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## The attitudes of principals of Catholic secondary schools toward teacher empowerment: A study of principals in the Western region of the national Catholic Education Association

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THE ATTITUDES OF PRINCIPALS OF CATHOLIC SECONDARY  
SCHOOLS TOWARD TEACHER EMPOWERMENT: A STUDY OF  
PRINCIPALS IN THE WESTERN REGION OF  
THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC EDUCATION  
ASSOCIATION

by

David W. Erbach

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

in

Educational Leadership

Department of Educational Leadership  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
December, 1996

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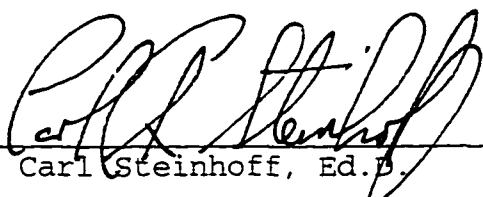
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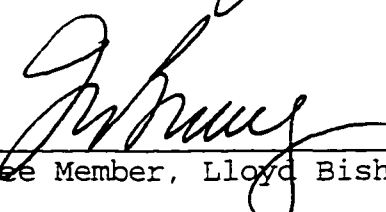
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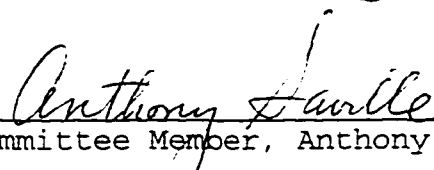
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December, 1996

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools toward aspects of teacher empowerment. The Attitudes Toward Teacher Empowerment Survey was developed to measure attitudes toward empowering teachers in certain decision areas and to examine attitudes about the effects of teacher empowerment.

The instrument was reviewed by two separate expert panels and sent, in final form, to 201 secondary school principals in the western region of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). The selected principals returned 161 (80.1%) usable surveys.

The first part of the survey, items 1 through 29, measured principal attitudes toward empowering teachers in certain key decision areas in schools. Factor analysis reduced the data into three decision domains: (a) the manager-controlled decision domain which dealt with decisions made primarily by administrators, (b) the teacher-controlled decision domain which dealt with decisions made primarily by teachers, and (c) the



collaborative decision domain which included decisions for which administrators wanted to share responsibility with teachers.

The principals surveyed in this study had highly positive views toward empowering teachers in the teacher-controlled decisions and the collaborative decisions, and they were mildly positive toward increasing teachers' influence in manager-controlled decisions.

The second part of the survey, items 30-43, measured the principals' views about the effects of empowering teachers. Factor analysis reduced the data into two groupings: the positive effects of empowerment grouping and the problems with empowerment grouping. The principals' views about these two groups of questions were consistent with their attitudes toward the first section of the survey. The principals surveyed were optimistic about the positive benefits of empowering teachers, and they did not exhibit great concern about the problems that empowering teachers might create.

Finally, characteristics such as a principal's lay or clerical status, gender, or years of experience as a principal and the size of the school were evaluated. These data had no meaningful effect on the principals' view of empowerment.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Recent trends in educational reform have called for structural changes in the way American schools operate. Restructuring proponents have insisted that schools would operate more effectively if educational decisions were made at the school site by those most intimately involved with the students. Principals and teachers have been urged to work in a more collegial fashion in order to make American schools more responsive to their students' needs. Many reformers continue to believe that schools will improve only when educators are given more control over the conditions of their work (Elmore, 1991). Workplace studies such as Johnson's (1990) have stated that teachers needed and wanted more influence and power in regard to educational decisions at their schools. Such studies have indicated that the principal's attitude toward sharing power with teachers was crucial for school reform to go forward. Principals who could build and foster consensus and collaboration would be great assets to school improvement while those

who could not, might be insurmountable obstacles to improvement.

