

DECISION-MAKING PROCEDURES
AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION

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CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

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INTRODUCTION

Organizational theory suggests a shift from decision making by individuals within the bureaucratic structure to cooperative decision making by groups and committees. Emphasis is on involving those individuals affected by decisions. This also applies to educational administration. Educational organizations are among those where more decision making through group and committee structures can be expected.

Educational theory emphasizes that teachers have a need for increased participation in decision making in areas directly affecting their work lives. The question arises how well school systems are prepared for this need for increased involvement. What mechanisms are available to schools for making effective decisions? The concept of participation seems too vague to suggest how teachers may participate.

While the pressures for an increased involvement and a higher degree of autonomy exist, schools lack effective procedures for decision making. Few studies have been conducted which specify such procedures. This study is a further step toward the development of a framework for decision making in secondary schools. It will attempt to answer these questions: (a) What type of decision procedures do teachers and principals use? (b) What type do they think desirable? (c) Are all decisions made by

participative methods? (d) What is the role and function of teacher and principal in these procedures?

The thesis is arranged into four chapters. The first chapter gives a review of the literature on teacher participation in decision making, of the administrative theory on which this research is based, and of studies and theories of decisional procedures. The experimental design is stated in Chapter II. The results of the study are presented in Chapter III and discussed in Chapter IV. The Appendix contains the instrument used in this study and a summary of the raw scores.

CHAPTER I

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

For the purpose of this study, participation was defined as "the manner in which the administrator involves teachers in decision making."¹ Schein's² definition of a psychological group was adopted as constituting "any number of people who (1) interact with one another, (2) are psychologically aware of one another, and (3) perceive themselves to be a group." Swanson's three major types of "constitutional arrangements"³ specify the group procedures.

The literature was reviewed under three categories: research on teacher participation in decision making, related administrative theories on decision making and decision-making procedures. A summary of the three categories and a statement of hypotheses followed.

1. Research on Teacher Participation in Decision Making.

The secondary school can be viewed as a subsystem of the total system. In this social institution the secondary

1 E. Bridges, "Teacher Participation in Decision Making", in Administrator's Notebook, Vol. 12, No. 9, 1964, p. 1.

2 E. Schein, Organizational Psychology, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, 1965, p. 67.

3 G. Swanson, "The Effectiveness of Decision-Making Groups", in Adult Leadership, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1959, p. 48-52.

school principal and his teachers work and interact. The conventional mode of operation is hierarchical; decisions and actions are segregated in the authority structure. In contrast, participative decision making stresses a mode of organizational operation in which decisions are made by those persons who execute these decisions.

Educational organizations have become larger and more complex. Schools and school districts have increased in size, offer more diverse programs and require more specialized personnel. The increase in size and complexity has also affected the pattern of decision making and the distribution of power in the schools. Miklos states that "there are numerous indications that various groups and individuals wish to become involved in significant decisions to a greater extent than they have been in the past."⁴ The question then arises whether the degree of participation of teachers in decision making has reached a desirable level.

Sharma⁵ reported the views of over five hundred teachers regarding the person or group that should make certain decisions, and to determine how practices in decision

⁴ E. Miklos, "Increasing Participation in Decision Making", in The Canadian Administrator, Vol. 9, No. 6, 1970, p. 25.

⁵ C. Sharma, "Who Should Make What Decisions?", in Administrator's Notebook, Vol. 3, No. 8, 1955, p. 1-4.

making were related to an individual's satisfaction in teaching.

He noted sharp differences between teachers' desired and actual practices with regard to participation in decision making by groups of teachers. In particular, teachers wanted to assume responsibility for all activities concerning instruction; in general, they desired more autonomy for the schools in which they taught. Sharma also found that teacher satisfaction was related to the extent that actual decision-making practices corresponded to desired practices, and to the extent that teachers participated in decision making as individuals or as groups.

Further support for the argument that teachers had a high need for autonomy is advanced by Bridges'⁶ study of teacher participation in decision making. Bridges found that open-minded principals involved teachers to no greater extent than closed-minded principals. Instead, the level of participation was related to the size of the school and to the age and experience of the principal. Attitudes of teachers toward the principal were significantly related to participation, support, and a teacher's need for independence. The most favourable attitudes were reported when a principal's behaviour was characterized by high participation, regardless of whether the teachers had a high or

6 Bridges, Op. Cit., p. 3.

low level of need for independence.

The need for independence and the strength of authoritarianism was also investigated by Vroom. He reported that the amount of participation

...was most positively related to the satisfaction and performance of persons high in the need for independence and low in authoritarianism and least positively related to the satisfaction and performance of those low in need for independence and high in authoritarianism.

Thus the strength of the need for independence together with the degree of authoritarianism determined both job satisfaction and job performance. Participation did not have unfavourable effects either on satisfaction or on performance. Vroom quoted two other investigations to support his findings. Sandford⁸ concluded that authoritarian personalities prefer strongly directive leadership and high status. Subjects with a high need for autonomy, Trow⁹ reported, were significantly less satisfied with roles in which they were highly dependent on others than did subjects with a lesser need for autonomy.

7 V. Vroom, Work and Motivation, New York, John Wiley & Sons, 1964, p. 119.

8 F. Sandford, Authoritarianism and Leadership, Philadelphia, Institute for Research in Human Relations, 1950, quoted by Victor Vroom, Ibid.

9 D. Trow, "Autonomy and Job Satisfaction in Task-Oriented Groups", in Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, Vol. 54, 1957, p. 204-209, quoted by Victor Vroom, Ibid.

To investigate the extent to which teachers participated in decisions on principles and policies of the schools they taught in, Simpkins and Friesen¹⁰ attempted to analyze teacher participation in decision making as perceived and preferred by teachers. Twelve task activities were grouped into four task areas: curriculum, classroom management, instructional arrangements, and general school organization. The respondents had a choice of three decision-making sources: the individual teacher, the formal staff group, or a higher administrative authority than the principal. The findings indicated that the individual teacher's primary role in decision making was restricted to classroom management. Matters external to the classroom were perceived as being decided by those in higher official authority. The classroom provided the line of demarcation between two contrasting participative patterns: one pattern, for tasks concerned with classroom management, was dominated by the individual teacher, while the other pattern, for school matters outside of the immediate classroom, was dominated by those in higher authority. The formal staff group was perceived to play a minor role in decision areas internal and external to the classroom. No conflict was reported between perceived and preferred participation in the area of classroom management,

10 W. Simpkins and D. Friesen, "Discretionary Powers of Classroom Teachers", in The Canadian Administrator, Vol. 9, No. 8, 1970, p. 35-38.

but sharp differences were reported between perceived and preferred participation in matters external to the classroom. Teachers preferred to have either the individual teacher or the formal staff group, rather than those in higher official authority, make decisions in these matters.

In discussing the results of their study, Simpkins and Friesen suggested that teachers preferred a mode of decision making which is considerably more decentralized than is currently practised.¹¹ The preferred pattern of decentralization was complex and varied with the nature of the task. Teachers' preferences also reflected a higher degree of professionalism than currently existed. Teachers expressed a desire to extend the decision-making authority to administrative matters, an authority structure characteristic of professional organizations. The authors of that study suggested that it was insufficient to view participative decision making only in terms of the power teachers wish to exercise, as the complexity of the style of participation influenced the variety of the kinds of participation preferred. Evidence seemed to indicate that teachers involved in the study desired a form of participation in school affairs which gives authority to those directly affected by the decisions.

11 Ibid., p. 37.

Maslow's¹² theory of motivation served as a conceptual framework for Trusty and Sergiovanni's¹³ investigation of need-fulfilment deficiencies for teachers and administrators in a school system. The underlying assumption of the study was that the larger the deficiency in need fulfilment the larger the dissatisfaction of the respondents. The findings of the research were that educators' need deficiencies differed significantly with the opportunity for participation in setting goals, with the opportunity for personal growth and development in their school position, with the feeling of self-fulfilment educators get from being in their school position, and with the opportunity to participate in determining methods and procedures. The study suggested that, for all educators, the largest need deficiencies had to do with esteem, autonomy, and self actualization. Administrators were less satisfied with their opportunity for self-actualization than teachers, but they reported greater satisfaction in the esteem category than teachers. The researchers suggested a restructure of the teacher's role by giving him more responsibility for his professional behaviour, more opportunity for personal and

12 A. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, New York, Harper, 1954, p. xiv-246.

13 F. Trusty and T. Sergiovanni, "Perceived Need Deficiencies of Teachers and Administrators: A Proposal for Restructuring Teacher Roles", in Educational Administration Quarterly, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1966, p. 168-180.

professional growth, and "a strong voice in curriculum development, policy formation, and in allocating resources."¹⁴

The preceding studies indicated that teachers preferred participation in decision making in various school affairs. Gorton¹⁵ tried to isolate the factors which are associated with the principal's efforts to expand or restrict teacher participation. Two variables were investigated: the principal's personal role orientation toward faculty participation and the institutional expectations of the principal's behaviour, held by two of his relevant reference groups, his faculty and his superiors. Both these groups have expectations concerning the principal's role in encouraging teacher participation in decision making; each group is related to the principal in the superior-subordinate hierarchy within the institutional setting. Gorton found significant relationships

...among the principal's behaviour in encouraging teacher participation in school decision-making, his perception of his immediate superior's expectations about teacher participation and his faculty's expectations about teacher participation in school decision making.¹⁶

14 Ibid., p. 179.

15 R. Gorton, "Factors Which Are Associated with the Principal's Behaviour in Encouraging Teacher Participation in School Decision-Making", in The Journal of Educational Research, Vol. 64, No. 7, 1971, p. 325-327.

