To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Martha Jean Bratton entitled "Decision Making in a Complex Educational Organization." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, with a major in Educational Administration and Supervision.

Larry W. Hughes, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Council:

Vice Chancellor
Graduate Studies and Research

E

DECISION MAKING IN A COMPLEX EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Education

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Martha Jean Bratton

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ABSTRACT

The problem investigated by this study was the nature of decision making in a complex educational organization. The first purpose of the study was to collect perceptual information about the current decision practices in the organization and the degree of intra-organizational agreement. The second purpose was to determine a pattern of ideal decision practices for the organization.

A forty-item decision analysis questionnaire was developed which included such items as "Who decides to fire a custodian?" and asking the questions, "Who makes this decision?" and "What is your participation in the decision?" "Do you make the decision, recommend the preferred decision, provide information only, or have no involvement?"

Data were analyzed to determine the degree of inter- and intra-group agreement among hierarchical levels of the school district concerning the locus of each decision and whether or not the appropriate person accepted the decision making responsibility.

The questionnaire was presented to central office administrators, area office administrators, and school building personnel in a large, decentralized school district.

No respondents agreed that the area office made any final decisions, and all groups agreed that the central office made most decisions. Much uncertainty existed about where decisions were made, however. On 11 of 40 items, no group was able to reach consensus about the locus of final decision making. When queried about the position which was responsible

for making certain decisions, as many as 24 positions were mentioned for one item. Moreover, the person nominated as final decision maker refused to accept the responsibility on over half of the items.

The ideal locus of decision making was placed at the area office and the school building level far more frequently than system personnel placed it there.

No decentralization exists in the system beyond organizational changes reflected in job titles and organizational charts. The members of the organization have accepted the area offices as another bureaucratic layer, not as a legitimate source of final decisions. Area offices are ineffectual as decentralized units in this system.

Confusion and uncertainty exist in the school system about where decisions are made; groups are unable to agree about where they are made and persons occupying positions as final decision makers frequently do not accept the responsibility assigned to them.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Formal and Informal Dimensions of Organizations

Formal organizations are created to provide a logical foundation for the way a group of people work together to reach some predetermined goals, whatever those goals might be. Official roles are designed for incumbents of the organization; communication channels, responsibilities, line and staff relationships, and the manner in which various jobs interface are reflected in job titles, job descriptions, and organizational charts. Thus, the responsibilities are presumably clearly defined. Etzioni described formal organization as:

> . . . the pattern of division of tasks and power among the organizational position [sic], and the rules expected to guide the behavior of the participants, as defined by management.[1]

Further, Etzioni says organizational characteristics include:

> . . . divisions of labor, power and communication responsibilities, divisions which are not random or traditionally patterned, but deliberately planned to enhance the realization of specific goals.[2]

The classical view of organization, emphasizing the importance of job descriptions and organizational charts, has been subjected to

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[1]Amitai Etzioni, Modern Organizations.(Englewood Cliffs: New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1964), p. 31.

[2]Etzioni, p. 3.

some criticism since the 1940's as McGregor and others suggested different management approaches based on assumptions about the nature of human motivation and the personal dimension of the organization.[3] The newer approaches to management focus on the importance of strategies such as involving members of an organization in decision making and designing ways for people to be self-directed in their work. Although these ideas created a shift in the management style of some organizational leaders, the importance of the formal organization in administrative theory has not diminished. The organization, when described by organizational charts, written rules and regulations and job descriptions, however, presents a tremendously oversimplified picture of organizational structure. What is described is the formal dimension only and, as Hamilton indicates, "It does not describe what exists, but what managers think ought to exist."[4] Thus, writers have discussed the informal dimension of the system as well as the formal. Hughes said:

> Membership in a formal group does not mean belief in or acceptance of, or even knowledge about, all of the principles established in the organization's constitution. In fact, a person may simply join such for a single purpose not even related to the organization's stated goals.[5]

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[3]Douglas M. McGregor, The Human Side of Enterprise. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), p. 45.

[4]Norman K. Hamilton, "The Decision-Making Structure," Educational Leadership, XXIX (May, 1972), p. 668.

[5]Larry W. Hughes, Informal and Formal Community Forces: External Influences on Schools and Teachers. (Morristown, New Jersey: General Learning Press, 1976), p. 26.

The organizational chart and the job descriptions fail to reflect the individual side of the organization. Each person brings a different style to a role which he assumes, different expectations, different views of the organization and its goals. Therefore, in order to fully examine an organization, one must examine the personal dimension as well as the institutional dimension.

Getzels and Guba described the interface of the organizational or institutional dimension and the personal or ideographic dimension of the social system in their well known social systems model.[6] The institutional dimension of the organization is made up of the official roles occupied by individuals and can be readily examined by looking closely at job descriptions, job titles, and organizational charts. The informal dimension is more elusive, but is of primary importance in examining the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization. The organizational iceberg paradigm has been proposed to describe the relationship between the formal and the informal dimensions of the organization.[7] The formal organization, including job descriptions, titles, and organizational charts, are, according to this analogy, merely the tip of an iceberg. This tip is the part of the iceberg which is readily visible, but is not as large as submerged information such as power and influence patterns, feelings of trust and competence, and individual needs, desires, and feelings.

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[6]Jacob W. Getzels and Egon G. Guba, "Social Behavior and the Administrative Process," The School Review, LXV (Winter, 1957), pp. 426-27.

[7]Stanley M. Herman, "What Is This Thing Called Organizational Development?" Personnel Journal, L (August, 1971), pp. 599-600.

All the complexities of organizations including their formal and informal dimensions have been included in a description of organizational health by Matthew Miles.[8] Healthy organizations have such characteristics as members who understand the goals of the organization and communication systems which efficiently transmit information both horizontally and vertically. The healthy organization is designed so that people are used effectively; they are neither overworked nor idle. The criteria are among those identified by Miles as characterizing a healthy organization.

Decision Making in Organizations

Complex public organizations are often not as responsive to client and personnel needs as they could be. One reason is that uncertain patterns of decision making frequently exist. The need for responsive school systems in these days of rising costs, demands for accountability, teacher militancy, and general erosion of support for the schools is clear.

Decision making is the key function in administration.[9] Decision making theory, for the most part, deals with decisions made by individuals and is prescriptive rather than descriptive in nature. With mathematical

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[8]Matthew Miles, "Planned Change and Organizational Health: Figure and Ground," Change Processes in the Public Schools, Richard O. Carlson and others (Eugene, Oregon: Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration, 1965), pp. 18-21.

[9]Robert G. Owens, Organizational Behavior in Schools. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1970), p. 90.

analysis and logical reasoning as bases, steps one should follow for arriving at decisions are presented. More recently, there has been a

> . . . growing interest in descriptive theory of decision making which reports and analyzes how people make decisions. . . . The descriptive approach still requires considerable development and needs to be extended from the individual to the organizational level.[10]

Given the nature of organizations, both the formal and informal dimensions, the act of deciding reflects power and authority invested in people and positions. In a healthy organization, appropriate people are responsible for decisions. Further, the information about who is responsible for specific decisions is clearly communicated within the organization. For example, in a public school system, one could identify specific areas of responsibility, such as maintenance of school plants, for which job titles and job descriptions exist. It is essential that the rest of the organization be aware that the responsibility rests here and for the people in that department to assume specific responsibilities. Few would argue that, generally, the maintenance department is responsible for maintenance, or similarly, that the department of instruction for instruction. The organization operates, however, at a more specific level, e.g., who fires a school custodian? Does the maintenance department, the personnel department, or the school principal have this responsibility? Further, does this person accept the responsibility the organization has given to him/her? In any organization, one might expect some issues to exist where there is confusion. On most issues,

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[10]Etzioni, p. 30.

however, there should be general agreement among members of the organization. Lack of agreement would cause, at the very least, a debilitating loss of time, and perhaps even postpone important decisions indefinitely.

Certain kinds of decisions are made at certain levels of the organization. Etzioni said that policy should be made at the top, specifications for policies at middle ranks and performance of work at the lower ranks.[11] This structuring provides for an efficient implementation of decisions. Simon recommends vertical specialization to complement horizontal specialization in decision making.[12]

School Organizations

School organizations, like other formal organizations, are typically arranged along the traditional patterns and can, most frequently, be depicted as a pyramid. Large school systems, employing a multitude of people to fill a variety of positions, are complex organizations which share all the problems related to such organizations. Numerous related organizational phenomena, such as vertical and horizontal communications, span of control, and informal power structure are also relevant to the serious study of complex educational organizations. Moreover, it is important to examine theory and research of formal

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[11]Etzioni, p. 30.

[12]Herbert A. Simon, Administrative Behavior, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1961), p. 1, cited by Robert G. Owens, Organizational Behavior in Schools (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 91.

organizations generally and school organizations specifically in order to provide a broader information base for designing organizational structure, selecting and training administrators, and analyzing and improving dysfunctional operations.

The school system investigated in this study is among the twenty-five largest in the United States. At the same time of this study the system employed 10,712 people; 6,907 were full-time certificated personnel and 3,805 were non-certificated personnel. There were 119,264 students served by the school system.

The school district had a major reorganization which went into effect in July 1971, and was designed to provide more efficient services to the youngsters in the district. This reorganization evidenced itself in the creation of four geographic areas, each of which had an assistant superintendent and a staff. This endeavor was designed to reduce the complexity of the organization through decentralization.

Organizational charts and job descriptions had been written for administrators in the system, but no formal examination of the implementation of these structures had been conducted. The degree to which the formal organization existed operationally had not been determined.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem investigated by this study was the nature of decision making in a complex educational organization. The first purpose of the study was to collect perceptual information about the current decision practices in the organization and to determine the degree of intra-

organizational agreement. The second purpose was to determine a pattern of ideal decision practices for the organization.

III. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Large public school systems are like other complex organizations. They face difficult problems in designing a management system and organizing personnel to deliver important services to the clientele in an effective and efficient way. An important aspect of this study related to extending the information base about formal and informal dimensions of public school organizations. Such an information base enables those working in the profession to look for ". . . patterns of success and failure, growth and decay, strife and harmony, and for the forces which produce them."[13]

Describing decision making in a large educational organization adds to the body of information available concerning organizational theory. Moreover, examination of the decisions as they relate to the formal organizational chart provide data for future research, for generating theory, for examination by similar districts, for evaluation, and for use in developing skill in analyzing organizations, for teaching decision making, and for understanding the formal and informal dimensions of educational organizations.

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[13]Antony Jay, Management and Machiavelli: An Inquiry Into the Politics of Corporate Life. (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1967), p. 27.

Further, it is important to examine the decision patterns in a complex organization in order to find ways for the organization to be more responsive and to determine likely barriers to communication. Efforts are being made to improve effectiveness of some large school organizations by decentralization; that is, by moving the locus of power closer to the clientele. If the described organization and the actual operation are different, it is essential for those who are designing and implementing organization structures to strive to analyze and understand the discrepancies.

IV. QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

The study answered the following questions:

1. What was the nature of decision making in a specific urban school system?
2. Where should various kinds of decisions be made in a large, decentralized, urban school system?
3. Did the perceptions of the professional personnel about decision making in the organization differ by hierarchical level?

In order to describe decision making in the educational organization, the following sub-questions were addressed:

1. Was there intra-group consensus among central office, area office, and school building personnel concerning the hierarchical level where decisions are made?

2. Was there inter-group consensus among central office, area office, and school building personnel concerning the hierarchical level where decisions are made?
3. What were the kinds of decisions about which there was consensus on decision loci and what were the kinds of decisions about which there was no consensus on decision loci?
4. What was the ideal locus of decision making for each of the forty items on the decision locus questionnaire?
5. How did the ideal and perceived decision loci for each questionnaire item compare?
6. What positions in the organization were nominated as final decision makers?
7. Did personnel who were nominated as final decision makers accept final decision making responsibility?

The responses to the preceding questions provided a data base for determining the effectiveness of the various hierarchical levels of the school organization, the degree to which appropriate people were viewed as having decision making responsibility, and the degree to which appropriate people were assuming responsibility. The final question answered was the degree to which perceived decision patterns were consistent with ideal decision patterns.

V. ASSUMPTIONS

The following assumptions provided a basis for the study:

1. Organizations have both a formal and an informal dimension. If the formal and the informal groups approach congruence,

the organization will perform more effectively.

2. The effectiveness of the organizational structure is affected by the beliefs people in the organization have about the responsibility and authority for decision making.
3. The beliefs people hold about responsibility and authority in an organization have a bearing on the effectiveness of the organization.

VI. DELIMITATIONS

This study was a part of a comprehensive evaluation of an urban school system. An examination of decision processes was one aspect of the second phase of the evaluation which focused on the organization and structure of the school system. The current study is directed solely to an analysis of perceived decision loci. Initial data were collected during the spring of 1975.

All of the personnel in the study were employees of the system. All personnel included in the population were certificated, professional staff members: teachers, principals, supervisors, and system-level administrators.

VII. DEFINITIONS

Administrator identifies the occupant of a system-level position who has line authority or whose primary function is to oversee instruction and ancillary services.

Area assistant superintendent refers to the assistant superintendent who is responsible for one decentralized area of the district. The system has four areas, each of which has an assistant superintendent and a staff.