The initial response to the growing chorus of criticism of American schools in the late 1970s and the early 1980s could best be described simply as an attempt to use old models and paradigms in more aggressive ways. This "First Wave" of reform was embodied in such documents as the 1983 report "A Nation at Risk." As Owens has stated, this report called for

. . . an astonishing increase in regulatory mandates imposed upon the schools by the states. Such regulations facilitated the reach of governmental bureaucracies directly into the classroom-- a reach that was mimicked at the local level by many school district central office organizations-- by specifying, for example, what textbooks must be used, how many minutes of time should be devoted to instruction, what teaching techniques were to be used, and by establishing elaborate systems of examinations and reporting through which compliance could be audited by governmental agencies. (1991, p. 34).

The Reagan administration used the Department of Education to promote the notion that the nation's schools were failing and that the solution to the problems of our schools was to be found in making the professional educational establishment accountable for the results coming out of the public schools of the United States. According to the Reagan administration, the solution involved a return to basics. Increasing student workload though increased graduation



requirements, longer school days and more school days were seen to be fundamental responses to the education crisis in this country. Administrators and teachers had simply not been tough enough on the students.

In response to federal dictum, state legislatures across the country set standards and passed laws that removed much of the discretion that teachers had in decision-making (Bacharach, 1990, p. 3). The assumption behind these reforms was that education did not need to be fundamentally changed. What was needed was simply to do more of what was traditionally done, but in a more intense and focused way (Kirst, 1990, p. 21). This "First Wave" of reform made the issues of accountability and achievement the primary priorities of reform. In this context, accountability meant that teachers were to be held accountable for student achievement on standardized tests chosen and written by others. Consequently, teachers were removed from the decision-making process of choosing curriculum goals and objectives; yet they were to be blamed if students did not achieve at a certain acceptable level (Bacharach, 1990, p. 3).

This bureaucratic model of teaching sought to simplify and routinize the work of teachers. The teacher was seen merely as a technician. Others decided what techniques of teaching were to be used based on

effective schools research, but they ignored aspects of daily life in classrooms that were uncertain and not routine (Conley, 1990, p. 315). This "First Wave" of reform produced quantitative results in test scores, higher salaries and budgets, increased numbers of students in core courses, and more hours and days in school. Two-thirds of the states enacted policies that sought to standardize and regulate teacher behavior (Sergiovanni, 1991, p. 236). Teachers were not seen as autonomous decision makers, but as agents of those parties that created public school policy (Darling-Hammond, 1988, p. 256).

Disenchantment with bureaucratic solutions began to grow in education as it was already doing so in business. It became clear that the improvement of teaching rather than the structural approaches of this "First Wave" of reform would best serve the educational needs of children in the United States. Any reform that did not include or come from the teachers was doomed to failure (Bacharach, 1990, p. 8). Commission reports from business, education, and statewide policy groups further called for major changes in the ways schools did business. Reports like the 1986 report by the Carnegie Forum on Education called for a reformed teaching profession (Darling-Hammond, 1988, pp. 58-59). The Carnegie Report (1986) argued that giving teachers a

greater voice in the decision-making process would make teaching more attractive to those good teachers already in the system and to those bright and able college students who might consider the education profession.

The "Second Wave" of reform suggested a new way of looking at schools. It called for a restructuring that changed the relationships between members of the school community. For example, leadership teams in schools with new roles for teachers and administrators were proposed. This reform movement believed that collegiality and collaboration would be the hallmarks of schools of the future (Lieberman, 1988, p. vii).

#### Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools toward aspects of teacher empowerment. Teacher empowerment is defined here as providing for teacher influence in areas that most directly impact the teaching and learning processes in schools.

More specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools toward increasing teacher influence in certain key decision areas. Factor analysis was used to identify three decision domains: the manager-controlled decision domain, the teacher-

controlled decision domain, and the collaborative decision domain.

2. determine the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools toward the effects of implementing teacher empowerment measures in schools. Factor analysis was used to identify two types of effects of empowerment statements: a positive effects of empowerment grouping and a problems with empowerment grouping.

3. determine if there were any meaningful attitudinal differences among the principals studied based upon certain characteristics of the principals or the schools. Principal characteristics considered were the lay or clerical/religious status and the gender of the principal as well as the number of years in the principal's position. The school characteristic considered was the size of the school.