16 Ibid., p. 326.

The results also indicated that the principal's personal role orientation regarding teacher participation in school decision-making is significantly related to his behaviour in encouraging teacher participation, independent of his perception of teacher and faculty expectations. A significant association existed between the principal's perception of his immediate superior's expectations concerning his role in encouraging teacher participation in decision making and his behaviour in encouraging such participation, independent of his personal role orientation.

While Gorton's research stressed the principal's behaviour and his own role orientation, and the expectations of his superiors and his faculty, Ambrosie and Heller¹⁷ examined to what extent the personality of the secondary school principal and his leadership behaviour were related to teacher participation in the decision-making process. Principal-personality was viewed as the principal's non-authoritarian personality, while leadership-behaviour was viewed as the teacher's perception of principal-leader behaviour. Decisional teacher participation was limited to teachers' perception of themselves as members of the

17 F. Ambrosie and R. Heller, "The Secondary School Administrator and Perceived Teacher Participation in the Decision-Making Process", in The Journal of Experimental Education, Vol. 40, No. 4, 1972, p. 9-13.

school's decision-making process. Halpin's¹⁸ dichotomy of leader behaviour, "consideration", emphasizing group maintenance, and "initiating structure", emphasizing the importance of maintaining the organization's goal achievement, served as the theory for Ambrosie and Heller's research. Consideration indicated behaviour indicative of friendship, trust and respect between the leader and the members of his staff. The study reported a significant relationship between principal-consideration and teacher perceived participation in decision making but indicated no appreciable relationship between principal non-authoritarianism and leader behaviour as measured by consideration. Initiating structure, where the leader is task-oriented and tends to remain aloof of group members, indicated leader behaviour which delineates the relationship between the leader and members of the group. As with consideration, there was also a significant correlation between teacher participation in decision making, as perceived by teachers, and the leadership dimension initiating-structure.

The previous six studies examined the decisional participation phenomenon as a continuum ranging from zero

18 A. Halpin, Theory and Research in Administration, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1966, p. xiv-352.

to maximum participation. Alutto and Belasco¹⁹ examined the discrepancy between a teacher's current and preferred rate of participation. Their study attempted to identify "the decisional participation needs of the various substrata within a teaching population and explore alternative administrative strategies to meet these specific needs."²⁰ Three decisional states were identified: deprivation, equilibrium, and saturation. The findings showed that teachers characterized by decisional equilibrium showed no more organizational commitment than teachers categorized as decisionally deprived or saturated. Secondary school teachers were decisionally more deprived than elementary school teachers. Middle-aged female teachers seemed to have reached a state of equilibrium between decisional desires and actions, while young male teachers tended to be decisionally deprived. The data indicated that maximum role conflict was perceived by those teachers experiencing decisional deprivation. Teachers who expressed saturation or equilibrium in decisional participation reported lower levels of role conflict. The investigators also reported on the relationship between attitudinal militancy and decisional participation. The group of teachers that experienced decisional deprivation was also

19 J. Alutto and J. Belasco, "Patterns of Teacher Participation in School System Decision Making", in Educational Administration Quarterly. Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 27-41.

20 Ibid., p. 30.

most favourable toward militant activities. The data suggested that the desire for increased decisional participation within the school organization was not equally and widely distributed throughout the school population. Certain teachers desired more participation, while others desired less or no change in the current rate of participation. The data further implied that there was no simple relationship between the desire for increased participation and desired organizational outcomes, such as administrative control and organizational commitment. The research suggested that shared decision making would not be an effective strategy for all strata of the school population. Teachers who are currently experiencing equilibrium or saturation may react dysfunctionally to increased participation.

Findings of the above seven studies have been largely supported by a number of other studies that have employed essentially the same approach.²¹⁻²⁵

21 F. Chase, "Factors for Satisfaction in Teaching", in The Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. 23, No. 1, 1951, p. 127-131.

22 G. Moeller and W. Charters, "Relation of Bureaucratization to Sense of Power Among Teachers", in Administrative Science Quarterly, Vol. 10, No. 4, 1965, p. 444-465.

23 D. Masse, Teacher Participation and Professional Attitudes, unpublished Doctoral thesis presented to The University of Alberta, 1969.

24 R. Corriveau, A Comparison of Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions of Actual and Preferred Degree of Teacher Participation in a Number of Decisions, unpublished Master's thesis presented to The University of Alberta, 1969.

The review of the previous studies does not suggest a definite conclusion concerning teacher participation in decision making in the school organization. The variance of the studies is briefly summarized.

Studies of the desire of teachers to be more active in the decision-making process within their school organization concluded on the one hand that this desire was equally and widely distributed throughout the teacher population, but stated on the other hand that teachers were far from homogeneous in many attitudinal and behavioural dimensions. Not only did it seem reasonable to assume that only one segment of teachers desired increased participation in decision making, but also that this desire would vary with decisional task areas.

Similarly, studies dealing with the conflict between the teachers' professionalism and the bureaucratically organized school system postulated that this conflict led teachers to desire participation in, and control of, the decision-making apparatus. But teachers varied in their professional aspirations, and even those with high aspirations might not demand participation in the same decision areas.

25 P. Garland, A Study of the Relationship Between Teacher Participation in School Decision-Making and the Task-Needs Integration in Schools", unpublished Master's thesis presented to The University of Ottawa, 1971.

Other studies suggested that increased participation in organizational decision making was associated with greater levels of job satisfaction, enthusiasm, and positive attitudes. But participation in decision making was more complex and could range from an offering of an opinion, where the final decision rested elsewhere, to group membership with final control over an issue. The organizational outcome of various forms of participation may well be different.

Attempts to overcome some of the limitations were made by emphasizing organizational procedures for a number of given task areas. Participants were offered six decisional choices for each of the task areas. Teachers' and their principals' perceived and desired participational choices were analyzed and compared to determine for which procedures significant differences existed.

2. Administrative Theory of Decision Making.

The studies reviewed in the previous section suggested that a wider distribution of power, by having teachers participate in decision making, could yield benefits to the school. Satisfaction of subordinates was related to a perception of the extent to which they could influence aspects of the organization's decision making. Influence of members in lower organizational strata need not reduce control of

administrators higher up in the organization. Tannenbaum²⁶ stated that high amounts of influence could be exercised at every hierarchical level. He distinguished two distinct aspects of control in organizations: (1) the distribution of control emphasized the power or influence of individuals or groups within the organization while (2) the total amount of control referred to the absolute amount of control within the organization from all sources. The control process itself broke down into an active control - the extent to which the individual or the group exercised control in the organization, and a passive control - the extent to which the individual or the group was controlled within the organization. When these individuals and groups of the lower echelons within an organization could exercise control, they were likely to accept more readily jointly-made decisions, as well as experience a sense of responsibility and motivation which was deemed beneficial to the organization. When, on the other hand, authority was hierarchical, as Blau²⁷ suggested, initiative was reduced, conflict and hostility were created among members, and individuals identified with the organization to a lesser degree.

26 A. Tannenbaum, Control in Organizations, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1968, p. vii-325.

27 P. Blau, Bureaucracy in Modern Society, New York, Random House, 1956, p. 80.

The importance of high mutual influence or control by all levels within the organization was also stressed by Likert²⁸ as the basis for effective coordination of organizational activity, and for the integration of the goals of individuals and of organizations. Such a coordination and integration was conducive to high organizational effectiveness. Yet in the effective organization, the stock of rewards of interest to all members was much greater and, Tannenbaum claimed,

...consequently, the exercise of control in the effective organization may be relatively more attractive to both leaders and members, because it is instrumental to the achievement of important satisfactions, and the amount of control which all groups try to exercise will be greater in this type of organization.²⁹

To the question of why organizations did not conform more closely to the ideal pattern of control as expressed by members, Tannenbaum suggested, among several possible reasons, that members might not be prepared to expend the effort which the exercise of control implied, even though they expressed the desire for greater control.³⁰ This discrepancy between actual and desired control within organizations could be related to differences in structure, functions, objectives and

28 R. Likert, "A Motivational Approach to a Modified Theory of Organization and Management", in M. Haire (ed.), Modern Organization Theory, New York, Wiley & Sons, 1959, p. 184.

29 Tannenbaum, Op. Cit., p. 74.

30 Tannenbaum, Op. Cit., p. 84.

member expectations of various organizations.

Bachman and Tannenbaum's study of the relationship between control and satisfaction in job or task situations supported earlier findings concerning job satisfaction and concluded that "individuals tend to be more satisfied with those aspects of life or of their jobs over which they have some control than with those over which they have none."³¹ But they cautioned that control could matter a great deal in determining the satisfaction of some persons, while for others it might have minor effects only. For a minority, satisfaction could be negatively related to control.