Area office personnel refers to the staff members who are assigned to one of the area offices with responsibilities for school programs within that area of the system.

Decentralization refers to the reorganization of a large school system into smaller administrative units.

School building personnel identifies professional personnel who work at a specific school. Principals, teachers, librarians, and guidance counselors are included.

VIII. PROCEDURES

In order to collect the information to satisfy the purposes of this inquiry, it was necessary to develop a decision making questionnaire, determine ideal answers, and ascertain the perceptions of the personnel in the school district. The procedures are briefly described below. A complete discussion will be presented in Chapter III.

Instrumentation

Data pertaining to perceived decision making were collected by using a decision analysis instrument. A prototype questionnaire was developed by Glen G. Eye at the University of Wisconsin. The questionnaire was modified by William H. Coffield and John T. Lovell at the University of Tennessee (Appendix A). The modified questionnaire was

adjusted for the purposes of this inquiry by an advisory group of 35 people from the school system investigated. A series of work sessions were held during January, February, and March 1975 to adjust the questionnaire to the local school district. The resulting forty-item questionnaire included items referring to personnel; students; business, finance, and plant management; curriculum; and public relations (Appendix B).

Determining Ideal Answers

In order to determine the "appropriate" hierarchical level for dealing with each of the decision items and to determine the ideal department or decision maker for each item, the questionnaire was submitted to a jury of experts. The jury was comprised of three educators who have had extensive experience working with decentralized school systems in urban areas. Each had also served as a meta-evaluator for a comprehensive, district-level evaluation study recently completed in the school district with which this inquiry is concerned.

The modified questionnaire which was sent to the jurors is exhibited as Appendix C. Consensus was considered to be agreement of two of the three jurors.

Determining Perceptions Within the Organization

In order to determine the perceptions of the members of the organization about the decision makers in the system, it was necessary to determine the population, identify the sample and administer the questionnaire.

The sample and its selection. Three hierarchical levels of personnel in the school system were a part of the population. Central office personnel including the superintendent, the deputy superintendent, assistant superintendents for personnel, instruction, business affairs, plant management, and pupil services were sampled. Directors and assistant directors of each central office department were also questioned. The total number for the central office sample was 35. Area assistant superintendents and their staffs were also surveyed. Sixty people in four area offices were questioned. At the building level, a random sample of certificated personnel responded to the questionnaire. Four hundred and ninety people from the school building level were surveyed.[14]

Collection of the data. The questionnaire was distributed to the sample and collected one week afterwards. Responses were secured from 82% of the sample.

Treatment of the Data

Each item on the questionnaire was examined to see if there was intra- and inter-group consensus among the hierarchical levels regarding the perceived decision maker. Further, each item was examined to determine whether specific persons nominated as final decision makers accepted final decision making responsibility. Finally, each item was examined

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[14]This study was part of a larger inquiry entitled: Program Evaluation for the ----- City Schools. (An agreement between the writer and the school district involved in the study required that anonymity be maintained.)

to see the relationship between who was and who should have been making decisions.

IX. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The present chapter has been devoted to the presentation of a general introduction, statement of the problem, importance of the study, questions, assumptions, delimitations, definitions, and procedures. Chapter II presents a review of selected related literature and research. Chapter III contains a more detailed explanation of methods and procedures. Chapter IV is a presentation and discussion of the data, and Chapter V contains a summary, conclusions, and implications.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

I. INTRODUCTION

Literature and research related to this inquiry were available in several categories. These included theory about organizations, literature and research about decision making, and the trend toward decentralization of school districts. Thus, this chapter is divided into the following sections: formal and informal dimensions of organizations, decentralization, decision making, and a summary.

II. FORMAL AND INFORMAL DIMENSIONS OF ORGANIZATIONS

Schools, like corporations, armies, hospitals, churches, and prisons, are social units deliberately constructed and reconstructed to seek specific goals.[1] Such units are formal organizations and are characterized by, ". . . explicit goals, an elaborate system of explicit rules and regulations, and a formal status structure with clearly marked lines of communication and authority."[2] Bennis points out that most students of organization would also include a well-defined chain of command, a system of procedures and rules for dealing with all work

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[1]Talcott Parsons, Structure and Process in Modern Societies. (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1960), p. 17, cited by Amitai Etzioni, Modern Organizations (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1964), p. 3.

[2]Peter M. Blau and W. Richard Scott, Formal Organizations: A Comparative Approach. (San Francisco: Chandler, 1962), p. 14.

activities, a division of labor based on specialization, promotion based on technical competence, and impersonality in human relationships.[3] While discussing schools specifically, Ornstein says:

> The American school, along with most large organizations connected with business, the service industry, and the government, is a bureaucracy. To many people, the word "bureaucracy" connotes rigidity and inefficiency; to others it means the most rational and efficient form of organization.[4]

Public schools, for the most part, operate under the basic mechanism of bureaucracy as formulated by Max Weber and refined by later theorists. Weber's concept of bureaucracy consists of six basic characteristics, and they have continually been analyzed in the literature.

> 1. Rules and regulations justify and govern official decisions and actions among people in specific positions.
> 2. The positions and offices are organized into a hierarchy with various levels of authority and subordination.
> 3. The management (administration) of the organization is based on written documents and files.
> 4. Administrators are expected to assume an impersonal orientation in contacts with workers or subordinates and clients; the clients are to be treated as cases.
> 5. The administrators are specifically trained and employment by the organization is considered a career for them.
> 6. The administrators follow a stable set of rules and policies.[5]

Writers often use the terms bureaucracy, formal organization, and organization as synonyms. Etzioni favors the term organization because

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[3]Warren G. Bennis, "The Coming Death of Bureaucracy," Think, XXXII (November-December, 1966), p. 30.

[4]Allan C. Ornstein, Metropolitan Schools: Administrative Decentralization vs. Community Control. (Metuchen, New Jersey: The Scarecrow Press, 1974), p. 17.

[5]Max Weber, Essays in Sociology, ed. and trans. by H. H. Gerth and C. W. Mills, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), cited by Allan C. Ornstein, Metropolitan Schools: Administrative Decentralization vs. Community Control. (Metuchen, New Jersey: The Scarecrow Press, 1974), p. 17.

of the negative connotation connected with bureaucracy and because formal organization refers to only one aspect of an organization.[6]

The classical view of administration of a formal organization stresses close control and careful supervision, and when diagrammed, it resembles a triangle with the apex being the highest point of authority. According to Hamilton:

> Theoretically, according to . . . organizational models, each school administrator or supervisor is responsible for more work than he can personally do. Therefore, he delegates part of his responsibilities to others, who are then said to report to him. If this network is considered from the center (the superintendent) to the periphery of the organization (the teacher), then this other direction would be called the Line of Delegation. In the reverse, considering the organization of a typical school system from the subordinate inward to the person who delegates responsibilities, the same network is called the Line of Accountability.[7]

Further, the organization is comprised of a series of roles. Individuals in specific roles behave in a certain manner, and roles are not expected to change because of retirement or transfer. Each person stepping into a position is expected to carry out the function just as his predecessor did. Owens said:

> This constant structure of roles, of course, distinguishes the complex organization from the smaller and simpler groups in which the structure of roles may be less defined and not as well ordered. The fact that a school is a complex organization in this sense renders some of its problems much like those of a military unit, an industrial organization, or a government agency.[8]

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[6]Amitai Etzioni, Modern Organizations. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1964), p. 3.

[7]Norman K. Hamilton, "The Decision-Making Structure of a School System," Educational Leadership, XXIX (May, 1972), p. 668.

[8]Robert G. Owens, Organizational Behavior in Schools. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 49.

Hammons said:

> Today it is relatively safe to say that most educational organizations, whether they are colleges or schools, have some type of organizational chart and that for each position on the chart, some form of position description exists. Yet, despite these, much time is spent resolving jurisdictional disputes over exactly who is responsible for a particular activity, who must be consulted about it before a decision can be made, and who, if anyone, can exercise a veto over the decisions regarding that activity.[9]

Organizations which are viewed exclusively by job titles, job descriptions, and organizational charts reflect only the formal aspect and omit a large and important set of forces that affect organizations. The component of organizations which is comprised of human personalities, friendships, and informal groups has been labeled the ideographic dimension in the often cited social systems model designed by Getzels and Guba.[10] Frequently, this side of the organization is simply called the informal organization.

This concept was developed from the human relations school which grew partly as a reaction to the scientific management theory of administration.[11] The human relations movement highlighted the importance of emotional communication, social groups, and leadership.

Weber's concept of an organization as a blueprint in action does not consider the informal dimension of the organization. As Hughes said:

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[9]James O. Hammons, "The Functional Responsibility Chart--Key to Effective Organizational Decision Making," College and University, LII (Fall, 1976), p. 21.

[10]Jacob W. Getzels and Egon G. Guba, "Social Behavior and the Administrative Process," The School Review, LXV (Winter, 1957), pp. 426-27.

[11]Etzioni, p. 20.

> It is not enough to understand the organizational chart and the job descriptions; there must be some understanding of the nature of individuals inhabiting the various roles or positions in the organization. The individual style each person brings to his particular role differs from other individuals performing in the same role.[12]

According to Hamilton, observations show that despite the carefully laid plans of formal organizational structures and job descriptions:

> Most people in an organization have work to do coming from many different sources and not just from one . . . . The seemingly straightforward concept of the Line of Delegation or the Chain of Command turns out, in fact, to be a tremendously oversimplified picture of organizational structure. Moreover, this concept takes care of only one aspect of accountability, that of the subordinate to a person in a superior position.[13]

Barnard, in early literature dealing with organizations, contended that organizations must be concerned with both effectiveness and efficiency. Effectiveness meant to achieve the goals of the institution, while efficiency meant to consider the human side of the enterprise.[14]

Study of organizations must direct attention to both the formal and the informal dimensions. Herman describes one approach to conceptualizing the phenomenon:

> A useful model to characterize organizations is the "Organizational Iceberg." The upper portion of the iceberg, "above the waterline" represents the formal statement of the organization. Such items as organizational structure and titles, charter, policies,

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[12]Larry W. Hughes, "Effective Internal Communications: A Need to Look at the Anatomy of the Organization," (Knoxville: University of Tennessee, 1971), p. 6. (Mimeographed.)

[13]Hamilton, p. 669.

[14]Owens, p. 82.

> job descriptions, etc. are typical of this area. Traditionally, in most organizations when a serious operating problem is encountered, managers, organization consultants, and others interested in improving functioning have tended to concentrate their attention in this area . . . . Below the waterline . . . are contained the intra and inter personal dynamics of those who staff the organization.[15]

Reflecting the importance of the informal dimension of the organization, Owens said:

> There is abundant evidence that (1) informal organization is essential to the functioning and administration of an organization and (2) the primary groups of the informal organization have great power.[16]

Some proponents of administrative or organizational theory have recommended that exclusive consideration be given to the informal organization, but attention must be directed to both aspects of the organization. Argyris noted that some have given the impression that ". . . formal structures are "bad" and that the needs of the individual participants should be paramount in creating and administering an organization.[17]

Recognizing the human dimension of the organization has fostered some controversy in the area of organizational administration. Morse and Lorsch said:

> During the past 30 years, managers have been bombarded with two competing approaches to the problems of human administration and organization. The first, usually called the classical school of

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[15]Stanley M. Herman, "What Is This Thing Called Organizational Development?" Personnel Journal, L (August, 1971), p. 599.

[16]Owens, p. 47.

[17]Chris Argyris, "The Individual and Organizations: Some Problems of Mutual Adjustment," Administrative Science Quarterly, II (June, 1957), p. 10.

> organization, emphasizes the need for well-established lines of authority, clearly defined jobs, and authority equal to responsibility. The second, often called participative approach, focuses on the desirability of involving organization members in decision making so they will be more highly motivated.[18]

Morse and Lorsch recommend altering the organizational characteristics to fit the nature of the task to be done rather than determining a best answer for all organizations. They suggest that in some cases highly controlled and formalized organizations are desirable, while in other cases, the more participative approach is most appropriate. Argyris said that:

> Organizations are formed with the intention and design of accomplishing goals; and the people who work in organizations believe, at least part of the time, that they are striving toward these same goals. We must not lose sight of the fact that however far organizations depart from the traditional description . . . most behavior in organizations is intended rational behavior.[19]

Urwick contends that although one knows and expects the organization to depart from the formal dimension because of the human dimension, and should take this human element into account, the deviation from the formal pattern is to be considered temporary.[20] The organizational planner should begin with a plan that is logical and simple, one that would work with the right human material. The organizer then deviates

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[18]John J. Morse and Jay W. Lorsch, "Beyond Theory Y," Harvard Business Review, XLVIII (May-June, 1970), p. 68.

[19]Argyris, p. 7.

[20]L. Urwick, The Elements of Administration. (New York, 1944), cited by Chris Argyris, "The Individual and Organizations: Some Problems of Mutual Adjustment," Administrative Science Quarterly, II (June, 1957), p. 7.

the plan to work with the informal dimension rather than plan with the informal aspects as foundations.

