the interviews were scheduled at the office of the primary personnel. This permitted an occasion to view the facilities of the agency. Some interviews were conducted in the home of the primary personnel which is a symbolic evidence of the informality the researcher found in Israeli society. Such visits afforded a privileged vignette of the interviewee's home environment, family, and/or such personal values as hobbies, library etc.

A cassette-recorder with a built-in microphone was used to record the conversation. Later the tapes were transcribed along with personal notes taken at the time. Only one person requested no taping of the interview. A few of the meetings listed in Appendix A were conducted with personal notes made at a later time without a transcribed tape. After the meeting with President Navon, a request was made by his office that the entire interview be placed in the paper as an 'Appendix' rather than phrases being lifted out of context. (see Appendix C)

The time together ranged from under an hour to over two hours. Depending on other factors such as interruptions, coffee, or tours of the facilities, the time together may have been extended beyond the formal 'taped segment' portion. In a few cases an invitation was extended to the researcher to meet with the primary personnel at a future more informal occasion. Meetings that included a visit to the program facilities of the adult education agency, provided an opportunity to meet additional staff members, observe adult participants in the physical setting of the adult education programs, and meet participants on an informal basis. Some of the primary personnel took the initiative to suggest, "You must meet...." and offered to arrange a contact with that individual on behalf of the researcher. A number made resources available from their agency library for further investigation. Some offered personal copies of agency publications or personal articles.

The initial interviews evidenced that certain adult educators in Israel were corporately regarded as the primary personnel for the stated research question. Being a somewhat small nation, with a close awareness of what is happening in one's field of specialization, the 'old-timers' in adult education (serving from 1948 on)⁹ tended to know one another quite intimately. This assured the researcher that the primary personnel chosen for the study were respected formulators of adult education policy in Israel in their areas of specialty. Another observable phenomenon was that the 'height of the heirarchy' between policy maker, program implementer,

and participant evaluator was very low in Israel. Many of the policy makers evolved from being a one time participant, through the level of program facilitator, to become a policy maker. This gave added validity to the data received from these individuals.¹⁰

An inherent question in the qualitative methodology is when to stop collecting data or when 'theoretical saturation' has taken place. In this study it occurred when it was observed that comments being made by the primary personnel about factors related to how adult education was viewed as a strategy for the development of national identity and national unity began to 'repeat' in later interviews. Two further parameters of the study helped move the collection of the data to a 'saturation point'. First the study was limited to the first twenty-five years of the modern State of Israel: 1948-1973. Many of the one hundred and eighty-eight agencies registered with the Adult Education Association of Israel,¹¹ emerged in the later years of the study or after 1973. Since the primary thrust of the study was to connect with the 'historical' agencies and the primary personnel active in the first years of nation building, the study tended to focus on primary personnel with the following 'primary agencies': 1) The Ministry of Education - Department of Adult Education and Torah Culture; 2) Ulpanim (language schools for Hebrew);^{11a} 3) Israel Defence Force-(IDF); 4) Kibbutzim; 5) Histradut - Labor Union; 6) Community Centers¹² and 7) Moshavim.

Secondly, the study specifically focused on adult education within the predominately Jewish segment of the total population in the Jewish State of Israel.¹³ The primary personnel directed the major portion of their comments in the taped conversations to the role of adult education within the Jewish population.¹⁴

Analyzing the Data and Building the Theory

According to Mezirow, a grounded theory, involves the development of conceptual categories, applicable to and indicated by the data and relevant to an explanation of the behavior under study. This approach means that the researcher would go into the field, free of predetermined theoretical constraints, to construct analytical categories out of the qualitative similarities and differences which emerge from (15) the study of situations.

Glaser and Strauss assert that the elements of grounded theory are generated by comparative analysis and they are first, conceptual categories and their conceptual properties; and second, they are hypotheses or generalized relations among the categories and their properties.¹⁶

The first phase in the analysis of the data was to gather all the transcribed interviews and begin to code the responses of the primary personnel into categories. This process evolved through four phases from late 1979 to July, 1980. As additional data was transcribed the overlapping content was drawn together in related categories. (See Appendix F). Major 'sections' of categories emerged that focused on aspects of the National Identity

National Unity question. These were: Adult Education in Israel (general history). Forces contributing to National Identity. The Contribution of Selected Adult Education Agencies to NI-NU; The Relationship of Cultural Pluralism to NI-NU. The contribution of Religion to NI-NU. The Relationship of Minority Groups to NI-NU.

The next phase of data analysis took place about mid-way through the collection of data, with the formulation of a conceptual model: 'A System of National Identity-National Unity within the State of Israel, 1948-1973'. This model, described in Chapter V is not a substantive theory itself, rather it is an attempt to visually portray the goal and direction of adult education as a strategy for NI-NU as it relates to each segment of the Israeli society. This conceptual model did permit a recoding of the data that indicated a similarity between the sections of the data and the thrust of the model. An important part of the project was to identify how the primary personnel defined the terms National Identity - National Unity. This was a crucial step as the emerging grounded theory required the researcher to have a clear understanding of what these terms meant in the data received from the primary personnel. How one perceives and assesses adult education as a strategy for the development of NI-NU will be affected by how NI-NU is defined.