If change were desirable within an organization--as for instance a change in the school's decision structure--should it be brought about through structural changes or through a change in internal relationships? Argyris³² brought new insights into the problem of decisional participation by hypothesizing that structural changes should be instituted at the lower levels of the hierarchy only if the personal responsibility of the individuals involved was low.

31 J. Bachman and A. Tannenbaum, "The Control-Satisfaction Relationship Across Varied Areas of Experience", in A.S. Tannenbaum, Control in Organizations, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1968, p. 241-249.

32 C. Argyris, Management and Organizational Development, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1971, p. ix-211.

When, by contrast, effective change depended on the individual's personal responsibility, "changes in interpersonal relationships, group effectiveness, and intergroup relationships are necessary before structural changes can be introduced."³³ The further one went down the hierarchy, the greater the probability became that the change criteria would be found in administrative control and in organizational structure.

But if participation in decision making constituted the change in an organizational structure, it would not, per se, guarantee effective problem solving, the quality of a decision, or the strength of commitment to a decision. Argyris warned not to expect effective relationships and group dynamics simply by bringing people together to participate. However, "participation can become effective if human beings are helped to develop the skills and self-acceptance and confidence required."³⁴ This task was not easy as neither good intention nor education of only some members of the group guaranteed the skills of interpersonal competence. The reeducative process could be frustrating and embarrassing, since individuals resented acknowledging their

33 Ibid., p. 169.

34 Ibid., p. 186.

interpersonal incompetence and hesitated reexamining the values to which they were committed. Argyris concluded that reeducation had to bring about maximization of such key behaviours "as expression of feelings, helping others to own up to their ideas and to be open, experimenting and risk taking, and establishing norms of individuality and trust."³⁵

Schein³⁶ also advocated reeducation for effective group membership and leadership through laboratory methods to increase the sensitivity and skill of members and leaders in diagnosing and working on group problems. Such methods could result in more effective group action which in turn would produce greater organizational effectiveness if accompanied by good communication, flexibility, creativity, and genuine psychological commitment. In particular, groups could provide for (a) affiliation needs, that is, needs for friendship and support, (b) developing, enhancing, or confirming a sense of identity and maintaining self esteem, (c) a means of establishing and testing reality, (d) a means of increasing security and a sense of power and (e) a means of getting done a job which members need to have done.³⁷ A variety of factors determined whether the kind of groups

35 Ibid., p. 191.

36 Schein, Op. Cit., p. 68-70.

37 Ibid., p. 70.

which existed in organizations would fulfil both organizational and personal functions or only one or the other. Schein listed three classes of such factors: environmental factors, membership factors--personal background, values, status of group members--and dynamic factors--how the group is organized, the manner in which the group is led, the amount of training in group skills, the nature of the task given to the group, and others.³⁸ Ignorance of these factors could lead to the erroneous conclusion that the group was ineffective.

Administrative theory thus emphasizes the importance of group training or reeducation to bring about effective and beneficial member participation in decision making. It is suggested that failure to take this phenomenon into account explains in part why the studies investigated in this review vary in their findings. Though this study does not claim to offer a satisfactory solution to the problem of training and reeducation, it tries to narrow the gap that exists between past research and what future research should stress, by offering a variety of group decision-procedures from which respondents can choose. These procedures are briefly discussed in the following paragraphs.

38 Ibid., p. 71.

3. Decision-Making Procedures.

Bridges³⁹ constructed a model for shared decision making which incorporated Swanson's "constitutional arrangements"⁴⁰ of the group by specifying the procedures by which the group can arrive at a decision: the participant-determining, the parliamentary, and the democratic-centralist arrangement. These three models had two characteristics in common which defined and differentiated the arrangements: the number of group members required to agree before a decision was reached and the amount of influence any one group member had over the decision.

Groups using the parliamentary procedure to make decisions could exercise a choice which was binding on the group when the majority agreed on a particular choice of action. One of the major functions of the principal for this decision-mode was to provide the minority with an opportunity to express their views. The minority could persuade the majority to adopt another viewpoint only by supplying new facts or points of view.

The democratic-centralist constitutional arrangement

39 Bridges, Op. Cit., p. 55-57.

40 G. Swanson, "The Effectiveness of Decision-Making Groups", in Adult Leadership, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1959, p. 48-52.

bound the group to a decision whenever this decision was reached by the person in final authority. The leader could minimize the tendency of the group's thinking to conform to the leader by focusing on the problem-solving process rather than by trying to make a decision himself.

Under the participant-determining arrangement, consensus was required. If one part of the group opposed the other, the leader could point out similarities in their arguments and use these as a basis for building consensus.

The same three types of decision procedures were used in a study by Plaxton and Bumbarger⁴¹ who studied the amount of power individual members of small groups possessed. They found a significant difference in interaction patterns within the group between the centralist and consensus arrangement: "group members gave more positive reactions to statements of other group members when the group was operating under the consensus arrangement than when it was operating under the centralist arrangement".⁴² No statistically significant difference was found between the decision rules employed and the time required to reach a decision. All members were less satisfied with the process under the centralist arrangement

41 R. Plaxton and C. Bumbarger, "Participation and Power in Decision-Making Groups", in The Canadian Administrator, Vol. 12, No. 5, 1973, p. 21-24.

42 Ibid., p. 22.

than under either the majority or consensus arrangement. Group members were also more committed to decisions reached under the majority arrangement than to those reached under the centralist arrangement. The investigators reported their findings to be consistent with theory. Non-leader members addressed more information, suggestions and opinions to the group, and group leaders asked for more opinions and suggestions from the group under the consensus arrangement.

The discussions of Bridges and of Plaxton and Bumbarger suggested that organizations might benefit by granting true decisional powers to their members, but that participation alone was not sufficient to achieve these benefits. The nature of that participation was important, especially as it applied to the school system. Constitutional arrangements, as perceived and desired by both principals and teachers, could, for specific task areas, serve the principal as a guide in making his selection from specific decision-making procedures. The validity of such a guideline varied in direct proportion to the degree of correlation of desired and perceived decision-making procedures of principals and teachers.

No definite answer had yet been reached on the question of which decision-making instrument was more effective: the group or the isolated individual. The present study gave respondents a choice between the three group

procedures discussed in previous paragraphs, and individual decisions by the principal, the department head, and the teacher.

4. Summary and Hypotheses.

Eight studies were reviewed which dealt with teachers' participation in decision making. Findings indicated that there was an organizational need for such participation and that schools could benefit from this participation. While the outcome of decisional participation was desirable, the degree of homogeneity of teachers' attitudes and behaviour varied.

Administrative theory generally supported earlier findings but emphasized conditions that have to be met before member participation in decision making could become effective and beneficial. Effective problem-solving is not guaranteed but depends on additional clarification of who should solve specific problems and by what procedures.

The subdivision of the group into three constitutional arrangements was developed and employed in previous studies to specify more detailed decision-making procedures. The investigators felt that it was important to specify the nature of decisional participation since participation by itself was too undefined and broad always to result in organizational benefits.

The present investigation sought to explore the problem of decision-making procedures further by applying specific procedures to a list of task areas typical in secondary schools, as perceived and desired by the principal and his teachers. To be more exact, the writer hoped to indicate which decision-making procedures were perceived as ideally desirable and to what extent this differed from present procedures. Based on the literature reviewed in this chapter, the investigator expected to find significant differences between perceived and desired decision-making procedures of teachers; he also expected differences in comparing teachers' and principals' perceptions and desires for these procedures. Expressed in full form, the hypotheses were as follows:

- (1) There is no significant difference in decision-making procedures for given task areas as perceived and desired by teachers.
- (2) There is no significant difference in decision-making procedures for given task areas as perceived and desired by principals.
- (3) There is no significant difference in decision-making procedures for given task areas as perceived by principals and desired by teachers.
- (4) There is no significant difference in decision-making procedures for given task areas as perceived by both principals and teachers.
- (5) There is no significant difference in decision-making procedures for given task areas as desired by both principals and teachers.

CHAPTER II

EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

This chapter presents the procedures followed in conducting a survey to test the hypotheses outlined in the preceding chapter.

A description of the instrument is succeeded by a description of the sample population for both subject groups. This is followed by the collection procedure and the organization of the data. A description of the statistical operation is given in Section Four.

1. The Instrument.

To test the hypotheses stated in Chapter I, the Decision-Making Questionnaire was developed for this study. Simpkins and Friesen's¹ twelve typical school task-activities, modified by Sharma's² suggestions and by recommendations obtained from subjects participating in a pilot study, made up one variable of the instrument. The task activities were divided into four major task areas as follows:

1 W. Simpkins and D. Friesen, "Teacher Participation in School Decision-Making", in The Canadian Administrator, Vol. 8, No. 4, 1969, p. 13-16.

2 C. Sharma, "Who Should Make What Decisions?", in Administrator's Notebook, Vol. 3, No. 8, 1955, p. 1-4.

- I. Curriculum
 1. Selecting textbooks for a subject.
 2. Planning the curriculum for a subject.
 3. Evaluating the curriculum for a subject.
- II. Classroom Management
 4. Determining the method of presenting subject matter in class.
 5. Determining the frequency and method of evaluating student progress.
- III. Instructional Program
 6. Determining the size and composition of classes.
 7. Determining the promotion of students.
 8. Determining the allocation of money to departments for supplies and equipment.
 9. Determining the allocation of money to teachers for supplies and equipment.
- IV. General School Organization
 10. Determining the teaching load of a teacher.
 11. Determining the policies to allocate teaching load among teachers.
 12. Determining rules and regulations for students.