III. DECENTRALIZATION

Introduction

Public schools have been subjected to increasing criticism since the late 1950's. Student unrest, students' lack of skills, teacher strikes, and rising costs, among other issues, have taken their toll. Some criticisms have been rooted in fact, while others have been a manifestation of a more general societal ferment, an outgrowth of the lack of school-community understanding, or a second order consequence of some other problem situation. Nevertheless, schools, and urban schools especially, have been caught in a tide of increasing expectations by clients on the one hand and by decreasing resources on the other. One common solution attempted by many large, urban centers has been decentralization of the school organization. Candoli said:

> Decentralization models have proliferated with most major cities attempting in one way or another to cecentralize their administrative structure . . . . Legitimate concerns over extreme centralization are well taken and appropriate. Bigness leads to remoteness and remoteness leads to impersonalness which is inappropriate in an institution (education) that is based on human services.[21]

Decentralization Defined

It was apparent from a review of the literature that decentralization is not a precise, narrowly defined term. Furthermore, despite the

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[21] I. C. Candoli, "The Urban School System," Theory Into Practice, XV (October, 1976), p. 244.

trend toward decentralization, which has seemingly maintained its momentum, and despite a proliferation of verbiage about the trend, mostly in support of it, little documentation exists about its success or failure. Ornstein said:

> There is very little current research related to administrative decentralization and community control; most of the statements are based on dubious claims, half truths, on unsupported evidence.[22]

Ornstein contends that research on urban schools has been based, in the main, on soft data, utilizing personal observations, anecdotal data, and interviews. Both Ornstein and Cawelti have, however, compiled studies of the decentralized system which present data about the status of decentralization among the nation's schools.

Cawelti reports a 1974 study in which the nation's 50 largest school districts were surveyed.[23] Twenty-six reported that they were decentralized. Others reported regional or area intermediate units for attendance, but were not classified as decentralized unless they had a line officer such as an area assistant superintendent. Decision analysis indicates a limited shifting of decision making authority away from the central office. However, Cawelti says:

> Further study is needed on the extent to which this shift is intended, and to validate the central office leaders' (who completed this survey instrument) perception of how much real authority has been shifted to the building level.[24]

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[22]Orstein, p. 67.

[23]Gordon Cawelti, "Urban School Decentralization and Curriculum Development Strategies," Impact of Decentralization on Curriculum, ed. I Ezra Staples (Washington: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1975), pp. 18-27.

[24]Cawelti, p. 25.

Decentralizing to the Local School

Many advocates of administrative decentralization define decentralization in a broad sense, designed to give most decision making power to the local school level--to principals, teachers, department chairmen, and students. Havinghurst and Levine define the major purpose for decentralization:

> . . . to encourage a given community within the big city to tackle its own problem in a particular way--a way which might not be satisfactory to other communities either because they have a different situation which gives them different problems, or because their local leadership is not yet ready for the actions that another community wishes to take.[25]

Educational Research Service conducted a nationwide survey to determine the extent to which building level personnel were involved in decision making. They asked:

> . . . 1,269 school systems stratified by enrollment size to indicate whether they had policies that encourage decentralized decision-making on the part of principals. Of the total 554 respondents, 42.6% indicated that such policies were in existence in their school systems; an additional 15.2% indicated that such policies were currently being developed.[26]

Cross presents decentralization as moving the locus of power to the local school, and he discusses the increasing importance of the principal in decentralization.[27] This type of decentralization requires

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[25]Robert J. Havighurst and Daniel U. Levine, Educational in Metropolitan Areas, 2nd ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1971), p. 187.

[26]Janet F. Powell, comp., "Decentralized Decision-Making," Educational Research Service Information Aid. (Arlington: Educational Research Service, 1975), p. 1.

[27]Ray Cross, "The Administrative Team or Decentralization? The National Elementary Principal, LIV (November/December, 1974), p. 80.

that individual principals and teachers actively develop their leadership potential. McDonough says:

> Without assessment of individual and group strengths and weaknesses, professional growth cannot occur . . . . Standard evaluative procedures must incorporate self-evaluations and conferences . . . . The movement to decentralization increases desirability of formal procedures which ensure accountability on the local level.[28]

Unless such leadership development occurs, decentralization and community control can be a step backward. The literature abounds with reference to various kinds of abuses; charges of harassment, nepotism, and corruption have been leveled at some decentralized districts heavily into community control.[29]

Decentralizing to Intermediate Administrative Units

Most frequently, decentralization has referred to the breaking up of large school districts into smaller administrative units. It is a common occurence in city and suburban school systems comprising 50,000 or more students. Orstein says:

> By breaking down the system, in theory, the administration is brought closer to the schools and community, and there is closer communication between the schools and the central office.[30]

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[28]Patrick J. McDonough, "Administration: Decentralization," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, LVIII (April, 1974), p. 45.

[29]I. Ezra Staples, "Decentralization Affects Curriculum," Impact of Decentralization on Curriculum, ed. I. Ezra Staples (Washington: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1975), p. 9.

[30]Ornstein, p. ix.

With respect to size, Sage has said:

> . . . each decentralized region should have a total pupil base of from 20,000 to 40,000. Units smaller or greather than this probably distort most of the rationale upon which large system decentralization is based.[31]

Ornstein presents reorganization data about 16 randomly selected medium-sized city and suburban school districts.[32] Of these 16, including the system examined in this study, 15 had either decentralized or were considering it. Most were involved in plans to increase community participation, but none reported community control. The 15 largest school districts had issued reports related to school policy produced either by local committees or outside consulting firms. While recommending school decentralization and strong community participation, most cities rejected total community control, although many theorists, including Ornstein, feel strongly that community control and decentralization go hand in glove. Sage said:

> . . . the distinction has been drawn between political decentralization, which involves true community control with grass roots participation in major policy matters, and the less dramatic process of administrative decentralization, in which major policy matters are retained by a central board and only administrative details are delegated to school executives operating in a more localized setting.[33]

Given the data available, it would seem that most school systems have taken the less dramatic course of action.

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[31]Daniel D. Sage, "Organization for Leadership in Large Systems: The Decentralization Dilemma," (paper presented at the annual international convention of the Council for Exceptional Children, Chicago, Illinois, April, 1976), p. 6.

[32]Ornstein, pp. 137-208.

[33]Sage, p. 2.

Decentralization in One Urban School System

The following information related to the centralization of the specific school system under investigation in this inquiry. The decentralized school system has four areas, each headed by an area assistant superintendent and staffed by appropriate personnel. The central office was divided into five departments: (1) instruction, (2) pupil services, (3) business affairs, (4) plant management, and (5) personnel services, each headed by an assistant superintendent. Each of these nine assistant superintendents share equal rank and report to the deputy superintendent who is responsible to the superintendent. Each geographic area has between 33,300 and 39,400 students.[34]

The brief summary report highlighted the reorganization as generally successful. In conclusion, the report speaks to the importance of the total school system, "We must never forget that this is one system, one Board of Education, and one Superintendent. We all work in the same arena . . . ."[35]

IV. DECISION MAKING

Discussions of decentralization often miss the real issue, according to Candoli--the real issue is what functions are best highly centralized and what decisions are best made closest to the student.[36]

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[34]Ornstein, p. 147.

[35]Ornstein, p. 150.

[36]Candoli, p. 244.

Etzioni says that students of formal organization have been more interested in factors related to the coordination of subunits, but the newer trend in organizational analysis is the study of organizational decision making.[37] Most literature pertaining to decision making deals with the prescriptive approach to decisions, e.g., using a logical approach to making decisions, or, if descriptive, deals with the individual rather than the organization.

Virtually the only national study examining decentralized decision making in the public schools was conducted by Cawelti who found only limited shifting of authority to area offices in decentralized school districts.[38] The inquiry data were collected exclusively from perceptions of central office personnel, however. The ten decisions from which Cawleti collected data were:

1. Ordinarily makes decisions on assigning new teachers to a particular building.
2. Makes the decision in selecting which basic materials to purchase for an elementary school reading program.
3. Makes the basic determination as to how given amounts of Title I funds are to be spent.
4. Has the responsibility and resources for carrying out a program of in-service education for teachers.
5. Selects a building principal.
6. Determines final plans for the modification of a school's physical plant such as removing walls for an Instructional Materials Center.
7. Makes the decision to install a plan such as differentiated staffing within a building.
8. Decides to alter an existing program such as a social studies to include a sizeable unit on environmental education.

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[37] Etzioni, p. 30.

[38] Cawelti, p. 22.

9. Determines particular goals and objectives for a certain school.

10. Develops a plan for reporting to patrons in the community on the extent to which an individual school is meeting its goal.

The Cawelti study was replicated in the Madison, Wisconsin, Public Schools, a system which decentralized in 1973. The replication of the Cawelti study utilized a population which included local school principals, area administrators, and central office personnel rather than delimiting the study to central office personnel as Cawelti had done. The Madison administrators did not perceive central office officials as most influential on any of the issues--a direct contrast to the Cawelti findings on the same items. Moreover, Madison data showed building level personnel having the most influence on most items.[39]

Among the proponents of decentralization, there is an awareness that some decisions need to be retained by the central office. Cunningham itemizes those as research and development, school construction, and district-level accountability.[40]

In a more prescriptive piece of literature, Cawelti and Howell presented a plan to assist the principal in becoming more able to deal

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[39]Jerry L. Patterson and Lee H. Hansen, "Decentralized Decision Making: It's Working in Madison," Educational Leadership, XXXIII (November, 1975), p. 127.

[40]Luvern L. Cunningham, "The Magnificent Pandora of Decentralization," The School Administrator, (June, 1970), p. 5.

with the decision authority they contended he should have. In 1971, they prefaced a three-phase plan for group-paced, self-paced and independent study activities for principlas with the following quote:

> The solution is apparent: give the local administrator more decision-making authority as required by his school area needs, and let him implement the necessary programs. But therein lies the problem. Due to lack of funds, lack of opportunity to view and study trends, limited decision-making powers and perspective, the principal is oftentimes incapable of meeting these responsibilities.[41]

Nondecision making or decision making by default is a premise discussed Mann in a presentation at the American Educational Research Association:

> Most research habitually assumes that administrative behavior, and the direction of public policy is a function of conscious choice among alternatives. That assumption is constantly reified in the phase, "decision-making." Unfortunately, the concept may have more to do with analytic convenience than with administrative reality. In the world of practice many decisions are not "made" in any concrete or unitary sense; rather, they emerge.[42]

In another prescriptive piece, Sharples recommended a rational selection of successful alternatives when considering decisions. He said:

> In effect, decision making might be said to be circumscribed by ignorance. . . . Any discussion of the conceptual problems of applying analytic techniques to decision making must also consider the concern for information and data.[43]

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[41]Gordon Cawelti and Bruce Howell, "Help for the Man in the Middle," School Management, XV (March, 1971), p. 22.

[42]Dale Mann, "Prolegomenon to the Analysis of Nondecision Making," (paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, California, April, 1976).

[43]Brian Sharples, "Rational Decision-Making in Education: Some Concerns," Educational Administration Quarterly, XI (Spring, 1975), p. 57.

Charting of decisions in an organization in a systematic manner should serve as a supplement to organizational charts and job descriptions in every organization, according to Hamilton.[44] Such charting of the decision making structure, when superimposed on the organizational chart, would provide empirical evidence to enable the organizational leaders to take action to move the organization closer to the desired structure as depicted by the charts, titles and job descriptions.

Monahan and Johnson suggest steps in moving toward decentralized decision making:

> 1. Those areas that should definitely come under centralized control should be delineated. These would probably include such items as pupil transportation and building maintenance.
> 2. Those areas that are ripe for decentralization should be identified. Items in this category might include internal school staffing, selection of learning materials, and student body management.
> 3. Those items that do not immediately fall in either category 1 or 2 should be assembled. This category might include administrative staffing, special services, and curriculum development.[45]

Further, Monahan and Johnson have developed a 28 item questionnaire which they suggest using in gauging administrative inclination to decision making.

Decision making literature available was limited and, for the most part, rested heavily on prescriptive information. Repeatedly, however, particularly in reference to decentralization, was stated the urgency of collecting decision making data.

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[44] Hamilton, p. 670.

[45] William W. Monahan and Homer M. Johnson. Decentralized Decision Making Toward Educational Goals. Sunnyvale, California: Fremont Union High School District, 1973, p. 12.

V. SUMMARY

There is much information available about organizations and the degree to which the formal and the informal dimensions differ from one another, sometimes even conflicting. Further, the momentum toward decentralization both by giving more control to the local schools and by organizing districts into smaller administrative units shows no sign of diminishing. Added to these facts the reality that descriptive decision making research is scarce signifies the necessity of conducting such research about decision making in public schools, particularly in decentralized districts.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

I. INTRODUCTION

Despite the fact that a wealth of literature exists suggesting how decisions should be made or at what level of the organizational hierarchy they should be made, there is a shortage of descriptive research related to decision making. How are decisions made? Who in organizations is making decisions? What kinds of decisions are they making? There is a particular shortage of descriptive literature related to complex educational organizations.

This study was designed to collect information pertaining to decision making in one complex educational organization. In order to describe decision making more exactly in this system, an is/ought dichotomy was developed. The descriptive survey method was selected for this study to determine what the perceived decision making patterns were in one large, urban school system and how these patterns related to an ideal pattern of decision making in the system.

II. QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire Development

Data related to decision making processes in the urban school system were collected by questionnaire. A prototype questionnaire was developed by Glen G. Eye at the University of Wisconsin. The

questionnaire was modified by William H. Coffield and John T. Lovell at the University of Tennessee (Appendix A). This modified questionnaire was adjusted for the purposes of this inquiry by a 35 person advisory team from the school system. This team served as an advisory council to the larger inquiry to which this study is related.

During work sessions held over a three month period, the advisory tem suggested a series of modifications which were incorporated in the questionnaire. The adjusted questionnaire, which contains 40 items, appears in Appendix B.

Questionnaire Issues

A one-phase Delphi probe determined decision categories for all but a few items. That is, the questionnaire was sent to the members of the organizational analysis team of the original study, and each respondent was asked to indicate which decision category best embraced each questionnaire item: personnel; business, finance, and plant management; curriculum; students; and public relations. In those instances where there was disagreement as to which decision category an individual item referred, the final designation was made through a consensus process. The issues thus determined for each item provided permanent categories for this questionnaire.

III. IDEAL DECISION MAKING LOCI

Introduction

In order to examine decision practices in the large, urban school district studied, an ideal pattern of decision making was developed. The

ideal location for decision making responsibility was identified for each of the 40 items on the questionnaire, by asking the question, "Who should make this decision?"

Jury

A jury of three educators familiar with decentralized school systems in urban areas was questioned to determine the appropriate hierarchical level for the decisions--central office, area office, or building level--and to determine the most appropriate department or position for the decision--curriculum; management; or, at the building level, principal or teacher.

The jurors were Daniel U. Levine, R. Timothy McDonald, and Robert J. Simpson. Dr. Levine is Director of the Center for Urban Studies at the University of Missouri, Kansas City, Missouri. Dr. McDonald is Director of Federal Projects at Oakwood College, Huntsville, Alabama. Dr. Simpson is Professor and Director of the Center for Educational Policy and Law at the University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida. The jurors also served as meta-evaluators for the larger project to which this study is related.

Procedures

Each member of the jury was mailed a questionnaire preceded by a telephoned explanation concerning the importance of the inquiry. The questionnaire to which they responded may be found in Appendix C. Responses were received from each of the members of the jury. For the purposes of the study, it was decided that consensus was agreement of

two of the three jurors. In the event that no two agreed, the researcher decided that no ideal locus existed for that decision.

IV. PERCEIVED DECISION MAKING LOCI

Introduction

Examination of perceived decision making within the school organization was conducted by administering the questionnaire to a variety of professional people within the organization at all levels and asking the question, "Who makes this decision?"

Population

This study was delimited to professional personnel in one large, urban school district. Three hierarchical levels of personnel in the school system were a part of the population. The three levels were central office, decentralized area offices, and school buildings.

The entire population of the central office from the superintendent through assistant directors was questioned. The total number for the central office population was 35 people. The four area assistant superintendents and their staffs were also surveyed. The total number in the area offices was 60 people. At the school building level, all principals and a random sample of other certificated personnel received the questionnaire. Four hundred and ninety people were surveyed.

Collection of Data

The questionnaire was distributed to the sample and collected one week after it was distributed. Members of the 35 person advisory committee distributed and collected the questionnaires.

V. TREATMENT OF THE DATA

Percentages of Responses

Percentages were calculated for responses of the sample as a whole and by the three groups representing three hierarchical levels of the school system. Numbers of responses by category and percentages were presented in tabular form.

Procedures

Procedures were developed to ascertain the answers to the sub-questions identified in Chapter I. The sub-questions are repeated here, along with the procedures which were used to determine the answers.

1. Was there intra-group consensus among central office, area office, and school building personnel concerning the hierarchical level where decisions are made?

Consensus was determined to be 75% agreement of the respondents in a particular category. Each questionnaire item was examined for intra-group agreement among each of the three groups. These data were presented in tables giving the locus of the decision for all consensus items as perceived by each group. All percentages of agreement were reported in an appendix.

2. Was there inter-group consensus among central office, area office, and school building personnel concerning the hierarchical level where decisions are made?

Inter-group consensus among the three hierarchical levels of the school organization was obtained by examining intra-group consensus derived from the first sub-question. When three hierarchical levels of

the organization reached intra-group agreement on the same item, at the same decision locus, inter-group consensus resulted. These data were presented in a table which showed, for each questionnaire item, two and three group agreement as well as no inter-group consensus.

3. What were the kinds of decisions about which there was consensus on decision loci and what were the kinds of decisions about which there was no consensus on decision loci?

The kinds of decisions (issues) to which each questionnaire item pertained had been ascertained by a one-phase Delphi probe. After intra-group and inter-group agreement had been determined, items were examined to see whether consensus or lack of consensus was related to specific issues.

4. What was the ideal locus of decision making for each of the 40 items in the decision locus questionnaire?

The 40 item questionnaire was presented to a jury of experts who determined the ideal locus of decision making for each item. These results were reported for each item.

5. How did the ideal and perceived decision loci for each questionnaire item compare?

Ideal and perceived decision loci were compared for each of the 40 items on the questionnaire. The data were displayed in tabular form showing the perceptions of all three groups in addition to the jury's ideal loci, and where indicated, no consensus.

6. What positions in the organization were nominated as final decision makers?

Data were examined to determine what specific positions in the organization were nominated as final decision makers by others in the organization. In addition to reporting the number of different nominees for each questionnaire item, the number of nominations received by the top nominee was given, along with that person's percentage of all nominations.

7. Did personnel who were nominated as final decision makers accept final decision making responsibility?

Data were examined to see if the personnel who were nominated as decision makers by others in the system accepted the responsibility assigned to them. Accepting final decision making responsibility was defined as having 75% of the respondents occupying a position in the organization such as principal or deputy superintendent respond, "I make the decision," or "I recommend the decision." These two questionnaire responses were collapsed for reporting, because both were judged to show acceptance of responsibility. It was felt that some respondents would reply "recommend the decision" rather than "make the decision," because in some instances final legal responsibility rests with the board of education.

CHAPTER IV

INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

I. INTRODUCTION

This inquiry was designed to describe the decision practices in a large, urban school system. The system underwent a major reorganization in 1971, resulting in the creation of four geographic areas, each under the direction of an area assistant superintendent. Further, five departments were created at the central office, each under the direction of an assistant superintendent. These nine assistant superintendents held equal rank and were responsible to a deputy superintendent who reported directly to the superintendent. The 11 highest ranking administrators comprised an executive council, a body designed to provide coordination and direction to the total school system.

These positions, as well as subordinate positions and offices, represented the formal dimension of the organization. It is important for job titles, organizational charts, and relationships among positions to be clearly delineated in order for an organization to be functional. Clarity in the formal dimension, however, does not assure optimal functioning of the organization.

A complex school organization has both formal and informal dimensions. The informal dimension reflects personalities and styles of individuals and the informal power groups which tend to exist in all complex organizations. These forces add another facet to the organization,

making the real organization somewhat different from that which exists on paper. However, the closer the informal and formal dimensions of an organization approximate one another, i.e., achieve congruence, the healthier, and subsequently, more productive the organization tends to be. To gain insight about the degree of congruence which exists in an organization, it is necessary to examine decision making practices.

The major questions addressed by this study were:

1. What was the nature of decision making in a specific urban school system?
2. Where should various kinds of decisions be made in a large, decentralized, urban school system?
3. Did the perceptions of the professional personnel about decision making in the organization differ by hierarchical level?

The presentation and analysis of data collected by the procedures described in Chapter III appear in this chapter. Answers to the seven sub-questions have been achieved by an analysis of the data related to each specific question.

Responses to the decision locus questionnaire are presented in Table I by frequency and by percentage. Four hundred and seventy-seven questionnaires, 82% of the number distributed, were returned.

In order to provide easy readibility without encumbering the text, short summaries of questionnaire items were inserted after questionnaire item numbers. The entire questionnaire with full questions can be seen in Appendix B.

TABLE I

DECISION QUESTIONNAIRE SAMPLES AND RESPONSES

Group	Number of Questionnaires Distributed	Usable Responses		Percent of Total Responding
		Number	Percent	
Central Office	35	28	80	6
Area Office	60	48	80	10
School Building	490	401	82	84
Totals	585	477	82	100

II. ORGANIZATIONAL CONSENSUS: HIERARCHICAL LEVELS WHERE DECISIONS ARE MADE

Perceptual data were collected by means of a forty-item decision locus questionnaire to determine to what extent there was consensus in the organization about the hierarchical levels where decisions are made. These data were examined for both intra- and inter-group agreement concerning the hierarchical levels where decisions are made. These data are reported in Table II. Percentages of responses to each item by each group can be found in Appendices D, E, and F.

Intra-Group Consensus

For purposes of this study, intra-group consensus was determined to be agreement among 75% of the respondents in that group. The first sub-question addressed intra-group consensus:

> Was there intra-group consensus among central office, area office, and school building personnel concerning the hierarchical level where decisions are made?

Central office personnel. The central office personnel responding to the questionnaire agreed on the decision locus for 29 items. Final decision making responsibility for 23 of those items was perceived to be located in the central office, six at the school building level, and none in the area offices.

Area office personnel. Area office personnel responding to the questionnaire agreed on the decision locus for 21 items. Their

TABLE II

DECISION LOCI OF ITEMS HAVING INTRA-GROUP CONSENSUS

Decision Loci	Numbers of Items Having Intra-Group Consensus Clustered by Assigning Group		
	Central Office	Area Office	School Building
Central Office	2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 18, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35 No. Items = 23	3, 5, 8, 10, 14 18, 20, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35 No. Items = 15	5, 10, 14, 18, 20 25, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35 No. Items = 12
Area Office	No. Items = 0	No. Items = 0	No. Items = 0
School Building	4, 11, 24, 36, 38, 40 No. Items = 6	7, 11, 24, 36, 38, 40 No. Items = 6	1, 7, 11, 24, 36, 38, 40 No. Items = 7
	Total No. = 29	Total No. = 21	Total No. = 19

perceptions placed 15 of those at the central office, six at the school building level, and none in the area offices.

School building personnel. School building personnel responding to the questionnaire agreed on the decision locus for 19 items. Twelve of these were located at the central office, seven at the school building level, and none in the area offices.

Other findings. Other findings regarding intra-group consensus were apparent:

1. Consensus was reached by all groups in reference to the area office level; no final decision locus was placed in the area offices by any of the three groups.
2. More final decision making was placed at the central office than at the other two levels by all three groups.
3. Central office personnel assumed final decision making responsibility for eight items that neither of the other groups could agree to assign, while school building personnel assumed final decision making responsibility for one item that neither of the other groups could agree to assign.

Inter-Group Consensus

The second sub-question addressed inter-group consensus: Was there inter-group consensus among central office, area office, and school building personnel concerning the hierarchical level where decisions are made?

Personnel in the three hierarchical levels--central office, area office, and school building--agreed on the decision locus for 17 items (Table III). Of these 17 items, final decision making for 12 was perceived to be located at the central office. None was located in the area offices, and five were located at the school building level.

In addition to the 17 items on which there was three-way agreement, the central office and area office personnel reached consensus on three other items, but they were not joined by school building personnel on these:

3. add cafeteria space;

8. obtain replacement for teacher;

26. select method of reporting pupil progress.

Further, the area office and school building personnel reached consensus on item 7, "Who selects the specific substitute for a teacher expected to be sick for four months?," locating that decision at the school building level, while central office personnel achieved no consensus on that item. The school building personnel assumed responsibility for item 1, "Who resolves a conflict between a consultant and a teacher?," but neither of the other groups assigned them that responsibility. The one decision assigned to a group by another group but not accepted by the first group was item 4, "Who makes the decision to make organizational changes in the reading program at the school building level?" The central office personnel said that the school building personnel were responsible for item 4, but that responsibility was not accepted by the school building personnel.

TABLE III

INTER-GROUP CONSENSUS OR LACK OF CONSENSUS ON DECISION LOCI FOR ALL ITEMS HAVING INTRA-GROUP CONSENSUS AT ANY HIERARCHICAL LEVEL

	Item Numbers of Decisions Assigned by Groups		
Decision Loci	Central Office	Area Office	School Building
Central Office	5 10 14 18 20 25 27 30 31 32 33 35 3 8 26 2 6 9 12 13 22 23 28	5 10 14 18 20 25 27 30 31 32 33 35 3 8 26	5 10 14 18 20 25 27 30 31 32 33 35
Area Office	none	none	none
School Building	11 24 36 38 40 4	11 24 36 38 40 7	11 24 36 38 40 7 1

In no case did groups conflict about the decision loci. Frequently, one group agreed while other groups failed to reach consensus, but in no case did consensus of two or more groups conflict. There were nine items on which no group reached consensus:

15. assign child to CLUE;
16. remove emotionally disturbed teacher;
17. put teacher on tenure;
19. reassign ineffective consultant;
21. initiate school level race relations program;
29. individualize instruction at area level;
34. evaluate principals;
37. place student in learning disabilities class
39. resolve teacher-principal conflict.

Thus, the findings related to inter-group consensus can be stated as:

1. Personnel at all three hierarchical levels agreed on the decision loci for 17 items, fewer than half of the 40 items on the questionnaire.
2. Central office personnel accepted all responsibility assigned to them by other groups and more.
3. More agreement existed on decisions which are made at the central office than at any other level.
4. There were no conflicting consensus decision loci among groups.