#### Definitions

Attitude. Refers to the disposition and opinion of a person. In this study, the attitude of principals toward teacher empowerment referred to the disposition and/or opinion of these administrators. Dillman (1978) stated that "attitudes describe how people feel about something. They are evaluative in nature and reflect

respondents views about the desirability of something" (pp. 80-81).

Autonomy. Refers to the level of independent authority one has. In the context of this study, it referred to a principal's level of independence from other governors or governing bodies in making decisions regarding faculty in a school.

Catholic Secondary Schools. Refers to any high school that operates under the direct sponsorship of the Roman Catholic Church.

Cleric. In the Catholic Church, one who had received the sacrament of Holy Orders was commonly called a priest. Priests were secular, being ordained for a particular diocese or religious, ordained as a member of a particular religious order. All priests were clerics, but not all were religious in an organizational sense.

Collaboration. Working together to accomplish group tasks. In the context of this study, collaboration referred to the working relationship between principals and teachers or among teachers.

Collegiality. The sharing of authority among colleagues. In the context of this study, collegiality referred to the principals' sharing decision-making

authority or decision-making influence with the teaching faculty.

Decision Domains. Through factor analysis the number of decision areas was reduced to three decision domains. They were the manager-controlled decision domain which dealt with decisions usually controlled by school management, the teacher-controlled decision domain which dealt with decisions usually controlled by classroom teachers and the collaborative decision domain which dealt with decisions over which management had final authority but were decisions in which teachers sought more influence. Responsibility for these decisions was, to varying degrees in schools, shared by administrators and teachers.

Diocese. Refers to the basic regional governing unit of the Catholic Church. A diocese is a geographical area surrounding a city headed by a bishop or an archbishop.

Effects of Empowerment Groupings. Through factor analysis the effects items were reduced to two groups. The positive effects of empowerment grouping measured the principals' attitudes about the beneficial results that would occur if teacher participation in school decision-making increased. The problems with empowerment grouping measured the principal's attitudes

about difficulties that would occur if teacher participation in school decision-making increased.

First Wave of Reform. Refers to early 1980s attempts to reform public schools in the United States by increasing legislative prescriptions for schools to follow. The "First Wave" attempted to routinize and control the work of teachers through bureaucratic measures. Teachers had little voice or influence in educational decision-making but they were expected to produce better results with students.

Layperson. Baptized member of the Catholic Church who was not a cleric or a member of a religious order.

National Catholic Educational Association. The NCEA is the national organization linking all Catholic schools to each other. Located in Washington, DC, the NCEA provides support services for Catholic schools throughout the United States.

Participative Decision-making. This concept was used interchangeably with teacher empowerment to indicate a state of decision-making in which teachers have real influence over decisions affecting practice and policy relating to their classrooms.

Principal. Refers to the administrator responsible for school operation, and for the purposes of this

study, the administrator responsible for the faculty and their performance.

Religious. Members of a religious order. They could be clerics, like priests or non-clerics, like nuns or brothers.

Restructuring. Refers to a recent reform movement in education that calls for fundamental changes in the ways the components of the education system relate to each other. Specifically, restructuring proponents have called for more collegial and collaborative relationships between teachers and principals.

Second Wave of Reform. Refers to an educational reform attempt that started with the 1986 Carnegie Forum report on teaching. This report called for greater teacher influence in decisions affecting students which are made at the school level. The "Second Wave" has continued with calls for the professionalization of teaching and the restructuring of relationships between administrators and teachers. The "Second Wave" reformers insist that true progress in schools will occur only when those actors closest to the educational process have the power to make key educational decisions.

Teacher Empowerment. A concept for improving the performance of teachers. Teacher empowerment means that



teachers would have more influence or control over practice and policies that most impact the teaching and learning process.

Western Region of the NCEA. The western region of the NCEA consists of Catholic schools in the states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

#### Significance of the Study

A growing body of literature clearly indicates that teachers were increasingly frustrated by the constraints and obstacles posed by the "First Wave" of reform in regard to their ability to exercise their professional judgment about the students in their classrooms (Owens, 1991, p. 34).