These, or similar task activities, have also been used in studies by Masse³, Reynoldson⁴, and Garland⁵.

The second variable was made up of Swanson's⁶

3 D. Masse, Teacher Participation and Professional Attitudes, unpublished Doctoral thesis presented to The University of Alberta, 1969, p. 133-137.

4 R. Reynoldson, "The Interrelationships Between the Decision-Making Process and the Innovativeness of Public Schools", Project No. 8-H-015, USOE, 1969, p. 60-61.

5 P. Garland, A Study of the Relationship Between Teacher Participation in School Decision-Making and the Task-Needs Integration in Schools", unpublished Master's thesis presented to The University of Ottawa, 1971, p. 51-52.

6 G. Swanson, "The Effectiveness of Decision-Making Groups", in Adult Leadership, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1959, p. 48-52.

constitutional arrangements of a group--democratic centralist, parliamentary, and participant-determining--and of single decision-making bodies--principal, department head, and teacher--as the six decision-making procedures. One of the purposes of this research was to analyze the decision-making process to establish significant patterns of decisional procedures. The above procedures were selected for being representative of six of the most frequently occurring decisional choices in secondary schools.

Each of the three constitutional arrangements of the group was defined primarily by "the number of group members required to be in agreement to reach a decision and the amount of influence any given group member can theoretically exert over the decision."⁷ Groups operating under a democratic-centralist arrangement were bound by a decision reached by the principal. When a group used the parliamentary procedure, it could reach a decision that was binding on the group whenever a majority agreed on a particular course of action. The participant-determining arrangement required group consensus.

Validity data, to correlate the Decision-Making

7 E. Bridges, "A Model for Shared Decision Making in the School Principalship", in Educational Administration Quarterly, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1967, p. 55.

Questionnaire with similar instruments, were not available. The investigator hypothesized that, based on the theories presented in Chapter I, certain predictions could be made concerning the scores of subjects. The degree to which these predictions were supported provided tentative evidence of validity of the investigator's theory and of the instrument used to measure the pertinent variables of his theory.

Respondents to the questionnaire had the choice of selecting six decisional procedures for each task item. They could exercise this choice twice: once by selecting a decisional procedure by which decisions were reached in their school at the time the questionnaire was completed; a second time by selecting a decisional procedure by which decisions should be reached ideally in their school. Each type of choice, for perceived and desired situations, was recorded on a separate page. The task items and decisional procedures were identical on both pages. A copy of the instrument is given as Appendix I.

Reliability of subject performances on the Decision-Making Questionnaire was determined by the test-retest method at a two-month interval. In a pilot study the instrument was administered to fifteen secondary school teachers and administrators from nine different schools. Pearson's product-moment coefficients of correlation of the total

scores of each test were computed. The results can be found in Table I. The reliability coefficients of the measuring instrument compared favourably with those of Garland⁸ who used task items of a similar nature, given at a four-week interval. Garland reported the following correlations: Curriculum Planning .62, Classroom Management .75, Instructional Program .73, School Organization .54, Overall Correlation .69.

A second objective of the pilot study was to test and improve the wording and form of the instrument. As a result of the suggestions obtained, the wording of both the task items and the decision-making procedures was shortened and rephrased. For instance, Simpkins and Friesen's⁹ "Determination of the basic outline of a curriculum" was changed to "Planning the curriculum for a subject"; "Determination of the promotion and class placement of pupils" was altered to "Determining the promotion of students." An example was added as the first task item to guide subjects and to stress a single response.

8 Garland, Op. Cit., p. 53.

9 Simpkins and Friesen, Op. Cit., p. 13.

Table I.-

Pearson Product-Moment Coefficient of Correlation (r)
for Test-retest Reliability of Pilot Study (N=15)

Task Area	Perceived	Desired
Curriculum	.77	.65
Instruction	.92	.97
Classroom	.98	.90
School Organization	.88	.99
All Areas	.87	.96

2. The Sample.

From a total population of seventy-three Ontario school boards, representing approximately 607 secondary schools and 34,549 secondary school teachers¹⁰, seven boards were randomly selected to participate in the study.¹¹ Of these, six boards accepted, and one board declined because of prior commitments to participate in other studies. The six boards provided a population frame of 106 secondary schools, with approximately 5,680 teachers. From this frame, thirty-four schools were randomly selected and invited to participate: six schools refused, on the same grounds as the school board, and four schools did not reply to repeated invitations. The resulting twenty-four participating schools constituted the data-producing sample; seven of these could be classified as rural, while the other seventeen were urban schools.

For each of the twenty-four secondary schools a random sample representing approximately ten per cent of the teaching staff was selected. In this way, 248 teachers were

¹⁰ Report of the Ministry of Education for the Year 1972, Toronto, Ontario, 1972.

¹¹ Random Number Tables were used for all random selections: J. Murdoch and J. Barnes, Statistical Tables, Macmillan, Cranfield, 1972, p. 30-32.

invited, and 192 agreed to participate, representing a seventy-seven per cent gross return rate. To ensure sufficient time for interaction between principal and teachers, only individuals who had served in the school for at least two full years were included in the list from which names were randomly selected. Because of this stipulation, a 1972 list¹² was used for selection; as a result, twenty questionnaires were returned. These teachers had since transferred to other schools or left the teaching profession. This reduced the invited teacher sample to 228. With a data-producing sample of 192, the net return rate was eighty-four per cent.

All questionnaires returned, both principals' and teachers', were counted as part of the data-producing sample. Several of the subjects--twenty-three teachers and two principals--placed more than one checkmark for a task item. Of the teachers, seven indicated that the decision procedure for a certain task item varied and that more than one decisional choice was possible. The remaining sixteen teachers did not give reasons but simply placed more than one checkmark for some task items. In these cases, the two or more decision procedures were included in the raw scores for each

12 "Who's Where in Our Secondary Schools", in OSSTF The Bulletin, Vol. 52, No. 4, 1972.

task item. Similarly, twelve subjects left blank two or more task items. They indicated that the decision-making procedure for these particular task items was outside of the ones listed in the questionnaire. Most of these referred to Item Six, "Determining the size and composition of classes." These added or deleted entries were shown as "correction factors" in the raw scores. (Appendix 2) A negative correction factor indicated the number of subjects who did not check off a particular task item. Conversely, a positive correction factor indicated the number of subjects who checked off more than one decisional procedure for a task item. On twenty-six questionnaires the respondents wrote comments, observations and explanations; some of these will be referred to in Chapter IV.

The questionnaire included a personal data section to be completed by the subjects. Only fifty-nine per cent of the responding subjects completed this section; forty-one per cent either left this section blank or completed it in part only. As a result, no meaningful sample characteristics could be established.

3. Collection Procedure and Organization of Data.

The experimental design employed was that of a descriptive questionnaire study.

Requests for permission to do research were sent to

all school boards and secondary school principals represented in the sample. Questionnaires were sent out by mail to each subject as soon as permission was granted. A personal data sheet, instructions for filling out the questionnaire, and a letter explaining the objective of the research accompanied each questionnaire. Subjects who did not respond to the original request received two reminders, sent out at two-week intervals. The names of the subjects were typed onto each questionnaire, which enabled the investigator to send out reminders to non-respondents. The teacher-return rate of the original request was sixty-one per cent, that of the first reminder twenty-one per cent, and that of the second reminder two per cent. The corresponding rates for principals were forty-eight, seventeen and six per cent. Responses of subjects received after the raw scores were computed were listed as non-respondents.

Subjects were asked to give two responses to each of the twelve task items, one for their perceived and one for their preferred decisional procedure. Each response was given an index score of one. A total score was then established for each decisional procedure by adding up the scores of the task items of all returns. This procedure was followed for the perceived and desired decision procedures of both principals and teachers and resulted in four total scores.

These scores provided the data used to test the hypotheses of this study.

4. Statistical Operations.

The total scores represented the frequencies for each procedure. Mean and standard deviation scores were then computed for the twelve frequencies of each procedure. Thus two sets of six mean and standard deviation scores were obtained in this way, one set of scores for each procedure for perceived and desired decision-making procedures. The resulting twelve scores were then grouped in pairs in such a way as to correspond to the hypotheses tested. The significance of differences, using a t-test, between the mean scores of each grouped pair was then determined.

The frequencies of principal scores were multiplied by a constant of eight to offset the difference in sample size.

The results of the analysis will be presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

The first section will be devoted to the testing of the five hypotheses of Chapter I. The hypotheses were tested by computing t-values for each of the six decisional procedures listed in the instrument. The means, standard deviations, the mean differences, and the t-scores are given for each procedure and are arranged in five tables to correspond to the five hypotheses. Correlation coefficients to examine the extent of relationship between the groups compared are given in Table II.

Section Two will give a summary of the findings.

1. Testing of Hypotheses.

Correlation data for the five hypotheses tested indicated a high correlation for the three individual decision-procedures--the principal, the department head, the teacher--and a moderately high correlation for the three group decision-procedures--democratic-centralist, parliamentarian, participant-determining. Only the data for the second hypothesis, where principals' perceptions and desires were compared, showed a high correlation for all six procedures for the task items investigated. The correlation coefficients were given in Table II.