5. Area office personnel did not reach consensus on any item exclusive of the other two groups.

III. KINDS OF DECISIONS

The third sub-question was concerned with possible patterning of agreement or disagreement about decision loci:

What were the kinds of decisions about which there was consensus on decision loci, and what were the kinds of decisions about which there was no consensus on decision loci?

Using a modified Delphi probe, decision issues or subjects were determined for the forty-item questionnaire. The five resulting issues were: personnel; curriculum; business, finance, and plant management; students; and public relations. Labeling the kinds of decisions which were included in the questionnaire allowed the researcher to determine whether or not there were certain issues about which there was decision clarity and other issues about which there was little or no agreement. The questionnaire items were not divided equally among the five issues--16 were personnel items, 11 were curricular items, five related to students, five were business, finance, and plant management items, and three were public relations items. These categories were not designed to assign responsibility to any specific department or person, but to provide a basis for generalizing about the kinds of decisions about which there was agreement and disagreement within the system. Table IV shows the questionnaire items grouped by the decision issues.

Of the 17 items about which there was three-way, inter-group consensus, seven were personnel items, four were curricular items,

TABLE IV

DECISION LOCUS QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS GROUPED BY ISSUES

Personnel (16 Items)	Curriculum (11 Items)	Business, Finance, and Plant Management (5 Items)	Students (5 Items)	Public Relations (3 Items)
1	2	3	15#	22
7	4	13	24*	26
8	5*	14*	36*	28
9	6	31*	37#	
10*	12	33*	40*	
11*	21#			
16#	23			
17#	27*			
18*	29#			
19#	32*			
20*	38*			
25*				
30*				
34#				
35*				
39#				

*Seventeen items about which three-way, inter-group consensus was achieved.

#Nine items about which neither intra- nor inter-group consensus was achieved.

three were business, finance, and plant management items, three were related to students, and none were public relations items. Of the nine items about which no single group agreed, five were personnel items, two related to curriculum, and two related to students. Both consensus and no consensus items are indicated in Table IV.

The following findings emerged concerning the kinds of decisions made:

1. No pervasive relationship was shown to exist between the decision issues and decision loci clarity.
2. Of the nine items about which there was no intra- or inter-group consensus on the decision loci, none was in the area of business, finance, and plant management. Moreover, three-way, inter-group consensus was achieved on three of the five business, finance, and plant management items. Therefore, considerably more clarity was shown among all groups about where these decisions were made.

IV. IDEAL DECISION LOCI

The fourth sub-question dealt with what "ought" to be, rather than with what actually was perceived to exist:

What was the ideal locus of decision making for each of the 40 items on the decision locus questionnaire?

The ideal decision making loci were determined by three jurors who were instructed to respond to each of the 40 items on the questionnaire by designating the ideal decision locus, assuming a large,

decentralized, urban school system. Consensus was defined by the researcher as decision locus agreement by at least two of the three jurors. Consensus was obtained on 38 of the 40 items as shown by the placement of these item numbers in Table V. Eleven decisions were placed at the central office, nine were placed at the area office, and 18 were placed at the school building level. The two items on which the jury did not reach consensus were 13, "Who decides to repaint a cafeteria?" and 37, "Who decides whether to place a child in a learning disabilities class?"

V. PERCEIVED AND IDEAL DECISION LOCI

The fifth sub-question was:

How did the ideal and perceived decision loci for each questionnaire item compare?

Decisions were analyzed to see the extent to which perceived and ideal decision loci were in agreement. Table VI presents the 17 items for which there was inter-group consensus in the system, the hierarchical level where the decisions were perceived to be made, and the hierarchical level where, ideally, they should be made. Of these 17 items, 11 of the decisions were perceived to be made in the ideal location:

5. change social studies curriculum;
11. change elementary teacher's grade level;
24. suspend student;
27. choose system-level tests;
30. choose summer school teachers;

TABLE V

IDEAL DECISION LOCI

Central Office	Area Office	School Building
3	10*	1*
5*	14*	2
6*	19*	4*
12*	20*	7
17	25*	8*
26	29*	9
27*	34*	11*
30*	35	15*
31*	39*	16
32*		18
33*		21*
		22*
		23*
		24*
		28
		36
		38*
		40*
Total Items 11	9	18

*Indicates unanimity among the jurors.

TABLE VI

CONSENSUS DECISION LOCI ASSIGNED BY THE JURY (IDEAL) AND BY GROUPS AT THE THREE HIERARCHICAL LEVELS (PERCEIVED) REPORTED BY QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM

Item Number	Jurors' Ideal Location	Location Assigned by Groups		
		Central Office	Area Office	School Building
1	school building	no consensus	no consensus	school building
2	school building	central office	no consensus	no consensus
3	central office	central office	central office	no consensus
4	school building	school building	no consensus	no consensus
5	central office	central office	central office	central office
6	central office	central office	no consensus	no consensus
7	school building	no consensus	school building	school building
8	school building	central office	central office	no consensus
9	school building	central office	no consensus	no consensus
10	area office	central office	central office	central office
11	school building	school building	school building	school building
12	central office	central office	no consensus	no consensus

TABLE VI (continued)

Item Number	Jurors' Ideal Location	Location Assigned by Groups		
		Central Office	Area Office	School Building
13	no consensus	central office	no consensus	no consensus
14	area office	central office	central office	central office
15	school building	no consensus	no concensus	no consensus
16	school building	no consensus	no consensus	no consensus
17	central office	no consensus	no consensus	no consensus
18	school building	central office	central office	central office
19	area office	no consensus	no consensus	no consensus
20	area office	central office	central office	central office
21	school building	no consensus	no consensus	no consensus
22	school building	central office	no consensus	no consensus
23	school building	central office	no consensus	no consensus
24	school building	school building	school building	school building
25	area office	central office	central office	central office
26	central office	central office	central office	no consensus

TABLE VI (Continued)

Item Number	Jurors' Ideal Location	Location Assigned by Groups		
		Central Office	Area Office	School Building
27	central office	central office	central office	central office
28	school building	central office	no consensus	no consensus
29	area office	no consensus	no consensus	no consensus
30	central office	central office	central office	central office
31	central office	central office	central office	central office
32	central office	central office	central office	central office
33	central office	central office	central office	central office
34	area office	no consensus	no consensus	no consensus
35	area office	central office	central office	central office
36	school building	school building	school building	school building
37	no consensus	no consensus	no consensus	no consensus
38	school building	school building	school building	school building
39	area office	no consensus	no consensus	no consensus
40	school building	school building	school building	school building

31. increase lunch price;

32. submit federal programs;

33. fund secondary school athletics;

36. remove student from class for an hour;

38. enter school in city science fair;

40. retain an elementary child.

Of the six consensus items on which there was disagreement between what was perceived to be and what the jury thought should be, the ideal location was judged to be the area offices for five of the items:

10. transfer cook;

14. provide more maintenance funds;

20. remove principal;

25. transfer guidance counselor;

35. promote teacher.

It will be recalled that no group placed final decision making responsibility for any item at the area office level; the jurors, however, designated this as the ideal decision locus for nine items, the five listed above plus:

19. reassign ineffective consultant;

29. individualize instruction at area level;

34. evaluate principals;

39. resolve teacher-principal conflict.

The 23 items about which three-way inter-group consensus was not reached are also examined in Table VI. There were four items on the

questionnaire on which inter-group consensus was achieved between two of the three groups:

3. add cafeteria space;
7. obtain long term substitute teacher;
8. obtain replacement for teacher;
26. select method of reporting pupil progress.

Of the three decisions where agreement existed between area office and central office personnel, two of the three were perceived to be in the ideal location, i.e., the central office (items 3 and 26). The third decision (item 8) was perceived to be made in the central office by these two groups, but the ideal location was at the school building level. In one instance, the area office and school building personnel reached consensus, while the central office was unable to agree. That item, item 7, was placed in the ideal location, i.e., the school building, by the agreeing groups.

The central office personnel reached consensus on nine items on which the other two groups did not. Eight of these nine decisions were considered to be made at the central office by the central office personnel:

2. add vocational position;
6. select textbook committee;
9. fire custodian;
12. choose new textbooks;
13. repaint cafeteria;
22. discuss controversial issue with news media;

23. allow research at local school;

28. permit use of school by community group.

One decision, item 4, "Who makes the decision to make organizational changes in the reading program at the school building level?," was deemed to be the responsibility of the school building personnel. Of these nine items (central office consensus only), there was agreement with the jurors on the decision loci in three cases--two at the central office (items 6 and 12) and one at the school building level (item 4). The ideal location for five additional items was judged by the jury to be the school building level (2, 9, 22, 23, and 28), not the central office. Decision making responsibility for the remaining item (13) was assumed by the central office, but the jurors were unable to reach consensus. The area office and school building groups did not reach consensus on this item either.

On item 1, "Who resolves a conflict between a consultant and a teacher?," the school building personnel reached consensus, placing the responsibility at the school building level, but no other group did. Moreover, the jurors also considered the school building to be the ideal location for this decision. On nine items no group in the system reached consensus. Of those nine, the jurors said four should have been made at the area office:

19. reassign ineffective consultant;

29. individualize instruction at area level;

34. evaluate principals;

39. resolve teacher-principal conflict.

Three should have been made at the school building level:

15. assign child to CLUE;

16. remove emotionally disturbed teacher;

21. initiate school level race relations program.

The ideal location for item 17, "Who makes the decision to place a teacher on tenure?," was the central office. The jury itself did not reach consensus on the eleventh item, item 37, "Who decides whether to place a child in a learning disabilities class?."

Findings relating to perceived and ideal decision loci were:

1. In no case when the perceived location was different from the jurors' ideal location was the ideal locus at the ideal locus at the central office.
2. The ideal decision locus determined by the jury was the area office and the school building level many more times than the system personnel assigned those same decision responsibilities to those respective levels.
3. There was consensus within and among the groups on the decision locus for 11 items which matched the jury consensus for the same items.
4. The area office was the ideal location for five of the six items on which the jury differed with the school system personnel. The latter groups would place the responsibility for those items at the central office.

VI. ACCEPTING FINAL DECISION MAKING RESPONSIBILITY

This section is divided into two parts based on the sixth and seventh sub-questions. Question six asked:

What positions in the organization were nominated as final decision makers?

Each of the 40 items on the questionnaire was examined to see who was most frequently regarded as the final decision maker by personnel in the system. Table VII presents the top nominee for each item, the total number of people nominated as final decision maker for that item, and the number of nominations and the percentage of nominations the top nominee received. Twelve different positions were nominated as having final decision making responsibility. While as many as 24 different positions were nominated as final decision makers on a given item (Table VII, Column 2), only these 12 different positions received top nominations (Table VII, Column 3). In other words, some positions received the highest number of nominations for several different decision items. The 12 top nominee positions assigned final decision making responsibility are shown in Table VIII, along with the number of decision items assigned to each one.

Principals were named the top nominee 16 times, four times more than the next most named positions. The superintendent, the assistant superintendent for instruction, and the assistant superintendent for personnel were each named top nominee four times. Area assistant superintendents were named top nominee three times, while the board of education and the director of food service were named two times. The

TABLE VII

NOMINATIONS FOR FINAL DECISION MAKER

Question Number	Number of Nominees	Top Nominee		
		Position	Number of Nominations Received	Percent of All Nominations
1	15	Principal	357	75.6
2	20	Principal	105	23.2
3	21	Principal	153	32.7
4	22	Principal	322	68.1
5	20	Asst. Supt. Instruction	190	42.4
6	20	Asst. Supt. Instruction	122	26.6
7	14	Principal	403	84.7
8	16	Asst. Supt. Personnel	195	41.5
9	19	Dir. Classified Pers.	119	25.7
10	17	Dir. Food Service	171	37.2
11	14	Principal	407	86.0
12	22	Asst. Supt. Instruction	137	29.5
13	16	Asst. Supt. Plant Mangt.	175	38.2
14	17	Board of Education	115	25.3
15	21	Principal	112	24.0
16	19	Principal	185	39.3
17	12	Principal	241	51.1
18	14	Board of Education	126	26.8
19	17	Area Assistant Supt.	162	35.8
20	11	Superintendent	335	71.3

TABLE VII (continued)

Question Number	Number of Nominees	Top Nominee Position	Top Nominee Number of Nominations Received	Top Nominee Percent of All Nominations
21	15	Principal	305	65.2
22	24	Principal	135	30.6
23	18	Principal	190	40.6
24	14	Principal	428	90.3
25	20	Asst. Supt. Personnel	104	22.7
26	23	Asst. Supt. Instruction	129	27.7
27	24	Dir. Guidance and Test.	119	25.9
28	19	Principal	129	27.6
29	19	Area Assistant Supt.	218	47.3
30	21	Asst. Supt. Personnel	238	51.2
31	19	Dir. Food Service	198	43.8
32	19	Superintendent	143	31.9
33	21	Superintendent	115	26.6
34	14	Superintendent	190	44.0
35	17	Asst. Supt. Personnel	149	33.3
36	9	Principal	314	66.0
37	19	Dir. Special Education	113	24.2
38	13	Principal	373	80.6
39	15	Area Assistant Supt.	233	50.3
40	8	Teacher	316	67.1

TABLE VIII

TOP NOMINEES FOR FINAL DECISION MAKERS

Top Nominee	Number of Decision Item Assignments
Principal	16
Superintendent	4
Asst. Superintendent, Instruction	4
Asst. Superintendent, Personnel	4
Area Assistant Superintendent	3
Board of Education	2
Director of Food Service	2
Asst. Superintendent, Plant Management	1
Director of Classified Personnel	1
Director of Guidance and Testing	1
Director of Special Education	1
Teacher	1
Total	40

assistant superintendent for plant management, the director of classified personnel, the director of guidance and testing, the director of special education, and teachers were each nominated as final decision makers on one item.

