Implementation of Education Reform Policies: The Issue of Structural and Cultural Discordance

Book Series: Globalisation, Comparative Education and Policy Research
Volume: Volume 11
Book: Globalisation, Ideology and Education Policy Reforms
Publisher: Springer Netherlands
DOI: 10.1007/978-90-481-3524-0
Copyright: 2010
ISBN: 978-90-481-3523-3 (Print) 978-90-481-3524-0 (Online)
Part: Part 1
DOI: 10.1007/978-90-481-3524-0_6
Pages: 79-85
Subject Collection: Humanities, Social Sciences and Law
SpringerLink Date: Tuesday, January 19, 2010

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Abstract
Successful implementation of educational reforms has always been a big challenge. Management efficiency has often played a crucial role in determining the success. In a highly centralized education system like in Malaysia, there is an assumption that any reform effort can be successfully carried out with the existence of a well-developed and formalized organizational structure. But, for the effective implementation of any reform initiatives, the structure alone is not sufficient. It may also need the application of cultural elements at work. While the organizational structure ensures the integration of reform effort via coordination and control of activities, organizational culture directs employee behavior through a common vision, shared values, norms, and goals that may encourage whole-hearted participation in reform implementation. But the efficiency in the implementation of reform policies may be hampered by the structural and cultural discordance of the system.