Table II.-

Correlation Between Groups for Six Decision-Making Procedures*

Groups Tested	Decisional Procedures					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
H ₁ - Teacher Perceived and Teacher Desired:	.90	.87	.98	.45	.50	.75
H ₂ - Principal Perceived and Principal Desired:	.97	.85	.99	.78	.83	.87
H ₃ - Principal Perceived and Teacher Desired:	.91	.78	.90	.50	.40	.72
H ₄ - Principal Perceived and Teacher Perceived:	.95	.89	.90	.52	.69	.55
H ₅ - Principal Desired and Teacher Desired:	.95	.85	.92	.65	.80	.76

*For 12 task items.

Table III.-
Comparison of Decisional Procedure Scores for Teachers

Procedure	Perceived		Desired		Mean	
	Mean	S. D.	Mean	S. D.	Diff.	t
A	60.50	61.25	20.17	22.27	40.33	3.31**
B	24.92	25.21	18.67	17.25	6.25	1.64
C	39.67	52.99	41.08	48.38	-1.41	-0.44
D	42.58	21.27	52.25	19.39	-9.67	-1.57
E	15.25	13.65	36.50	15.05	-21.25	-5.11**
F	9.92	8.11	21.58	10.52	-11.66	-5.81**

**Significant beyond one per cent.

11 d. f.

The first statistical hypothesis stated that there was no significant difference in decision-making procedures for given task areas as perceived and desired by teachers. The pertinent findings related to this hypothesis were presented in Table III. Contrary to the hypothesis, significant differences were found between teachers' perceptions and desires for three procedures. Teachers perceived the principal to be the sole decision-maker to a significantly higher degree than these teachers desired. Instead, teachers expressed a strong preference for group involvement in decision making, favouring the parliamentarian and the participant-determining procedure.

The null hypothesis was upheld for the remaining three procedures. Teachers did not desire to have more decision-making power than they perceived themselves to have presently, at a significant level. Similarly, there was no significant difference in teachers' perceived and desired decision-making power for the department head. Teachers desired an increase in their function as advisers and information-givers. Yet this desire was not statistically significant.

The second hypothesis stated that there was no significant difference in decision-making procedures for given task areas as perceived and desired by principals. Table IV presents the findings related to this hypothesis.

Table IV.-
Comparison of Decisional Procedure Scores for Principals

Procedure	Perceived		Desired		Mean Diff.	t
	Mean	S. D.	Mean	S. D.		
A	36.00	35.20	18.00	19.33	18.00	3.65**
B	29.33	23.47	7.33	14.25	22.00	5.56**
C	28.00	44.28	24.00	41.78	4.00	1.91
D	90.67	31.32	94.00	29.37	-3.33	-0.57
E	18.67	18.48	21.33	16.12	-2.66	-0.89
F	10.67	10.97	16.67	17.55	-6.00	-2.14

*Significant at five per cent.

**Significant beyond one per cent.

11 d. f.

Contrary to the hypothesis, two perceived decision-making scores were significantly higher than those principals desired: principals desired to make fewer decisions themselves; they also desired that their department heads make fewer decisions individually.

The hypothesis was upheld for the other four decisional procedures. No significant differences were found between principals' preferences and desires for these procedures.

The third hypothesis was as follows: There is no significant difference in decision-making procedures for given task areas as perceived by principals and desired by teachers. The results are listed in Table V. The hypothesis was rejected for all but one procedure. Principals perceived a significantly higher decision-making autonomy for themselves and for their department heads than teachers desired. The high mean and the significant t-value for the democratic-centralist procedure indicated that the principals' perceptions of themselves as democratic centralists in decision making differed markedly from what teachers desired. The other two group-decision procedures--parliamentarian and participant determining--resulted in negative t-values, significant beyond one per cent. Teachers' desires for these procedures were significantly higher than principals' perceptions.

Table V.-
Comparison of Principals' Perceived and
Teachers' Desired Decisional Procedure Scores

Procedure	Perceived		Desired		Mean Diff.	t
	Mean	S. D.	Mean	S. D.		
A	36.00	35.20	20.17	22.27	15.83	3.10*
B	29.33	23.47	18.67	17.25	10.66	2.50*
C	28.00	44.28	41.08	48.38	-13.08	-2.13
D	90.67	31.32	52.25	19.39	38.42	4.85**
E	18.67	18.48	36.50	15.05	-17.83	-3.32**
F	10.67	10.97	21.58	10.52	-10.91	-4.67**

*Significant at five per cent.

**Significant beyond one per cent.

11 d. f.

Although teachers as individual decision-makers desired more decision-power than principals perceived teachers as actually possessing, the difference of the means was not significant, and the null hypothesis was upheld

The fourth hypothesis read: There is no significant difference in decision-making procedures for given task areas as perceived by both principals and teachers. Based on the findings reported in Table VI, the research hypothesis was rejected for two procedures. The perceptions of principals and teachers as to which decision-making procedures were employed in their schools differed significantly for procedures involving the principal as either the sole decision-maker or as the democratic centralist in group decisions. Teachers perceived a significantly higher degree of individual decision making on the part of the principal than the principal perceived himself. Principals, on the other hand, felt that they involved teachers in decision making to a significantly higher degree than actually perceived by teachers.

No significant differences were found between principals' and teachers' perceptions for the other four decision-making procedures, and the hypothesis was not rejected.

The fifth hypothesis stated that there was no significant difference in decision-making procedures for given task areas as desired by both principals and teachers. This

Table VI.-
Comparison of Principals' Perceived and
Teachers' Perceived Decisional Procedure Scores

Procedure	Principals		Teachers		Mean	
	Mean	S. D.	Mean	S. D.	Diff.	t
A	36.00	35.20	60.50	61.25	-24.50	-2.83*
B	29.33	23.47	24.92	25.21	4.41	1.31
C	28.00	44.28	39.67	52.99	-11.67	-1.72
D	90.67	31.33	42.58	21.27	48.09	6.11**
E	18.67	18.48	15.25	13.65	3.42	0.89
F	10.67	10.97	9.92	8.11	0.75	0.28

*Significant at five per cent.
**Significant beyond one per cent.

11 d. f.

Table VII.-
Comparison of Principals' Desired and
Teachers' Desired Decisional Procedure Scores

Procedure	Principals		Teachers		Mean	
	Mean	S. D.	Mean	S. D.	Diff.	t
A	18.00	19.33	20.17	22.27	-2.17	-1.08
B	7.33	14.25	18.67	17.25	-11.34	-4.36**
C	24.00	41.78	41.08	48.37	-17.08	-3.17**
D	94.00	29.37	52.25	19.39	41.75	6.50**
E	21.33	16.12	36.50	15.05	-15.17	-5.26**
F	16.67	17.55	21.58	10.52	-4.91	-1.45

**Significant beyond one per cent.

11 d. f.

hypothesis was rejected, at the one per cent significance level, for all procedures but for the principal as the sole decision-maker and for the participant-determining procedure, as indicated in Table VII. The desires of principals and teachers differed significantly for decision-making procedures made individually, by the department head and by the teacher. In both cases teachers desired greater decision-making power than the principal was willing to grant. Significant differences were also found with regard to group decision-making procedures. Principals strongly desired the democratic-centralist arrangement for making decisions, in contrast to teachers who desired a more modest employment of this procedure. Teachers favoured the parliamentary procedure significantly more often than did principals.

Both principals and teachers desired a relatively low involvement of the principal as sole decision-maker, and the hypothesis was upheld for this procedure. Desires for the participant-determining arrangement also did not differ significantly.

2. Summary of Results.

The results of the preceding section can be summarized as follows:

- (1) Teachers perceived a lower degree of involvement than they desired for the parliamentary and participant-determining decision-making procedure.

They also perceived the principal to be the sole decision-maker more often than they desired.

- (2) Principals saw themselves as sole decision-makers more often than they preferred. No significant difference existed between principals' perceptions and desires for group involvement in decision making.
- (3) Significant differences were found for all those decision-making procedures in which principals' perceptions and teachers' desires were compared, except for the procedure in which the teacher was the sole decision-maker.
- (4) Teachers perceived the principal to be the sole decision-maker more often than principals perceived. Principals perceived that they acted as democratic centralist significantly more often than teachers perceived.
- (5) Ideally, teachers desired a stronger involvement, of themselves and of the department heads as single decision-makers, than principals desired. Principals, in contrast, preferred a stronger use of the democratic-centralist procedure, and less use of the participant-determining procedure, than did teachers.

The limitations and the generalizations of these findings will be discussed as part of Chapter IV. In that chapter the investigator will also relate the findings to other research studies and to organizational theories.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

While in the previous chapter the major findings were identified and presented, in this chapter these findings are interpreted, and the possible reasons why the results occurred are discussed. The consistencies and inconsistencies of the findings are reviewed by comparing them with those of related studies and with organizational theory.

In the first section the teacher results are emphasized and discussed; in the second section the data for principals are stressed. The findings are related and interpreted, with regard to theory, in Section Three. Limitations and qualifications of the results are given in the last section.