On three items the area assistant superintendents were named as final decision makers:

19. reassign ineffective consultant;

29. individualize instruction at area level;

39. resolve teacher-principal conflict.

On item 39, the area assistant superintendents were named by as many as 50% of the respondents. Yet, final decision making responsibility was not placed at the area office level by any group on any item. (Refer to Table II, p. 45 and Table III, p. 48.) Each of the three items (19, 29, and 39) were among the nine items on which no group reached consensus.

The seventh sub-question was:

Did personnel who were nominated as final decision makers accept final decision making responsibility?

The final decision maker nominated for each of the 40 items on the questionnaire was identified. The person occupying that nominated position was queried to determine the degree to which he accepted responsibility for the item in question. Acceptance of responsibility was defined as the respondent's saying, "I make," or "I recommend," the decision a minimum of 75% of the time. The data are presented in Table IX.

TABLE IX

TOP NOMINEES ACCEPTED RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISION MAKING REPORTED BY DECISION ITEM

Item Number	Top Nominee	Total Number of Top Nominees Responding	I Make Or Recommend the Decision	I Provide Information for the Decision	I Am Not Involved in the Decision
1	Principal	154	81	15	5
2	Principal	146	33	20	47
3	Principal	154	48	43	9
4	Principal	151	76	15	9
5	Asst. Supt. Instruction	0			
6	Asst. Supt. Instruction	0			
7	Principal	154	88	7	5
8	Asst. Supt. Personnel	1	0	0	100
9	Dir. Classified Pers.	0			
10	Dir. Food Service	1	100	0	0
11	Principal	154	90	1	8
12	Asst. Sup. Instruction	0			

TABLE IX (continued)

Item Number	Top Nominee	Total Number of Top Nominees Responding	I Make Or Recommend the Decision	I Provide Information for the Decision	I Am Not Involved in the Decision
13	Asst. Supt. Plant Mangt.	0			
14	Board of Education	0			
15	Principal	149	42	49	9
16	Principal	155	73	25	2
17	Principal	155	88	6	6
18	Board of Education	0			
19	Area Assistant Supt.	3	100	0	0
20	Superintendent	1	100	0	0
21	Principal	155	86	8	6
22	Principal	150	70	19	11
23	Principal	151	53	26	21
24	Principal	155	94	5	1
25	Asst. Supt. Personnel	1	0	0	100

TABLE IX (continued)

Item Number	Top Nominee	Total Number of Top Nominees Responding	I Make Or Recommend the Decision	I Provide Information for the Decision	I Am Not Involved in the Decision
26	Asst. Supt. Instruction	0			
27	Dir. Guidance and Test.	0			
28	Principal	152	47	34	20
29	Area Assistant Supt.	3	100	0	0
30	Asst. Supt. Personnel	1	0	0	100
31	Dir. Food Service	1	100	0	0
32	Superintendent	1	0	0	100
33	Superintendent	1	0	0	100
34	Superintendent	1	100	0	0
35	Asst. Supt. Personnel	1	0	100	0
36	Principal	154	90	4	6
37	Dir. Special Education	0			

TABLE IX (continued)

Item Number	Top Nominee	Total Number of Top Nominees Responding	I Make Or Recommend the Decision	I Provide Information for the Decision	I Am Not Involved in the Decision
38	Principal	153	87	6	7
39	Area Assistant Supt.	3	100	0	0
40	Teacher	211	80	9	11

Principals

Principals, who had been assigned final decision making responsibility 16 times, more than any other group, accepted the responsibility nine times, for items:

1. resolve teacher-consultant conflict;
4. change reading program in one school;
7. obtain long-term substitute teacher;
11. change elementary teacher's grade level;
17. put teacher on tenure;
21. initiate school level race relations program;
24. suspend student;
36. remove student from class for an hour;
38. enter school in city science fair.

They did not accept final decision responsibility for seven items:

2. add vocational position;
3. add cafeteria space;
15. assign child to CLUE;
16. remove emotionally disturbed teacher;
22. discuss controversial issue with news media;
23. allow research at local school;
28. permit use of school by community group.

Interestingly, item 1 was accepted by the school building personnel (refer to Table II, p. 45), but neither of the other groups assigned it to them. Further, item 4 was not considered to be the school building personnel's responsibility by the building level people

responding, although central office personnel assigned it to them. No group agreed on the appropriate hierarchical level for items 17 and 21, although principals accepted responsibility. Items 24, 36, and 38 were determined by the three groups to be the principal's responsibility, and the latter said, in effect, "Yes, we do that."

Superintendent

The Superintendent was nominated four times, for items:

20. remove principal;
32. submit federal programs;
33. fund secondary school athletics;
34. evaluate principals.

He accepted responsibility for items 20 and 34, but considered himself uninvolved in decision items 32 and 33. The reader may note that although the Superintendent received more nominations as final decision maker for items 32 and 33 than any other position in the system, he received 31% and 26%, respectively, of the nominations--not a mandate.

Assistant Superintendent for Instruction

The Assistant Superintendent for Instruction was nominated for final decision maker for items:

5. change social studies curriculum;
6. select textbook committee;
12. choose new textbooks;
26. select method of reporting pupil progress.

The person occupying the position failed to return the questionnaire and, therefore, no assumed responsibility could be determined.

Assistant Superintendent for Personnel

The Assistant Superintendent for Personnel was nominated as final decision maker four times, for items:

8. obtain replacement for teacher;

25. transfer guidance counselor;

30. choose summer school teachers;

35. promote teacher.

The person occupying the position assumed responsibility for none of these decisions. He responded, "I provide information," for item 35, and "I am not involved," for items 8, 25, and 30.

Area Assistant Superintendents

Area assistant superintendents were nominated as final decision makers three times, for items:

19. reassign ineffective consultant;

29. individualize instruction at area level;

39. resolve teacher-principal conflict.

They accepted responsibility for each of these items. It is interesting to note that no hierarchical level in the organization was able to reach consensus on these items, but the area superintendents responded, "I make that decision."

Board of Education

The Board of Education was nominated as final decision maker on two items:

14. provide more maintenance funds;

18. fire non-tenured teacher.

The Board, however, was not asked to respond to the questionnaire; therefore, no assumed responsibility could be determined.

Director of Food Services

The Director of Food Services was nominated as final decision maker on two items:

10. transfer cook;

31. increase lunch price.

The person occupying that position said, "I make that decision," on both items.

Assistant Superintendent for Plant Management

The Assistant Superintendent for Plant for Plant Management was nominated as final decision maker on one item, item 13, "Who decides to repaint a cafeteria?". The person occupying that position failed to return the questionnaire.

Director of Classified Personnel

The Director of Classified Personnel was nominated as final decision maker for item 9, "Who makes the decision to fire a custodian?," but the person occupying that position failed to respond to the questionnaire.

Director of Guidance and Testing

The Director of Guidance and Testing was nominated as final decision maker for item 27, "Who selects the tests to be used for a

system-wide testing program?," but the person occupying the position failed to respond to the questionnaire.

Director of Special Education

The Director of Special Education was nominated as final decision maker for item 37, "Who decides whether to place a child in a learning disabilities class?," but the person occupying the position failed to respond to the questionnaire.

Teacher

Teachers were nominated as final decision maker for item 40, "Who decides whether an elementary school child repeats a year in the same grade?," and they accepted the responsibility.

The following findings were related to the assumption of assigned decision making responsibility:

1. The persons occupying the position which was nominated as final decision maker accepted the responsibility on 17 items.
2. The persons occupying the position which was nominated as final decision maker did not assume the responsibility assigned to them on 14 items.
3. On nine items, the person occupying the position which was nominated as final decision maker did not return the questionnaire.[1] It was not possible to determine whether or not they assumed final decision making responsibility.

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[1]These data were collected as part of a larger inquiry to which this study is related prior to the time this writer became involved in the study. Because an 80% return was received from the central office, it was not readily apparent that seven people occupying critical positions had failed to return the questionnaire.

VII. SUMMARY

Descriptive data on decision making in a large, urban school system were collected by means of a forty-item questionnaire. The respondents were asked for two kinds of information on each item, "Who makes this decision?," and "What is your involvement in the decision?".

Data were examined by hierarchical level (central office, area office, and school building level) and by specific position. Analysis of the data revealed clarity in the organization about the decision loci for 17 of 40 items. No group reached consensus about nine of the items, and one or two of the groups agreed about decision loci for the remaining 14 items. More decisions were placed at the central office than at the local school level; no decisions were placed at the area office level by any group.

Questionnaire items were defined by subject matter, and analysis was made to determine whether or not there was clarity or confusion within the system on certain issues. With one exception, no pattern was revealed. Of the nine items about which no group reached consensus, none were in the area of business, finance, and plant management.

Ideal decision loci were determined by a panel of jurors. When compared to the perceived loci of final decision making, it was determined that more decision responsibility was placed at the local school and at the area office by the jurors than by the personnel in the school system.

Nominees for final decision maker by specific position as selected by the sample were identified, and data were examined to see the degree to which the people occupying these positions accepted the responsibility assigned to them by others in the district. Seventeen times, the nominee assumed the responsibility; 14 times he or she said, "I provide information only," or, "I am not involved," thus accepting no responsibility. The nine remaining items of the 40 were assigned to persons who did not return the questionnaire.

Clearly, uncertainty and confusion exist in the decentralized school district about who makes decisions. Moreover, in over one-third of the cases, a person or persons occupying specific positions are abdicating responsibility, despite the fact that a majority of their colleagues hold them responsible.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

I. INTRODUCTION

This research inquiry was designed to examine decision making in a large, complex educational organization. The inquiry also determined the degree to which the formal school organization existed operationally, i.e., with respect to decision making.

Using a forty-item decision questionnaire, professional employees from the school system who worked at the central office, in the area offices, and at the school building level were asked, "Who makes this decision?" and "What is your participation in this decision?" Further, a jury of professionals familiar with decentralized, urban school administration were asked, "Where should this decision be made in a large, urban school district with a decentralized organization?"

The study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. What was the nature of decision making in a specific urban school system?
2. Where should various kinds of decisions be made in a large, decentralized, urban school system?
3. Did the perceptions of the professional personnel differ about decision making in the organization by hierarchical level?

In order to determine the answers to these questions, seven specific sub-questions were addressed. Findings were generated for each sub-question. In this chapter, findings are summarized, conclusions are generated, implications of the study are presented, and suggestions for further research are given.

II. FINDINGS

The following findings were the answers to the specific sub-questions explicated in Chapter IV.

1. Central office personnel agreed on the decision locus for 29 of 40 items. They placed 23 decisions at the central office, six at the local school building level, and none at the area offices.
2. Area office personnel agreed on the decision locus for 21 of 40 items. They placed 15 decisions at the central office, six at the local school building level, and none at the area offices.
3. School building personnel agreed on 19 items. They placed 12 decisions at the central office, seven at the local school building level, and none at the area offices.
4. No group reached consensus on nine items.
5. Each group perceived the area office to have no final decision making power.
6. The three hierarchical levels of the school system--central office, area office, and school building level personnel--

agreed on the decision locus for 17 items. Twelve of those items were located at the central office; five were located at the school building level; and none was located at the decentralized area office.

7. Consensus was reached in reference to the area office. No final decisions were placed at that level by any group.
8. More decision items were placed at the central office than at any other level.
9. The central office assumed responsibility for eight more items than any other group assigned to them.
10. The school building personnel assumed responsibility for one decision which no other group assigned to them.
11. The central office accepted all decision delegated to them by any group. In fact, with one exception, that was also true of building level personnel.
12. Only once did a group assign an item to another group which they did not assign to themselves, item 4, "Who makes the decision to make organizational changes in the reading program at the school building level?" The central office agreed that this was the responsibility of the local school while neither they nor the area office reached agreement.
13. No obvious pattern emerged in relation to the decision issues.
14. Of the nine items about which there was no group consensus, none were in the areas of business, finance, or plant management.

15. The jurors placed final decision making for 11 items at the central office; nine at the area office; and 18 at the school building level.
16. The ideal decision loci were placed at the school building level and the area office many more times than school personnel agreed that decisions were being made at those levels.
17. In no case where the ideal and the perceived decision loci were in conflict, "should" the decision have been made at the central office. Instead, decisions perceived to be central office decisions should have been made in the decentralized office or at the local school.
18. Twelve different specific positions were nominated as having final decision making responsibility for the questionnaire items. Nine nominated positions were central office positions; one was an area office position and two were local school positions.
19. The principal was given final decision making responsibility for 16 items, four times as many as any other group.
20. The person or persons who were nominated as final decision maker accepted responsibility for that decision on 17 of the 40 items.
21. The person or persons who were nominated as final decision maker did not accept responsibility 14 times.