One major report argued that the bureaucratic culture of schools made "schools very unattractive to many people with real intellectual skills and the desire for some control over themselves and their environment" (Education Commission of the States, 1986, p. 22). Boyer (1990, p. 34) further maintained that teaching would be an endangered profession because of poor working conditions that would discourage able people from entering it. Indeed, Berry's study (1986) of the brightest college seniors not considering education

indicated that the reasons included the perception of "frustrating working conditions, bureaucratic requirements, lack of professional control, and the limited opportunities for intellectual growth" (Maeroff, 1988, pp. 32-33).

Maeroff (1988, p. xiii) stated that the "teacher is the basis of schooling." Teachers should be empowered because they, more than anybody, have the capacity to influence learning. The "Second Wave" of reform took the view that power and influence belonged to those closest to the students. In this way, it has recognized the professional rather than bureaucratic role of the teacher. Rather than having legislatures solve the problems of schooling in America, the "Second Wave" of reform has called for teachers who are decision makers and who are committed to achieving results for their students (Owens, 1991, p. 35).

"Second Wave" reformers believe that our schools will not improve unless teachers are involved in the decision-making process in their schools. Sergiovanni similarly (1991, p. 137) argued that empowerment complements accountability. It is unacceptable to hold teachers accountable without giving them the necessary responsibility to make decisions. Empowerment involves responsibility more than it does freedom. The

consequence of not providing people with the opportunity of sharing power damages both workers and their organizations. Opportunity and power are important to effective performance in complex work, like teaching (Kanter, 1977, p. 246).

The failure to trust teachers has led many of them to withdraw and give less than their best. Surveys have shown that teachers are less satisfied with teaching in recent years than a generation ago, but the source of their dissatisfaction relates more to their experiences with the organization than with what goes on in their classrooms (Grant, 1988, p. 225).

Boyer (1990, p. 34) stated that studies have shown that teachers are not involved in key decisions at their schools. More than one-third of teachers surveyed stated that they had no influence over curriculum, and more than one-half to three-fourths of them were not involved in policy decisions concerning the placement of students in courses, in selecting in-service activities, and in many other decisions that impacted on their day-to-day life in schools. Boyer (1990) also believed that poor working conditions make it extremely difficult to recruit and retain talented people in education. Working conditions in schools encourage teachers to leave the profession, discourage many from entering it,

and lower the morale and effectiveness of those who stay (Owens, 1991, p. 34).

Catholic schools certainly have a strong interest in examining the conditions of their workplaces. As private schools competing for students to insure their survival, the maintenance of a very high quality staff is essential for their continued existence. In fact, Catholic schools have to be excellent schools if they wish to continue to attract students at a time when tuition and other costs continue to escalate.

Catholic schools also have reason to create workplaces that would attract and retain qualified teachers. Catholic school salaries have almost always been lower than those of the nearby public schools. If there were not other working conditions that overcame some fundamental dissatisfaction with salary, the best teachers would leave for the public sector and it would become increasingly difficult for Catholic schools to recruit and retain teachers of high quality. With tuition and costs constantly rising, just being a religious school would not be enough reason for many parents to send their children to a Catholic school.

The Catholic school system is generally less bureaucratic than the public schools (Ouelette, 1989, p. 58). Studies have shown that because of the declining number of professional religious (priests, brothers,

nuns) involved in Catholic schools, central offices have greatly weakened, leaving virtually all of the key decisions to the individual school (Wolsonovich, 1980).

Individual Catholic schools tend to be autonomous. The principal acts as the chief administrator for the school and assumes responsibilities that are equivalent in range and nature to those of a public school principal and superintendent combined (Bryk, Holland, Lee & Carriedo, 1984, p. 95). Diocesan central offices tend to exercise leadership more by persuasion, encouragement, and stimulation than by control, supervision, and regulation (Ouelette, 1989). In recent years, a president and principal model has emerged in Catholic schools, but responsibility for faculty and day-to-day operation still remains with the principal at the local school site.