1. Results: Teachers.

In their study of discretionary powers of classroom teachers, Simpkins and Friesen¹ reported that teachers perceived a high individual discretionary power for task items concerned with classroom management and a limited perceived power for other task items. These findings were partially

¹ W. Simpkins and D. Friesen, "Discretionary Powers of Classroom Teachers", in The Canadian Administrator, Vol. 9, No. 8, 1970, p. 35-38.

confirmed in this study. Teachers did not differ significantly in the perceptions and desires of their own individual decision-making power. The correlation coefficient for this individual decision-making procedure could be considered very high, .98, indicating a close relationship between teachers' preferences and desires for the task items.

The raw data of this study indicated, however, that teachers were also satisfied with their role as individual decision maker outside classroom tasks. Simpkins and Friesen's findings showed that teachers' preferred discretionary powers for the task area "curriculum" exceeded their actual power.² The present study seemed to indicate that perceptions and desires for curriculum tasks did not vary significantly. A possible explanation for these different findings could be the recent decentralization of decision-making--from the Ontario Ministry of Education to school boards and schools--which also affected curriculum decisions.

Though Simpkins and Friesen considered only one group, the formal staff group, they reported a low actual discretionary power for this group for all task items.³ The present study indicated significant differences in teachers'

2 Ibid., p. 37.

3 Ibid., p. 37-38.

perceptions and desires for the parliamentary and participant-determining group procedure, which could be made up of the formal staff group. Teachers desired more decision-power as a group, based on a majority or consensus vote, than they perceived.

The democratic-centralist group decision-making procedure received the highest mean scores of all six procedures, for both teachers' perceptions and desires. The desired application of this procedure exceeded the perceived application, though not at a significant level. Teachers thus preferred the principal to make the final decision, being satisfied to give advice, information and suggestions. Teachers' perceived use of the parliamentary and participant-determining procedures was significantly lower than their desired use. The mean scores indicated that, of the three group procedures, the democratic centralist was highest in demand, followed by the parliamentary and then the participant-determining procedure.

In their study of decision-making groups, Plaxton and Bumbarger⁴ found that the centralist arrangement was the least desirable of the decision-making procedures. They reported that decisions reached under the majority

⁴ R. Plaxton and C. Bumbarger, "Participation and Power in Decision-Making Groups", in The Canadian Administrator, Vol. 12, No. 5, 1973, p. 21-24.

(parliamentarian) arrangement, and especially under the consensus (participant-determining) arrangement, resulted in a freer sharing of information and opinions--which produced a more thorough discussion of issues--in a greater commitment to a decision reached, and in more satisfaction with the decision-making process in its implementation. Plaxton and Bumbarger's suggestion that the administrator, in this case the principal, make more use of the participant-determining and parliamentarian rather than of the democratic-centralist arrangement thus stands in direct contrast to the perceptions and desires reported by the teacher sample in the present study who preferred the centralist over the majority procedure and who desired the consensus procedure least of all group arrangements. The reeducation process for effective group membership, advocated by organizational theorists to increase the sensitivity and skill of members and leaders, could provide a possible solution to overcome this contrast.

Sharma⁵ supported the findings of this study with regard to teachers' perceived and desired group participation in decision making. Though he did not subdivide the group into specific constitutional arrangements, he reported the existence of sharp differences between what teachers desired

5 C. Sharma, "Who Should Make What Decisions?", in Administrator's Notebook, Vol. 3, No. 8, 1955, p. 1-4.

and the current practice with regard to participation in decision making by groups of teachers.

The comparison of teachers' perceived and desired decision-making procedures as a whole seemed to suggest a greater desire for group procedures and a decreased emphasis on the principal as sole decision-maker, than currently existed. Alutto and Belasco⁶, in investigating patterns of teacher participation in school decision-making, reported similar findings. They stated that individual teachers desired greater decisional participation than they currently enjoyed. High decisional control was exercised by administrative officials, mainly the principal. One of their additional findings showed that increasing participation could prove to be highly dysfunctional to teachers currently encountering conditions of decisional equilibrium. The findings of the present study seemed to indicate that teachers' perceptions and desires to be the sole decision-maker are in equilibrium, while the demand for higher participation in the form of group participation is uniform and statistically significant for two of the group procedures.

Teachers' and principals' perceptions of which

6 J. Alutto and J. Belasco, "Patterns of Teacher Participation in School System Decision Making", in Educational Administration Quarterly, Vol. 9, No. 1, 1972, p. 27-41.

decision-making procedures were in use in their schools were closely related for all procedures but for the two involving the principal. Principals saw themselves as much more group-oriented than teachers did. Yet this difference in perception became less significant when the principal became the sole decision-maker, if one compared the preferences of both groups. Teachers and principals alike desired a much lower involvement for the principal.

In comparing the principals' and teachers' perceived and desired democratic-centralist procedure, one can deduce that both groups want to keep the status quo. Principals perceived and desired a high degree of involvement for this procedure, just as teachers perceived and desired a low degree of involvement. Since an inverse relationship existed for the other two group procedures--teacher-desires were greater than principal-desires for more use of the parliamentarian and participant-determining procedure--one could conclude that though principals wanted teacher participation in decision making, they tended to want this participation restricted to such decisional procedures in which they, the principals, have the final decision.

2. Results: Principals.

While the previous section stresses the teacher-sample, this section emphasizes the principal-sample,

partially by relating it to previous research.

Sample scores indicated that principals desired significantly less power for themselves and for their department heads than they perceived. Instead, principals preferred a shift to group decision-making, though not at a significant level. Masse⁷ reported similar results. In his study, the preferred type of participation was that of collegial involvement by teachers and administrators, with neither complete autonomy nor mere consultation being highly favoured.

Principals' and teachers' perceptions of which decision-making procedures were in use in their schools were not different, at a statistically significant level, except for one phenomenon: principals perceived that they consulted teachers significantly more often than teachers perceived themselves. Teachers, in turn, perceived that the principal made many decisions himself, without consultation. This difference seemed to be connected with the number of teachers the principal consulted: only some of the teachers might have been consulted, a single department for instance, with the result that the principal perceived teachers as participating, while those teachers not involved perceived

⁷ D. Masse, Teacher Participation and Professional Attitudes, unpublished Doctoral thesis presented to The University of Alberta, 1969.

the principal as the sole decision-maker. Corriveau⁸ also reported that principals perceived a greater degree of teacher participation than did teacher.

Corriveau's second finding was only partially substantiated. He reported that principals preferred a lower level of teacher participation than did teachers.⁹ The present investigator found, however, that principals desired a significantly higher level of participation for the democratic-centralist procedure than did teachers. Principals did prefer a lower level of participation for the parliamentary (significant) and the participant-determining (not significant) procedure. But they also desired a lower level of decision-making for the one-man procedures. Principals preferred the department head and the teacher, as individual decision-makers, to have significantly less power.

Principals desired less decisional power for themselves as individual decision-maker than teachers were willing to grant. Principals also perceived less decisional power than teachers perceived. A significant discrepancy thus exists between the present and preferred state of

8 R. Corriveau, A Comparison of Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions of Actual and Preferred Degree of Teacher Participation in a Number of Decisions, unpublished Master's thesis presented to The University of Alberta, 1969.

9 Ibid.

decision making for cases where the principal is the sole decision-maker. Principals also preferred more, though not significantly more, group decision-making procedures than they perceived. The question immediately arose as to why principals did not put their preferences into practice. Possibly, guidelines for decision-making procedures for various task items may be of assistance in narrowing this gap.

In comparing the principals' perceived and desired decision-making procedures, the most significant result ($t = 5.56$) pertained to the department head. Principals perceived their department heads to have far too much decisional power. Teachers also desired less power for the department head, but not at a significant level. The department head seemed to have been able to gain or retain decisional power against the desires of both principals and teachers.

The relationship between principals and teachers concerning the role of the teacher as single decision-maker differed significantly only when the preferred scores of both groups were compared. Principals desired significantly less decisional power for this procedure than did teachers; principals also perceived less decisional power, though not at a significant level. The teachers themselves were in decisional equilibrium, with perceptions and desires being

nearly equal.

The correlation coefficient was generally slightly higher for the preferences rather than for the perceptions of principals and teachers. This indicated a strong relationship between the preferences of the groups for the twelve task items. It was especially apparent when the relationship among the three group procedures was examined: a much higher correlation existed for desired than for perceived decisional procedures.

3. Consistency of Findings with Theory.

While in the two previous sections the findings were discussed and partially substantiated by relating them to previous research, the following section presents a discussion of the findings with respect to the theory underlying this study.