III. CONCLUSIONS

All groups, including central office personnel, agreed that the central office personnel make the most decisions, identifying them as the most influential level in the organization. The central office personnel are reluctant to share decision making with either the area offices or the local schools, although the central office did place some influence at the building level. Other people in the organization accept the strength of the central office, otherwise, there would be more evidence of consensual disagreement regarding the locus of final decision making.

The personnel in the organization have accepted the area office as another bureaucratic layer, but not as a legitimate source of final decisions. The area office never said, "We do that," in conflict with the downtown office or the local schools. One can conclude with reference to this that the area office personnel do not have much decision influence, and they know it, as does everyone else.

The school system is not truly decentralized except in some instances to its lowest hierarchical level. That is, area offices are ineffectual as decentralized units. Whether or not the school system wishes to be truly decentralized, the locus of decision authority seems heavy at the central office.

The school principal is viewed as an important final decision maker in an otherwise centralized school system. Although personnel in the system, when reported by hierarchical level, failed to assign

responsibility to the area office or substantial responsibility to the school building levels of the organization, the principal was named as a decision maker specifically far more frequently than any other person in the organization, and the area assistant superintendent was held responsible for three items. These data could provide a basis for examining responsibility within the system and for communicating with the system the appropriate responsibility for these decisions, an appropriateness which more nearly approximates the decisions of the jurors about ideal loci of decision making.

Confusion and uncertainty exist in a system where personnel cannot agree about the locus of final decision making on numerous items. Moreover, the situation is intensified when most people in an organization name a person occupying a position as responsible for a task and he or she responds, "I do not do that." Expectations of many people in the system are clearly not congruent with the performance of persons occupying many focal positions. Further, on some items, as many as 24 different people were nominated as final decision makers. Clearly, lack of information exists in the system when this occurs.

Uncertainty in the system about decision making extends into all but one of the decision issues. Confusion on items related to personnel, curriculum, students, and public relations was demonstrated. Efforts to clarify decision responsibility in the organization might be centered on these areas because less clarity exists than for business, finance, and plant management.

The jurors' perceptions of where decisions should be made provide an excellent data base to use in deciding who should make decisions and to move the district toward more effective decentralization--if, in fact, this is desired by the district.

Some confusion and uncertainty exist in the school organization about where decisions are made, and one can conclude thus that certain decisions are (a) being made at appropriate places with few people aware of it, (b) being made at inappropriate places, (c) being made concurrently at two or more places, or (d) not being made at all!

IV. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The decentralized school system as designed by the reorganization in 1971 is certainly not operating with much diffusion of decision authority--perceived or accepted. Either the newly created area offices are bypassed when decision issues occur between the school and the central office ot it would appear that simply another bureaucratic layer has been added. If the system wishes to become decentralized as was the original objective of the reorganization, steps should be taken to give the area offices power and authority. Additional budgetary autonomy might help provide this authority.

If, instead, the central office wishes to retain the power and authority vested in the centralized authority, the decentralized area offices should be abolished, and a highly centralized school administration should resume operation. It would be better to have a highly functional centralized system than a dysfunctional, decentralized district.

The creation of organizational structures designed to efficiently and effectively move an organization toward its goals are useless if they are not functioning operationally. The reorganization of a traditional organization requires that much energy and time be spent in communicating roles and responsibilities to persons responsible for the tasks, as well as to personnel in the system who have to get the jobs done. Attention must be directed toward the needs and expectations of individuals who work in the organization. Confusion and uncertainty lead to sluggishness, distrust, and duplication of efforts among the personnel.

One reflection of a healthy organization is communication clarity. The system in this inquiry showed a lack of communication both horizontally and vertically. On some decision items, for example, 24 different positions were nominated as final decision maker. Unhealthy organizations waste a great deal of energy on things well beyond the goals of the organization. In this way, such a reorganization as decentralization, if unclear to participants, creates a less healthy organization than the original structure.

Strong consideration should be given to empowering the local school with more decision making autonomy. The jurors placed many decisions at the school building level; personnel in the system did not. Yet, the principal was nominated frequently as final decision maker, demonstrating an awareness on the part of some personnel about the importance of the local school's position. Local schools may be able to make certain decisions about their programs better than any

other group. Checks and balances could be provided by the decentralized area offices, issuing parameters for the decisions.

Most importantly, however, uncertainty exists throughout the system. In too many cases, no one knows where decisions are made. It is essential, therefore, to communicate both vertically and horizontally within the organization about decision loci. Such communication improvement would help the organization to become a healthier one. The communication should be planned in a systematic manner through both formal and informal channels. Further, data should be collected with regularity on an informal basis to determine the degree to which clarity exists.

The literature abounds with verbiage related to how to decentralize and the virtues of a decentralized system which can be more responsive to the clientele. Little has been said, however, about the success of decentralization plans or even the degree to which they have been implemented beyond the paper and pencil or conferring new title stages. Despite the lack of substantive literature documenting the success or failure of the programs, the trend toward decentralization is not losing momentum. This inquiry demonstrates a case in which the decentralization has failed to go beyond the initial stages of creating titles and offices. Such a documentation would lead one to recognize the importance of evaluating other such systems and in expanding the literature with specific research and suggestions dealing with reorganization beyond the initial stages.

V. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Specific questions related to this inquiry could be designed to answer the following questions:

1. Do other decentralized school districts share the findings of this study?
2. Do the personnel within specific, decentralized school districts believe decisions should be made somewhere other than where they believe they <u>are</u> made?
3. Where do non-certificated personnel in the school district believe decisions are made? Is there a difference between the perceptions of the two groups? What effect might this have on district effectiveness?
4. What kinds of communication programs enhance clarity of the personnel's perceptions of where decisions are made?
5. What is the relationship between decentralization and program effectiveness?
6. Can an instrument be developed which gives equal weight to various issues with which public school administrations are concerned?
7. What effect has decentralization had on school programs specifically?
8. Do parents and students view the decentralized school districts as more responsive to their needs?
9. Do the informal leaders in a system, identified indepently of decision issues, view final decision making in a

different way from others in the system?

10. Does the person who actually makes a decision differ from the perceptions of the system personnel?

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

COFFIELD-LOVELL DECISION POINT ANALYSIS QUESTIONNAIRE

This instrument contains 34 decision items. You are requested to answer two questions about each item. The column to the left identifies the position of the person in your school system whom you perceive as primarily responsible for making each decision. On the right, you are asked to report the nature of your participation in the decision. Please respond in the manner indicated.

My title or position: _____

Number of years in this position:_____

Number of years of administrative or supervisory experience:_____

Who makes this decision? Choose the one person in your school system who is primarily responsible for making this decision. Write the title or position of that person (principal, director of instruction, supervisor) in the space provided.	What is the nature of your participation in making this decision? Select one of the four choices and circle the number of this choice: 1. Make the decision. 2. Recommend the preferred decision. 3. Provide information only. 4. None
1. Decision to allow an extra week of sick leave in an extreme hardship case for a principal with many years of service to the system.	
_____	1 2 3 4
2. Decision to transfer a teacher from School A to School B because of a personality conflict with another teacher in School A.	
_____	1 2 3 4

3. Decision on orientation activities for new staff members.

_____ 1 2 3 4

4. Decision on the appointment of teachers to system committees dealing with improving attendance.

_____ 1 2 3 4

5. Decision on the content of pupil's cumulative records.

_____ 1 2 3 4

6. Decision on how to report pupil progress.

_____ 1 2 3 4

7. Decision on test selection for system-wide testing program.

_____ 1 2 3 4

8. Decision on adequacy of performance of a principal.

_____ 1 2 3 4

9. Decision on use of a building by a community group.

_____ 1 2 3 4

10. Decision to include a significant increase in annual budget for video-tape equipment.

_____ 1 2 3 4

11. Decision to move toward a program of individualized instruction in all elementary schools.

_____ 1 2 3 4

12. Decision on the content of a news item to be released to the press.

_____ 1 2 3 4

13. Decision on who will participate in the formulation of system's budget.

_____ 1 2 3 4

14. Decision on procedure for obtaining instructional supplies.

_____ 1 2 3 4

15. Decision on selecting teachers for summer school teaching assignment.

_____ 1 2 3 4

16. Decision on selection of textbooks.

_____ 1 2 3 4

17. Decision on assignment of non-teaching duties to faculty members.

_____ 1 2 3 4

18. Decision on releasing a special education teacher from contract on August 26.

_____ 1 2 3 4

19. Decision on increasing program in vocational education in all secondary schools.

_____ 1 2 3 4

20. Decision on increasing prices for school lunches.

_____ 1 2 3 4

21. Decision on using outside firm for a performance contract for reading instruction.

_____ 1 2 3 4

22. Decision to place all principals on 12-month appointments.

_____ 1 2 3 4

23. Decision on use of school facilities for summer recreation program.

_____ 1 2 3 4

24. Decision on bringing legal action against a vendor for fraudulent practices.

_____ 1 2 3 4

25. Decision on the appropriation of federal funds for a program only remotely related to the funded activity.

_____ 1 2 3 4

26. Decision on salary increase for chief building custodian.

_____ 1 2 3 4

27. Decision on priorities for repainting building interior.

_____ 1 2 3 4

28. Decision on criteria for assignment of five new secretarial positions.

_____ 1 2 3 4

29. Decision on moving to team-teaching and open-space programs.

_____ 1 2 3 4

30. Decision on budget of funds for secondary school band programs.

_____ 1 2 3 4

31. Decision on decentralizing administration by increasing the autonomy of building principal.

_____ 1 2 3 4

32. Decision on increasing support for all arts programs in all schools.

_____ 1 2 3 4

33. Decision to change the administrative structure and lines of responsibility within the system.

_____ 1 2 3 4

34. Decision on acquisition of land for future school use.

_____ 1 2 3 4

APPENDIX B

DECISION LOCUS QUESTIONNAIRE

Organization Analysis

1. My Title or Position: _____ _____ (5)

For the three parts of Question 2 below, round fractions to next whole year. Indicate years as two digits. For less than 10, use leading zero. For example:

22 years, 8 months, indicate as 23
3 years, 1 month, indicate as 04
0 years, indicate as 00

2. (a) Number of years in this position: _____ (7)

(b) Number of years of administrative or supervisory experience: _____ (9)

(c) Number of years in the system: _____ (11)

3. Indicate the number of the area in which you work if applicable: _____ (13)

1. North 3. Central 5. Central Office Bldg.
2. Southeast 4. Southwest 6. Other

We are asking you for input about our school system. We are interested in who you believe actually makes various decisions. We want your reactions and perceptions. At this point, we are not seeking "what should be," but "what is" as you see it. Remember, we want your perceptions.

We ask that you respond to all items in both columns. The left column deals with the decision maker while the right column deals with your participation, if any, in the decision making.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Who actually makes the decision? Choose the ONE PERSON in the school system who is primarily responsible for making this decision. Write the specific position of that person in the space provided.

What is the nature of YOUR participation in making the decision? Select only one of the four choices and write in the number of your choice in the space beside each question.

1. I make the decision.
2. I recommend the preferred decision.
3. I provide information only.
4. I am not involved.

EXAMPLES:

Principal (As answered by a Principal)	Decision to evacuate building due to bomb threat.	1
Principal (As answered by a Teacher)	Decision to evacuate building due to bomb threat.	4

_____	1. Who resolves a conflict between a consultant and a teacher?	_____ (14)
_____	2. Who makes the decision to add a new teaching position in the vocational area of instruction?	_____ (17)
_____	3. Who makes the decision to provide additional space needed at a local school building to prevent delays in the school-cafeteria services?	_____ (20)
_____	4. Who makes the decision to make organizational changes in the reading program at the school-building level?	_____ (23)
_____	5. Who makes the decision to change the secondary-school social studies curriculum for the school system?	_____ (26)
_____	6. Who selects members for the system-wide textbook selection committee?	_____ (29)
_____	7. Who selects the specific substitute for a teacher expected to be sick for four months?	_____ (32)
_____	8. Who selects a specific replacement for a teacher going on maternity leave?	_____ (35)

_____ 9. Who makes the decision to fire a custodian. _____ (38)

_____ 10. Who makes the decision to transfer a cook from one school to another school? _____ (41)

_____ 11. Who makes the decision to change an elementary teacher's grade-level assignment? _____ (44)

_____ 12. Who decides on the adoption of new textbooks for the school system? _____ (47)

_____ 13. Who decides to repaint a cafeteria? _____ (50)

_____ 14. Who makes the decision to provide additional funds for routine maintenance of a local school building? _____ (53)

_____ 15. Who decides whether to assign a child to a CLUE program operating in the school system? _____ (56)

_____ 16. Who decides to remove an obviously emotionally-disturbed teacher from a classroom assignment? _____ (59)

_____ 17. Who makes the decision to place a teacher on tenure? _____ (62)

_____ 18. Who makes the decision to fire a non-tenured teacher? _____ (65)

_____ 19. Who reassigns an instructional consultant because of ineffective performance? _____ (68)

_____ 20. Who decides on removing a principal from administrative responsibility? _____ (71)

_____ 21. Who makes the decision to initiate a program from improvement of race-relations at a local school? _____ (74)

_____ 22. Who makes the decision to permit you to discuss your views on a controversial issue with a representative of the news media? _____ (77)

_____ 23. Who makes the decision to allow a research project to be conducted in a local school building? _____ (14)

_____ 24. Who makes the decision to suspend a student for repeated infractions of posted local school-building rules? _____ (17)

_____ 25. Who makes the decision to transfer a guidance counselor from one school to another school? _____ (20)

_____ 26. Who makes the decision on the method of reporting pupil progress? _____ (23)

_____ 27. Who selects the tests to be used for a system-wide testing program? _____ (26)

_____ 28. Who permits use of a local school-building by a community group? _____ (29)

_____ 29. Who makes the decision to move toward a program of individualized instruction in all elementary schools for one of the decentralized areas? _____ (32)

_____ 30. Who selects teachers for summer school teaching assignments? _____ (35)

_____ 31. Who makes the decision to increase prices of school lunches for the school system? _____ (38)

_____ 32. Who makes the decision to approve and submit programs for federal funding? _____ (41)

_____ 33. Who makes the decision to provide funds for secondary school athletic programs? _____ (44)

_____ 34. Who evaluates the performances of principals? _____ (47)

_____ 35. Who makes the decision to promote a teacher to the position of instructional consultant? _____ (50)

_____ 36. Who decides to remove a student from the classroom for an hour because of misbehavior? _____ (53)

_____ 37. Who decides whether to place a child in a learning disabilities class? _____ (56)

_____ 38. Who determines if an individual school will participate in a city-wide science fair? _____ (59)

_____ 39. Who resolves a conflict between a principal and a teacher over a disagreement in a teacher's assignment to a non-instructional task? _____ (62)

_____ 40. Who decides whether an elementary-school child repeats a year in the same grade? _____ (65)

APPENDIX C

JURY'S MODIFIED QUESTIONNAIRE

Final Decision Making Responsibility

Assume that you are dealing with a large, decentralized public school system. Further assume that the organization desires to be functionally decentralized.