Teacher attrition and retention have emerged as serious concerns among Catholic school administrators (Yeager, 1985, pp. 42-43). Possible teacher shortages in the future would make it tougher for Catholic schools to compete for qualified instructors. As it is, turnover in Catholic schools was much higher than in the public sector (Radecki, 1987, p. 3).

Given the need to create more effective schools where teachers are able to exercise greater influence over decisions and policy that affect their classrooms,

studying the attitudes of principals toward teacher empowerment is important. In addition, given the fact that studies have shown that the Catholic school principal has been largely unaffected by central office power and has been extremely autonomous in his or her particular school setting, the attitudes of these administrators would indicate whether or not Catholic schools are places where school reform is possible. As private entities whose existence is guaranteed by no one, it seems to be important that Catholic schools improve working conditions for teachers in order to increase recruitment and retention of excellent teachers. Since Catholic school principals, by virtue of their autonomy, may be either the main catalyst or the primary obstacle to the empowerment of their teaching staff, a study of their attitudes toward sharing decision-making with their teachers is an important step in determining the status and probability of workplace reform in Catholic schools.

#### Conceptual Framework

This study was based upon concepts found in the literature on teacher empowerment which, in turn, was grounded in the motivation theories of the Human Resources Development movement.

Empowerment advocates had certain beliefs about schools and about teaching. They believed that school teaching was complex and dynamic, not a simple set of routine tasks. This view of teaching had great implications for education (Hallinger & Hausman, 1993, p. 22). In this view, school reform or improvement could not take place without the active participation of teachers. Their knowledge was too important and too crucial to the success of schools for it to be ignored; yet, it often was (Maeroff, 1988, p. 1). Empowerment advocates further believed that reform efforts worked best when they came out of the teaching force rather than through management dictum (Gainey, 1993, p. 38).

"Second Wave" reformers believed that schools would not improve unless teachers were involved in the decision-making process in their schools. Sergiovanni (1991, p. 137) argued that empowerment complemented accountability. One could not hold teachers accountable without giving them the necessary responsibility to make decisions. Empowerment involved responsibility more than it did freedom.

Empowerment has been defined generally as creating an environment where workers have a chance to exercise choice and responsibility. This can only happen in workplaces where the worker has the opportunity to

participate in the decision-making process. (Lightfoot, 1986).

Bolin (1989, p. 83) insisted that teacher empowerment must include the notion that teachers have a right to participate in decisions that affect them and their students in their classrooms. Short and Greer (1993, p. 166) identified three major thrusts of teacher empowerment:

1. It seeks to include teachers in a significant way in school decision-making.
2. It seeks to provide teachers with more control over workplace conditions.
3. It seeks to allow teachers to make contributions to the school's success in a wider range of professional roles.

The concept of empowerment has generated a range of views as to how far to go in empowering teachers. It does not have to mean giving teachers total control nor does it force the abdication of authority by management. Therefore, the present study asked principals to what degree teachers should have influence in important school decisions. As (Conley ,1989, p. 370) stated, ". . .influence, unlike authority, is not zero sum in nature." Both teachers and principals may have influence and it is important that principals begin to acknowledge the importance of teachers being allowed to



influence school goals, direction, and decisions (Gainey, 1993, p. 44).

Important to the conceptual framework of this study was the workplace study of teachers by Johnson (1990), who studied the views of 115 teachers in eastern Massachusetts, selected by their principals as above average. Included in this study were 75 public school teachers, 20 independent school teachers and 20 from church-related schools. Johnson purposefully sought out teachers identified as effective who were valued by their schools because she was most concerned with the retention of this type of quality teacher. She found that these quality teachers were not just looking for pay and prestige, but influence and control in the workplace were also important to them.

According to Johnson (1990), the best teachers find satisfaction in their work only when they have greater control over their schools and their classes. Johnson (1990, p. xix) additionally asserted that "workplace deficiencies are not only demoralizing but they constrain and inhibit good teachers from doing their best work." For education to attract and retain exemplary teachers, it has to attract individuals who sought responsibility and influence. Johnson (1990, p. xxiii) further believed that "workplaces that inhibit and disable the best staff are unlikely to improve the

performance of those who are only average." In order to retain quality teachers, the workplace must become more satisfying and supportive. As education is forced to compete with law, business, medicine, and technology in recruiting talented and committed individuals, the nature of the school as workplace will become more important (pp. 27-28).