Tannenbaum¹⁰ suggested that the lower echelons within the organization would more readily accept jointly-made decisions, show more responsibility and a greater sense of motivation, if they were able to exercise control, power, or influence. Group decision-making brings about widespread communication, and since decisions are made by those most

10 A. Tannenbaum, Control in Organizations, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1968, p. viii-325.

concerned with their execution, the result should be informed and effective decisions. The significant differences in perceived and desired decision-making procedures for teachers and principals of this study seemed to indicate that the lower echelon within the school, the teachers, desired more power as a group. Principals also desired an increase in group power. The results suggested that the teachers, as individuals, were satisfied with their own decision-making power. The preferred decision-making structure of the schools sampled conformed to Tannenbaum's pattern of power in which "Substantial influence exercised by members or by leaders and members creates conditions which contribute to more effective organization-performance as well as higher member satisfaction."¹¹ However, this present study did not analyze procedures for all segments of the school population; any equilibrium or disequilibrium found was ascribed to the total sample only. One finding--the indication of principals that they desired less decisional power for themselves and for their department heads--ran contrary to Tannenbaum's traditional management framework of "increasing the control exercised by top echelons at the expense of control by... lower echelons."¹²

11 Ibid., p. 130.

12 Ibid., p. 179.

In analyzing the organizational structure of "the new system" ("new" because a theory of organization has not yet been developed), Argyris concluded that organizations "will tend to vary the structures that they use according to the kinds of decisions that must be made."¹³ This study has attempted to define some decision rules for given task items to guide educators in their choice of establishing a proper structure. It gives the decision-maker the choice of selecting one procedure for a certain task item from a set of alternative procedures.

The results of this study indicated that teachers desired a significantly higher degree of group decision-making than they perceived. The findings were linked to Argyris' theory of self actualization, which stated that organizational members aspired to move from a state of dependence to independence, to occupy an equal or super-ordinate position.¹⁴ The data strongly suggested a desired increase in self actualization through group decision-making, with teachers' individual decisional power being in equilibrium.

Two questions this research tried to answer were

13 C. Argyris, Integrating the Individual and the Organization, New York, Wiley & Sons, 1964, p. 211.

14 C. Argyris, Personality and Organization, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1957, p. xiii-291.

a) what type of decisional procedures teachers and principals perceived themselves to be using in their schools, and
b) what type of procedures they desired ideally. The results indicated that both teachers and principals desired more group and less individual decision making. Schein¹⁵ stated that no definite answer had been reached as to whether the group, or isolated individuals, could reach more effective and creative, or faster decisions. However, if a decision-making structure, appropriate to particular tasks, were available, a group could be more creative than individuals because of the mutual stimulation members would be able to provide for one another. Errors of judgement would also be identified more likely in a group setting. If this research were taken one step further, larger samples of teachers and principals could provide a suggested guideline for the type of procedure more appropriate for specific task items.

Assuming that teachers and principals sampled in this study had not received any training for effective group membership and leadership, as suggested in the review of literature, the results might be significantly different if such training were given. Without training and with low

15 E. Schein, Organizational Psychology, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1965, p. 79.

"mutual trust and confidence [a group] will be slower and less efficient than an individual", Schein stated.¹⁶ It is conceivable that the mean scores of this research, for the parliamentary and participant-determining procedures, were relatively low compared with those of the democratic-centralist procedure because teachers and principals had experienced slowness and inefficiency when the former two procedures were used. This investigator suggested that group training could be a key factor in the perceived and desired decision-making procedures of subjects, and that the results of this research might change if training were provided.

The results indicated that principals and teachers desired less individual decision-making power for the principal than he currently had. Griffith agreed with this outcome in his assumption that the executive (principal) should "make decisions only when the organization fails to make its own decisions."¹⁷ Griffith based his assumption on Barnard's¹⁸ statement that the organization, rather than the executive, influenced the external environment. Griffith

16 Ibid., p. 79.

17 D. Griffith, Administrative Theory, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1959, p. 73.

18 C. Barnard, The Functions of the Executive, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1938, p. 215.

also called for decentralization and claimed that every decision should be made at the lowest possible level in the organization to increase involvement and a sense of importance and personal growth. A comparison of the perceptions and desires of the subjects of this study indicated that the desires, but not the perceptions, conformed to this aspect of organizational theory.

In general, this study indicated that administrators should be more selective in their choice of decision-making procedures for given task items, to minimize organizational conflict. Not only should principals try to bring their own and their teachers' desires with regard to participation closer to equilibrium, but they should also minimize conflict between their own perceptions and preferences with regard to decision-making procedures. The finding that teachers, and principals to some extent, desired more decisional participation through group procedures was linked to organizational theories of Tannenbaum and Griffith, which stressed the advantageous impact of jointly-made decisions, rather than individual executive decisions, on the environment. Argyris and Schein also supported the basic premise of this study-- to identify decision-making procedures for given task areas-- by emphasizing variation and identification of the decision-making structure in order to move members from a state of dependence to independence and to produce decisions of

higher creativity and better judgement.

Before summarizing the results of this study, some qualifications are given, which stipulate the limits for which the findings are valid and which suggest improvement of the research design for possible subsequent studies.

4. Limitations and Recommendations.

The conclusions of the study should be limited to secondary schools of the six participating school boards only, rather than to the total population of Ontario secondary schools. In particular, the principal-sample is too small to warrant valid conclusions beyond these boards. Also, different relationship between perceived and desired decision-making procedures could have resulted, if, instead of the subjects coming from the same invited population, the principals had come from one and teachers from another sub-population.

The instrument used in this study, the Decision-Making Questionnaire, contained items which, according to one subject, "do not seem to provide suitable answers." Three items were mentioned repeatedly: the selection of textbooks, the determination of the size of classes, and the allocation of money to departments for supplies and equipment. Subjects--all of them teachers, as principals did not comment on these items--felt that "the decision is made elsewhere"

(by the Ministry of Education and by the Board of Education) and that the decision-making procedure listed in the questionnaire did not apply. As a result, these subjects did not check off those particular task items or added another procedure. It is suggested that these three task items be left out or be amended to increase the validity of the instrument.

The decision-making procedures given in the instrument also led to comments from teachers. "Checking one answer only would be misleading. I suggest that an answer combining several alternatives be included" was one reaction; "The decision-making process is more complicated than the chart suggests" and "Many decisions are made by an individual, but within set limits" were two valid, additional comments. Consideration could be given to these comments by future investigators.

The questionnaires were sent to subjects during the spring months, coinciding with salary negotiations and with resignations either to leave the teaching profession or to change to other schools. Unrest, dissatisfaction and even militancy were more likely to occur during these spring months than during other months of the school year. It could be possible that these extraneous variables affected the results. Responses might have been given which widened the gap between perceived and desired decision procedures.

If this study were to be replicated, the research

design could be changed to offset ambiguities in the instrument by interviewing subjects, rather than by sending questionnaires. A different statistical analysis could also be employed to test the hypotheses.

A summary and the conclusions of the study follow.

In the analysis of perceived and desired decision-making procedures for given task areas, an attempt was made to find out what procedures teachers and principals were presently using and what procedures they preferred to be using. Five research hypotheses were derived from the literature.

Contrary to the first hypothesis, significant differences were found between teachers' perceptions and desires for two group- and one individual procedure. Teachers expressed a strong desire for an increased use of the parliamentarian and the participant-determining procedure in making decisions. They perceived the principal to be the sole decision-maker to a larger degree than they desired. Teachers also desired an increase in the use of the democratic-centralist procedure; they were satisfied to provide information and give advice for some task items, leaving the final decision to the principal.

The null hypothesis of the principals' perceptions and desires was rejected for individual decision-making procedures of the principal and of the department head. Principals desired less use of these two procedures.

When the perceptions of principals and the desires of teachers were compared, the hypothesis was rejected for

all but one procedure. Principals perceived a significantly higher decision-making autonomy for themselves as single decision-makers, for themselves as democratic-centralists, and for their department heads, than teachers desired. Teachers' desired use of the parliamentary and participant-determining procedures exceeded principals' perceived use of these procedures.

Principals' and teachers' perceptions of the decision-making procedures currently in use in their schools were alike but for the democratic-centralist procedure and for the procedure where the principal alone made the decision. Teachers perceived the principal to make decisions much more often than principals perceived this themselves. Principals, however, felt they acted as democratic-centralists significantly more often than teachers perceived.

Sharp differences were found for four procedures when principals' and teachers' desires were compared as to which decisional procedures should ideally be used in their schools. Teachers desired more use of the procedures in which they and their department heads made decisions; teachers also desired the parliamentary procedure more often than did principals. Principals strongly desired the democratic-centralist arrangement for making decisions, while teachers desired a more modest employment of this procedure.

The results should be considered tentative and

and limited in scope. The sample, especially the principal-sample, was too small to warrant conclusions beyond the school boards that participated. The validity of the instrument could be improved by rephrasing certain task items and decision-making procedures, and by interviewing subjects rather than by sending out questionnaires.

Two major problems which emerged from this study were suggested for future research. Since the democratic-centralist procedure, in terms of mean scores, was the most prevalent procedure, the role of the principal as group facilitator could be investigated. Also, a comparison of the relative effectiveness of the three group procedures used in this study could be undertaken, especially a comparison of trained and untrained groups.

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This study investigates the personality characteristics of the principal and the process of teacher participation in decision making. It is well organized and substantiated.

Argyris, C., Integrating the Individual and the Organization, New York, Wiley & Sons, 1964, p. xii-330.

Emphasizes the organizational structure of the "new system"; only this part of the book was used. The results of the present study were intended to contribute to this system.

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Deals with the concept of structural change and interpersonal relationships, group effectiveness and intergroup relationships. Stresses a reeducative process.

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This study investigates the teacher's professional authority and his opportunity to participate in matters of a professional nature. The author also uses similar task items employed in the present study.

Miklos, E., "Increasing Participation in Decision Making", in The Canadian Administrator, Vol. 9, No. 6, 1970, p. 25-29.