Chapter III is a detailed exposition of the definitions of National Identity - National Unity and how the adult educators perceive and assess adult education as a strategy for the development of those defined terms. Chapter VI develops the integration of the categories into a substantive theory.

In the grounded theory methodology there is always the question of validity. This researcher suggests the following ways of validation: (a) reviewing and reconstructing the various phases of data collection and analysis. This can be done on the basis of the transcribed conversations, observations, interim reports, coded categories, and coded sections as they emerged. The 'conceptual model' and the theory chapters of this study are based totally on the transcribed and coded data. Such review and reconstruction will enable the reader to follow the phases of the study and judge its validity; (b) putting the theory into practice in the field and checking its applicability; and (c) assessing the theory on the basis of the prima facie explanatory power of the major categories and the logical validity of their integration. Verification of the hypotheses derived from the theory would provide the most powerful and convincing evidence of validity.

The researcher believes there exists a need to test the emergent theory from this study in the light of the post-1973 changes in the Israeli society. In 1979 the rate of emigration

from the country rose to a level near the rate of immigration to the country. By the admission of government sources this is an undesirable situation.¹⁷ Rather than invalidating what has been done, or the success of the historical effort of the adult educators, the suggestion is made in the summary, that the time has come to reflectively consider the valuable contribution of adult educators during the first twenty-five years of statehood, and how this foundation can be built upon to make National Identity - National Unity an ongoing reality.

There are problems and rewards with the qualitative methodology. This researcher wondered at first, if an English speaking western Canadian Christian would be able to acquire accurate data from the primary personnel and interpret it with a minimum of personal bias. The warm encouragement from the primary personnel helped alleviate these concerns. They noted that for the same reasons, content could be given by the primary personnel that might have less internal emotional bias for the researcher. This was seen as a positive opportunity for the research project to be beneficial for the adult educators and agencies in Israel, as well as others seeking to understand the role of adult education in the development of National Identity - National Unity in the modern State of Israel. The investment of time and energy to personally meet the primary personnel in their

national environment - and share that homeland with them for a year - continues to pay rich dividends, that indicate the wisdom of the methodology selected for this project.

1. Gordon G. Darkenwald, "Field Research and Grounded Theory." Published by the Adult Education Association of the U.S.A., 1973. (mimeographed) p. 1. (obtained from Dr. Israeli in his unpublished dissertation). Published also in: Huey B. Long, Roger Hiemstra and Associates. Changing Approaches to Studying Adult Education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1980, pp. 65-77.
2. Alan B. Knox, "Criteria for Doctoral Dissertations in Adult Education," Cogito (Action and Knowledge in Adult Education), Teachers College, Columbia University, No. 2. November, 1971, p. 17.
3. Ibid, p. 17.
4. Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss. The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research. (1967), p. 20.
5. Ibid, p. 20.
6. Darkenwald, op. cit., pp. 2-3.
7. Glaser and Strauss, op, cit., p. 45.
8. Ibid, p. 62
9. The 1978 Survey of Adult Education Personnel in Israel indicates that 76% of the adult educators have lived in Israel twenty years and more. "44.7% of the 'supervisors, directors and headmasters' (i.e. policy makers) had immigrated to Israel before 1948." The Henrietta Szold Institute: Research Report No. 194, Publication No. 554a, Jerusalem, 1978, p. 16.
10. It appears from the Szold's publication that many of the adult educators who 'evolved' to the policy positions also furthered their own formal education. "59.1% of the 'directors' (i.e. policy makers) were university graduates." Ibid. p. 22.
11. Statistics received by the researcher from the Annual Report of the Adult education Association of Israel, at their Annual Meeting, held in Tel Aviv, December 17, 1979.
- 11a. 'Ulpanim' were originally one of the major agencies within both the Ministry of Education and the Histadrut. Due to its special impact on the field of education in Israel it will be regarded as a 'separate' agency for this study.

12. The Community Centers in Israel began as a formal Corporation of Community Centers in 1969, with a small number of centers. However, their phenomenal growth to over 100 centers by 1979 is an evidence of their influential role as an adult education agency making a contribution to Israeli society towards the end of the study time period.
13. The Jewish population of Israeli Society in 1973 was 85.1% (see 1973 Government of Israel Handbook entitled 'Aspects of Israel', Jerusalem: Government Publication, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1974.)
14. The phrase 'I am only speaking of Jews' or 'I am only referring to adult education within the 'Green Line' (pre-1967 borders) was a recurring comment or explanation, given by primary personnel. The reverse of this was experienced when a government official from Gaza studying Hebrew at Ulpan Akiva was asked by the researcher about 'Adult Education in Israel'. His reply was, 'I know nothing about adult education in Israel, I live in Gaza!'
15. Jack D. Mezirow, "Toward a Theory of Practice," Adult Education, (1971) p. 143.
16. Glaser and Strauss, op. cit., p. 35.
17. MacLean's Magazine, 'Exodus of the Disenchanted', January 5, 1981, p. 21.

"Since Israel was founded 32 years ago, 270,000 people have left the country...Official government figure based on people who have remained away for four years. The real figure is much higher partly because the rate of emigration has increased in the past four years (1975-1979). Some estimates put the number of Israelis and dependents living in the U.S. alone as high as 500,000, and the total living abroad at 800,000, or 20% of the Israeli population."