Much of the empowerment literature has its roots in Human Resource Development which grew as a core of organizational theory around the works of Abraham Maslow, Douglas McGregor, Frederick Herzberg, Chris Argyris, Karl Weick, and others. In regard to education, human resources development viewed educational organizations as

. . . characterized, not by the order, rationality and system inherent in classical thinking, but by ambiguity and uncertainty in their fast changing environments, unclear and conflicting goals, weak technology, fluid participation and loose coupling of important activities and organization units (Owens, 1991, p. 35).

The human resources view assumed that only the full participation in the decision-making process by all workers who possessed expertise would enable the organization to reach its full potential (Owens and Shakeshaft, 1992).

#### Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are the attitudes of selected principals of Catholic secondary schools toward increasing teacher influence in certain key decision areas?

2. What are the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools about the effects of implementing teacher empowerment measures in schools?

3. Are there any meaningful attitudinal differences among the principals studied based upon certain characteristics of the principals or schools? Principal characteristics considered were the lay or clerical/religious status of the principal, the gender of the principal, and the number of years in the principal's position. The school characteristic considered was the size of the school.

#### Assumptions

Assumptions of this study included the following:

1. Catholic schools, as religious institutions, try to embody values which include a strong interest in providing satisfying workplaces for their teachers.

2. The attitudes and beliefs of principals may be a significant catalyst or obstacle to giving teachers more influence in their workplace.

3. Catholic school principals, because of the greater autonomy they have in comparison to their public

school counterparts, are in a unique position to encourage teacher empowerment in their schools.

### Delimitations

The delimitations of this study were as follows:

1. The study was confined to a survey of principals of Catholic secondary schools in the western region of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). The western region of the NCEA consists of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. There are 216 secondary schools in this region (Mahar, 1994).

2. The study was confined to examining attitudes and beliefs of principals rather than attempting to determine what actual practices exist in their schools. No teachers, students, parents, or church officials were surveyed.

3. The study was confined to areas of influence that impact most directly the teaching and learning processes in classrooms.

### Limitations

Limitations of this study were as follows:

1. The scope of this study was limited by the willingness or ability of principals of Catholic

secondary schools in the western region of the NCEA to respond to the survey submitted to them.

2. The accuracy of the responses of those who returned the survey was accepted as truth. The instrument measured attitude of the individuals rather than the actual reality of the schools in which the surveyed principals work.

### Procedures

The study was descriptive in nature. The following procedures were followed to collect data to investigate the research questions:

1. A questionnaire was developed to determine the attitudes of the selected principals in regard to teacher empowerment.

2. The questionnaire was reviewed by expert panels.

3. The questionnaire was sent to the selected sample with follow-up procedures to obtain the largest possible response.

4. Statistical analysis was performed on the data obtained using SPSS software.

### Organization of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools toward aspects of teacher empowerment. The

statement of the problem, definitions, significance of the study, conceptual framework, research questions, assumptions, delimitations, limitations, and procedures have already been discussed. In the second chapter, the literature is reviewed including the conceptual framework of teacher empowerment which is grounded in motivation theory as embodied in the human resources development theories. Studies relating to advocacy of reform of the teaching profession as well as attitudes toward and status and results of teacher empowerment and participative decision-making are also reported.

The third chapter includes a discussion of the methodology used for this study. Topics are the population, the process of development of the instrument, a description of the instrumentation, the procedures used for data collection, and the methods of data analysis. In the fourth chapter, the results of the factor analysis are reported as well as the survey findings in response to the research questionnaire. In the last chapter, the study is summarized, conclusions are formed and recommendations for additional research are suggested.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of the literature followed five lines of inquiry related to the study: literature related to (a) the conceptual framework, (b) the advocacy of reform of the teaching profession, (c) studies of attitudes toward teacher empowerment and participative decision-making, (d) studies of the status of teachers in regard to teacher empowerment and participative decision-making, and (e) studies which examined the effects or results of teacher empowerment and participative decision-making. The literature review is presented according to these five lines of inquiry.