The author gives a comprehensive view of the results of research and of the theory of teacher participation in decision making. He stresses decentralization and increased teacher involvement for tactical decisions, with a resulting increase in total amount of control. A valuable source.

Plaxton, R., and C. Bumbarger, "Participation and Power in Decision-Making Groups", in The Canadian Administrator, Vol. 12, No. 5, 1973, p. 21-24.

An examination of the shift in authority and power from individual decision makers to committee decision making. The author analyzes the three group procedures which have also been used in the present study: centralist, majority and consensus.

Schein, E., Organizational Psychology, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1965, p. v-114.

A concise treatment of group relationships within the organization as a complex system of group integration of organizational goals and personal needs. Advocates re-education for effective group membership. Strongly recommended.

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A basic study on teacher participation in decision making. The author's findings led to a variety of subsequent studies on the same topic.

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This project preceded and led to the present study. It uses the dimensions preferred and actual discretionary powers in investigating individual and staff-group participation. The present study enlarged on the two latter dimensions.

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Vroom, V., Work and Motivation, New York, John Wiley & Sons, 1964, p. ix-331.

The author hypothesizes that the need for independence and the degree of authoritarianism determines job satisfaction and performance.

APPENDIX 1

Decision-Making Questionnaire

SCHOOL SURVEY

This survey consists of two questionnaires on DECISION-MAKING. Both are identical in content but answer two different questions. One questionnaire asks how decisions are actually made in your school now. The second questionnaire asks how decisions should ideally be made, regardless of present procedures.

Put one check mark only for each area of decision-making. Please give answers which reflect your own opinions, experiences and values.

In this survey the term "group" simply means two persons or more. A group can consist of a department, or part of a department, a committee, one teacher and a department head or pincipal, or a whole staff.

PERSONAL DATA

Name: _____

Number of years in your present school: _____

Number of years teaching experience: _____

Position in school: Department Head: _____ ; Teacher _____

Sex: Male _____; Female _____

All information will be used in strictest confidence!

Please return to
Robert Knoop
University of Ottawa
Faculty of Education
Graduate Studies
Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 6N5

DECISION-MAKING QUESTIONNAIRE

Areas for Decision-Making: (Place one checkmark for each area)	Procedure by which a decision is reached in your school NOW:					
	A one-man decision			A group decision		
	Principal	Department Head	Teacher	Group discusses and provides information but principal or head makes the decision	Group makes decision which is binding when majority agrees	Group makes decision but consensus is required
0. <u>Example</u> : Determining a policy for supervision of cafeteria:				X		
1. Selecting textbooks for a subject:						
2. Planning the curriculum for a subject:						
3. Evaluating the curriculum for a subject:						
4. Determining the method of presenting subject matter in class:						
5. Determining the frequency and method of evaluating student progress:						
6. Determining the size and composition of classes:						
7. Determining the promotion of students:						
8. Determining the allocation of money to departments for supplies and equipment:						
9. Determining the allocation of money to teachers for supplies and equipment:						
10. Determining the teaching load of a teacher:						
11. Determining policies to allocate teaching load among teachers:						
12. Determining rules and regulations for students:						

DECISION-MAKING QUESTIONNAIRE

Areas for Decision-Making: (Place one checkmark for each area)	Procedures by which decisions in schools SHOULD IDEALLY be reached:					
	One-man decision			A group decision		
	Principal	Department Head	Teacher	Group discusses and provides information but principal or head makes the decision	Group makes decision which is binding when majority agrees	Group makes decision but consensus is required
0. <u>Example</u> : Determining a policy for supervision of cafeterias:					X	
1. Selecting textbooks for a subject:						
2. Planning the curriculum for a subject:						
3. Evaluating the curriculum for a subject:						
4. Determining the method of presenting subject matter in class:						
5. Determining the frequency and method of evaluating student progress:						
6. Determining the size and composition of classes:						
7. Determining the promotion of students:						
8. Determining the allocation of money to departments for supplies and equipment:						
9. Determining the allocation of money to teachers for supplies and equipment:						
10. Determining the teaching load of a teacher:						
11. Determining policies to allocate teaching load among teachers:						
12. Determining rules and regulations for students:						

APPENDIX 2

Raw Data for the Decision-Making Questionnaire

Raw Data - Teachers
N=192

Task Item	Perceived Decisional Procedures						Correction Factor
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
1	2	52	47	50	28	21	+8
2	-	37	52	53	30	25	+5
3	3	36	47	48	38	18	-2
Curriculum	5	125	146	151	96	64	
4	-	1	173	1	6	13	+2
5	6	19	99	39	22	12	+5
Instruction	6	20	272	40	28	25	
6	138	13	1	33	1	2	-4
7	37	7	54	64	23	9	+2
8	152	9	-	26	-	3	-2
9	61	88	1	33	2	3	-4
Classroom	388	117	56	156	26	17	
10	135	21	-	35	3	-	+2
11	121	15	-	41	5	4	-6
12	71	1	2	88	25	9	+4
Organization	327	37	2	164	33	13	
Overall Total	726	299	476	511	183	119	

Raw Data - Teachers

N=192

Task Item	Desired Decisional Procedures						Correction Factor
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
1	1	23	58	51	37	24	+2
2	1	22	34	50	52	36	+3
3	1	15	41	42	44	43	-6
Curriculum	3	60	133	143	133	103	
4	-	4	157	5	7	19	
5	5	11	98	29	29	21	+1
Instruction	5	15	255	34	36	40	
6	26	26	16	66	37	17	-4
7	11	1	72	51	35	17	-5
8	73	13	-	70	26	8	-2
9	25	65	2	64	23	9	-4
Classroom	135	105	90	251	121	51	
10	45	28	9	65	34	12	+1
11	33	15	2	65	49	24	-4
12	21	1	4	69	65	29	-2
Organization	99	44	15	199	148	65	
Overall Total	242	224	493	627	438	259	

Raw Data - Principals

N=24

Task Item	Perceived Decisional Procedures						Correction Factor
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
1	-	5	2	17	1	2	+3
2	-	4	3	12	6	3	+4
3	2	7	3	7	6	3	+2
Curriculum	2	16	8	36	13	8	
4	-	1	19	3	2	-	+1
5	2	5	4	13	4	-	+4
Instruction	2	6	23	16	6	-	
6	10	1	-	14	-	-	+1
7	1	-	9	14	-	1	+2
8	12	2	-	10	1	1	+2
9	7	10	-	7	2	1	+3
Classroom	30	13	9	45	3	3	
10	9	5	-	13	1	-	+4
11	8	3	-	14	-	1	+2
12	3	1	2	12	5	4	+3
Organization	19	9	2	39	6	5	
Overall Total	53	44	42	136	28	16	

Raw Data - Principals

N=24

Task Item	Desired Decisional Procedures						Correction Factor
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
1	-	2	2	15	2	2	-1
2	-	-	2	11	5	5	-1
3	-	2	1	9	6	4	-2
Curriculum	-	4	5	35	13	11	
4	-	-	18	3	-	2	-1
5	1	-	5	13	3	1	-1
Instruction	1	-	23	16	3	3	
6	4	-	-	15	1	-	-4
7	1	-	7	12	1	2	-1
8	7	-	-	15	1	-	-1
9	4	6	-	11	2	-	-1
Classroom	16	6	7	53	5	2	
10	5	1	-	14	2	1	-1
11	4	-	-	15	3	1	-1
12	1	-	1	8	6	7	-1
Organization	10	1	1	37	11	9	
Overall Total	27	11	36	141	32	25	

APPENDIX 3

ABSTRACT OF
Decision-Making Procedures
and Teacher Participation

ABSTRACT OF

Decision-Making Procedures and Teacher Participation¹

Although the literature indicated numerous studies on teacher participation and decision making, few studies have dealt with decision-making procedures. In this study the relationship between teachers' and principals' perceived and desired participation procedures in decision making was investigated.

An instrument, the Decision-Making Questionnaire, was developed, containing twelve typical school task-items and six decisional procedures. The questionnaire was returned by 192 secondary school teachers and by 24 of their principals from six Ontario school boards.

The findings upheld some and rejected others of five hypotheses which stated that no significant differences would be found in the type of procedures perceived and desired by principals and teachers. Notably, both teachers and principals desired an increase in the use of group decision-making procedures: of the parliamentarian and of the participant-determining procedure and, to a lesser extent, of the democratic-centralist procedure. At the same time, teachers and principals perceived a

¹ Robert Knoop, Decision-Making Procedures and Teacher Participation, unpublished M. A. thesis presented to the Faculty of Education of the University of Ottawa, Ontario, November 1974, p. vi-85.

significant difference between actual and preferred single decision-making procedures of principals and of department heads: both groups desired a reduction in the use of these procedures.

No significant differences were found in comparing perceptions and desires of teachers and of principals with regard to the use of the procedure in which the individual teacher is the sole decision maker.

Generally, correlation coefficients were lower for group decision-making procedures than for individual procedures for the twelve task items.

The results of the study were linked to theories of Tannenbaum on the control aspect of the organization by the lower echelon, of Argyris on the organizational structure and his theory of self-actualization, of Schein on group relationships, and of Griffith on the decentralization of decision making.