For each of the 40 decision items listed below, indicate, first, the appropriate level of the hierarchy for the final decision to be made: central office, area office, or building level. Second, indicate the appropriate functional area (curriculum; personnel; pupil services; or business, finance, and plant management) for central office or area office decisions to be made; or whether principals or teachers should make each building level decision.

"Final decision making" means that generally speaking this person's desires will be (should be) implemented."

Use letters and numbers in responding to each question as outlined below:

In the first column, use the following letters:

C for central office;
A for area office;
B for building level.

Use more than one letter if the decision can be made equally well at more than one level.

1 for curriculum
2 for personnel
3 for pupil services
4 for business, finance, and plant management

} to follow C or A;

5 for principal
6 for teacher

} to follow B.

Examples: A 1 To be made by curriculum personnel in the area offices;

CA 3 To be made by pupil services personnel at either the central office or area offices;

Example: B 5 To be made by principals.

NOTE: Feel free to write comments between the questions or on additional pages.

	Level of Hierarchy C-A-B	Functional Area 1-2-3-4-5-6
1. Who resolves a conflict between a consultant and a teacher?		
2. Who makes the decision to add a new teaching position in the vocational area of instruction?		
3. Who makes the decision to provide additional space needed at a local school building to prevent delays in the school-cafeteria service?		
4. Who makes the decision to make organizational changes in the reading program at the school-building level?		
5. Who makes the decision to change the secondary school social studies curriculum for the school system?		
6. Who selects members for the system-wide textbook selection committee?		
7. Who selects the specific substitute for a teacher expected to be sick for four months?		
8. Who selects a specific replacement for a teacher going on maternity leave?		
9. Who makes the decision to fire a custodian?		
10. Who makes the decision to transfer a cook from one school to another school?		
11. Who makes the decision to change an elementary teacher's grade-level assignment?		

		Level of Hierarchy C-A-B	Functional Area 1-2-3-4-5-6
12.	Who decides on the adoption of new textbooks for the school system?		
13.	Who decides to repaint a cafeteria?		
14.	Who makes the decision to provide additional funds for routine maintenance of a local school-building?		
15.	Who decides whether to assign a child to a CLUE program operating in the school system?		
16.	Who decides to remove an obviously emotionally-disturbed teacher from a classroom assignment?		
17.	Who makes the decision to place a teacher on tenure?		
18.	Who makes the decision to fire a non-tenured teacher?		
19.	Who reassigns an instructional consultant because of ineffective performance?		
20.	Who decides on removing a principal from administrative responsibility?		
21.	Who makes the decision to initiate a program from improvement of race-relations at a local school?		
22.	Who makes the decision to permit you to discuss your views on a controversial issue with a representative of the news media?		
23.	Who makes the decision to allow a research project to be conducted in a local school building?		
24.	Who makes the decision to suspend a student for repeated infractions of posted local school-building rules?		

		Level of Hierarchy C-A-B	Functional Area 1-2-3-4-5-6
25.	Who makes the decision to transfer a guidance counselor from one school to another school?		
26.	Who makes the decision on the method of reporting pupil progress?		
27.	Who selects the tests to be used for a system-wide testing program?		
28.	Who permits use of a local school-building by a community group?		
29.	Who makes the decision to move toward a program of individualized instruction in all elementary schools for one of the decentralized areas?		
29.	Who makes the decision to move toward a program of individualized instruction in all elementary schools for one of the decentralized areas?		
30.	Who selects teachers for summer school teaching assignments?		
31.	Who makes the decision to increase prices of school lunches for the school system?		
32.	Who makes the decision to approve and submit programs for federal funding?		
33.	Who makes the decision to provide funds for secondary school athletic programs?		
34.	Who evaluates the performances of principals?		
35.	Who makes the decision to promote a teacher to the position of instructional consultant?		

	Level of Hierarchy C-A-B	Functional Area 1-2-3-4-5-6
36. Who decides to remove a student from the classroom for an hour because of misbehavior?		
37. Who decides whether to place a child in a learning disabilities class?		
38. Who determines if an individual school will participate in a city-wide science fair?		
39. Who resolves a conflict between a principal and a teacher over a disagreement in a teacher's assignment to a non-instructional task?		
40. Who decides whether an elementary-school child repeats a year in the same grade?		

APPENDIX D

DECISION MAKING PERCEPTIONS BY CENTRAL OFFICE PERSONNEL

TABLE X

LOCI OF DECISION MAKING AS PERCEIVED BY CENTRAL OFFICE PERSONNEL

Item Number	Percentage of Nominations			
	Central Office	Area Office	School Building	Other
1	11.1	22.2	66.7	
2	85.7*	7.1	7.1	
3	80.8*	3.8	15.4	
4	7.1		92.9*	
5	96.4*	3.6		
6	82.1*	14.3	3.6	
7	32.1		67.9	
8	96.3*		3.7	
9	96.3*		3.7	
10	100.0*			
11	14.3		85.7*	
12	81.5*		11.1	7.4
13	92.6*	3.7	3.7	
14	96.2*			3.8
15	60.7	10.7	28.6	
16	71.4		28.6	

TABLE X (continued)

Item Number	Percentage of Nominations			
	Central Office	Area Office	School Building	Other
16	71.4		28.6	
17	60.7		39.3	
18	75.0*	3.6	21.4	
19	60.7	35.7		3.6
20	96.3*	3.7		
21	39.3	3.6	57.1	
22	84.6*	3.8	3.8	7.7
23	75.0*	3.6	21.4	
24	11.1	7.4	81.5*	
25	92.9*	7.1		
26	96.3*			3.7
27	100.0*			
28	85.7*	3.6	10.7	
29	48.1	51.9		
30	100.0*			
31	100.0*			
32	96.4*		3.6	
33	100.0*			
34	65.4	30.8		3.8
35	78.6*	17.9	3.6	

TABLE X (continued)

Item Number	Percentage of Nominations			
	Central Office	Area Office	School Building	Other
36			96.4*	3.6
37	53.6	14.3	32.1	
38	11.1	7.4	81.5*	
39	25.0	71.4	3.6	
40			100.0*	

*Consensus.

APPENDIX E

DECISION MAKING PERCEPTIONS BY AREA OFFICE PERSONNEL

TABLE XI

LOCI OF DECISION MAKING AS PERCEIVED BY AREA OFFICE PERSONNEL

Item Number	Percentage of Nominations			
	Central Office	Area Office	School Building	Other
1	10.6	36.2	53.2	
2	73.9	2.2	23.9	
3	74.5*	10.6	14.9	
4	22.9	2.1	72.9	2.1
5	89.6*	2.1	6.3	
6	72.9	20.8	4.2	2.1
7	14.6		81.3*	4.2
8	83.3*		14.6	2.1
9	69.6	2.2	23.9	4.3
10	93.3*		6.7	
11	10.4		89.6*	
12	43.8		35.4	20.9
13	68.8	10.4	18.8	2.1
14	93.8*	2.1	4.2	
15	43.8	6.3	50.0	
16	60.4	6.3	33.3	

TABLE XI (continued)

Item Number	Percentage of Nominations			
	Central Office	Area Office	School Building	Other
17	41.7		58.3	
18	75.0*	2.1	22.9	
19	66.0	34.0		
20	91.5*	8.5		
21	29.8	8.5	61.7	
22	39.5	41.9	2.3	16.3
23	62.5	8.3	29.2	
24	10.4	4.2	85.4*	
25	84.8*	2.2	8.7	4.3
26	76.6*	4.3	14.9	4.3
27	95.8*	2.1		2.1
28	72.3	2.1	23.4	2.1
29	33.3	60.4	2.1	4.2
30	91.5*		2.6	6.4
31	100.0*			
32	97.9*	2.1		
33	85.4*		9.8	4.9
34	38.3	57.4		4.3
35	74.5*	21.3	2.1	2.1

TABLE XI

Item Number	Percentage of Nominations			
	Central Office	Area Office	School Building	Other
36			100.0*	
37	34.8	8.7	45.7	10.9
38	4.3	6.4	87.2*	2.1
39	20.8	66.7	6.3	6.3
40			100.0*	

*Consensus.

APPENDIX F

DECISION MAKING PERCEPTIONS BY SCHOOL BUILDING PERSONNEL

TABLE XII

LOCI OF DECISION MAKING AS PERCEIVED BY SCHOOL BUILDING PERSONNEL

Item Number	Percentage of Nominations			
	Central Office	Area Office	School Building	Other
1	4.5	13.4	81.1*	1.0
2	67.7	6.1	25.1	1.1
3	56.3	5.1	36.8	1.8
4	16.4	13.1	68.9	1.6
5	74.7*	11.6	8.1	5.6
6	38.1	34.6	22.3	4.9
7	10.8	0.5	87.2*	1.6
8	64.5	1.3	33.2	1.0
9	73.5	1.0	23.9	4.9
10	84.7*	1.8	5.2	8.3
11	11.9	1.0	87.1*	
12	57.2	7.5	12.4	22.9
13	69.9	7.3	19.1	3.7
14	88.1*	5.5	4.5	1.8
15	33.7	11.3	52.7	2.3
16	50.8	6.1	42.1	1.0

TABLE XII (continued)

Item Number	Percentage of Nominations			
	Central Office	Area Office	School Building	Other
17	47.1	1.5	51.4	
18	75.9*	4.3	19.3	0.5
19	57.6	36.6	3.2	2.7
20	90.6*	7.6	1.3	0.5
21	26.8	3.3	68.1	1.8
22	25.9	5.7	60.6	7.8
23	47.3	8.2	44.2	0.3
24	4.8	2.0	92.2*	1.0
25	78.1*	4.2	13.3	4.4
26	67.4	2.8	25.9	3.9
27	87.7*	3.4	3.9	5.0
28	62.4	5.6	29.9	2.0
29	43.4	48.6	6.8	1.3
30	91.8*	2.3	3.1	2.9
31	96.0*	0.3	0.8	2.9
32	96.5*	0.5	1.3	1.6
33	84.8*	0.3	12.9	2.0
34	56.1	33.5	2.0	8.4
35	84.1*	8.6	5.9	1.3

TABLE XII (continued)

Item Number	Percentage of Nominations			
	Central Office	Area Office	School Building	Other
36	0.8		98.7*	0.6
37	37.0	6.9	49.2	6.9
38	4.9	2.6	90.7*	1.8
39	31.3	50.3	15.5	2.9
40	0.8		99.0*	0.3

*Consensus.

VITA

Martha Jean Crumley Bratton was born in Johnson City, Tennessee, on January 25, 1944. She attended public schools in Johnson City, graduating from Science Hill High School in 1962. She attended East Tennessee State University and the University of Tennessee. She received the Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Tennessee in March, 1966, and the Master of Science degree from the University of Tennessee in August, 1971.

She was employed by the Knox County School System as an English teacher at Halls High School and subsequently as a supervisor of language arts and then supervisor of middle schools. She worked in this district for nine years, 1966 to 1975.

She received the Ed.D. degree from the University of Tennessee with a major in Educational Administration and Supervision in August, 1977. While completing the doctoral program, she engaged in a variety of consultant activities in organizational evaluation and language arts in Georgia, Ohio, and Tennessee.

She is married to Samuel E. Bratton, Jr. Her husband is Director of Research and Evaluation for the Knox County School System. He, too, holds the Ed.D. degree from the University of Tennessee with a major in Educational Administration and Supervision. They have one daughter, Sarah Carolyn.