#### Teacher Empowerment

The conceptual framework of this study is based on the teacher empowerment literature of recent years. A great many studies supported the notion of a need for increased teacher involvement in school governance. The genesis for this belief was contained in the early "Second Wave of Reform" reports from the Carnegie

Foundation (1988) and the Education Commission of the States (1986).

The Carnegie Report stated that allowing teachers to have a greater voice in the decisions that affected, not only their classrooms, but the entire school operation would help keep our best teachers in education and also make the profession an attractive one for those considering education as a career (Carnegie Forum, 1986, p. 57). This document also criticized earlier reforms for treating teachers in a way that suggested "teachers had no expertise worth having. Policy after policy tried to remove the teacher's professional judgment from any school decisions that mattered" (Carnegie Forum, 1986, p. 39). Similarly, the Education Commission of the States reported:

Nobody reports to the teacher. The teacher reports to everyone else. Other people decide almost everything--how the day is organized, how students are assigned, what the curriculum will be, what is the day to day scope and sequence of instruction, how discipline is meted out. The schools operate in an incredibly bureaucratic culture at the bottom of which we find the teacher. That makes schools very unattractive to many people with real intellectual skills and desire for some control over themselves and their environment. (Education Commission of the States, 1986, p. 22).

In another report, Maeroff found that teachers believed they had one of society's most difficult jobs; yet, they did not feel they had the authority to do what was expected of them. No one argues against the notion



that teachers are absolutely crucial to the success of schools, but their voices are often not heard (Maeroff, 1988, p. 1).

The "Second Wave" reformers believed that imposed changes would fail. Schools needed to rely on cooperation and interdependence of staff members (Hallinger & Hausman, 1993, p. 146). Empowerment advocates have a fundamental belief that "reform efforts are most effective and long lasting when carried out by people who feel a sense of ownership and responsibility for the process" (Gainey, 1993, p. 38). These empowerment advocates also observed that teaching is complex and dynamic; it is not routine. This conception of teaching had implications for school organization and governance (Hallinger and Hausman, 1993, p. 22).

Empowerment, in general, can be defined as the chance that workers have to participate fully in the decision-making process of an organization. Workers who can do so are able to exercise choice and responsibility (Lightfoot, 1986). Another study defined empowerment as the "influence teachers were allowed to have on important decisions both in the classroom and throughout the school" (Moore and Esselman, 1992, p. 5). Melenyzer further stated that empowerment relates to

. . . the opportunity and confidence to act upon one's ideas and to influence the way one performs in one's profession. True empowerment leads to

increased professionalism as teachers assume responsibility for an involvement in the decision making process (Melenyzer, 1990, p. 16).

Along the same lines, Bolin (1989, p. 83) asserted that teacher empowerment must include the notion that teachers have a right to participate in decisions that determine school goals and policies and that they also had the right to exercise their professional judgment about classroom matters, such as curriculum and instructional methods.

Short and Greer (1993) maintained that teacher empowerment has three major thrusts:

1. It seeks to provide teachers with a significant role in school decision-making, thereby developing a sense of shared governance.
2. It seeks to provide teachers with control over their work environment and work conditions.
3. It seeks to provide teachers with opportunities to contribute to the school in a range of professional roles (p. 166).

Empowerment is part of a global trend to rethink how humans organize themselves (Rallis, 1990, p. 185).

Historically, the biggest problem in American management has been the gap that existed between ability and authority (Thompson, 1961). According to Sergiovanni (1991, p. 137), those workers with the authority to act

usually lacked the technical ability and those with the technical ability to act usually lacked the authority.

As a result of these reports, studies, and findings, the restructuring movement in schools sought to:

1. decentralize,
2. empower those closest to the students in the classroom,
3. create new roles for principals and teachers, and
4. transform the teaching and learning processes in the classroom (Hallinger, Murphy, & Hausman, 1992, p. 2).

The attempt to empower teachers and restructure schools put two different models of school structure into direct conflict, however. Bureaucratic structures did not support teacher decision-making, and school boards often did not trust teachers who were at the bottom of the chain of command (Rallis, 1990, p. 193).

On the other hand, Gamoran (1994, p. 2) maintained that the professional view of schools supported the belief that teacher autonomy leads to better instruction. This position assumes that teachers are professionals; therefore, they are in the best position to make judgments regarding students. The professional

view necessitates a participatory managerial philosophy because of three beliefs concerning teachers and their work:

1. The primary control of pedagogical knowledge should be left to teachers.
2. Teaching activities are not routine.
3. The teacher's main work activity is making decisions (Conley & Bacharach, 1990, p. 541).

This perspective also addresses teachers' needs for discretion in performing their tasks (Bacharach & Conley, 1986, p. 642).

Believers of the bureaucratic view, on the other hand, theorize that strong central control of curriculum and teaching produces effective teaching. This view was "skeptical about the training, skills and goals of teachers" (Gamoran, 1994, p. 4). Administrators who felt the need for coordination and teachers who felt the need for discretion were led to perceive each other as natural enemies. Effective principals sought to close the gap between teacher's and principal's roles. Coordination did not have to mean top-down control. Effective management did not preclude the notion that teachers could have a say in developing organizational strategies and decisions that directly impacted on their work in the classroom (Bacharach and Conley, 1986, p. 642).

Similarly, Johnson (1990, p. 41) contended that while some measure of formal authority needed to be given to teachers, it was not necessary or even desirable for management to abdicate in order for that to occur. On the other hand, since the principal is crucial to the success of a school, all good ones seek teacher participation and leadership anyway. Rallis (1990, p. 186), however, stated that the notion of principals as super hero and the extreme empowerment rhetoric are both off base. Super teachers are no more a solution than super principals. Schools need the collective wisdom of both teachers and principals.

It was Conley's (1989, pp. 367-368) view that most reformers failed to distinguish between the two elements of power in decision-making, namely, authority and influence. Authority is zero sum in nature, and only one position has it. Furthermore, decisional authority constrains the work of the other actors. If the locus of authority were actually changing, then conflict would be expected to appear.

The other dimension of power in decision-making is influence. Influence deals with the capacity to shape decisions through informal or non-authoritative means. Authority has only one source, and it is structural. However, influence has three sources:

1. personal characteristics such as charisma, verbal skills, and leadership qualities;
2. expertise; and
3. opportunity (Conley, 1989, p. 369).

When administrators realize that teachers are their primary source of information and knowledge about students, both administrators and teachers yield influence. While authority is top down, influence is multi-directional (Conley, 1989, p. 370). For the present study, a definition of teacher empowerment that suggested that teachers needed to influence decision-making rather than to control it was used.

Principals need to trust teachers and acknowledge their informal authority since so much of what happens in school is in their hands (Gainey, 1993, p. 44). In addition, schools need leaders who are capable of changing the basic work culture. The current leadership task for schools is "to stimulate continuous innovation which alters the outcomes of schooling for all populations rather than to manage for compliance with outdated standards of work" (Snyder, 1994, p. 2). As Cunningham and Gresso (1993) asserted:

Any form of administration that is engaged in containing incompetence is involved in a fruitless and frustrating struggle. Such a management style does not help the incompetent get better. Structural controls are not as effective as helping people discover their competencies (p. 200).

Research seminal to the conceptual framework of this study was conducted by Susan Moore Johnson (1990). She found that while teachers were primarily motivated by intrinsic rewards such as working with students, the best teachers were also frustrated by their lack of influence in school decisions that affected them. Johnson suggested that schools must improve as workplaces for the best teachers and that the quality of teaching would not improve unless workplace conditions improved as well. Teachers, she observed, wanted more influence over decisions to be made in the schools. As a result, empowerment strategies could lead to higher levels of satisfaction for teachers in the workplace (Johnson, 1990, p. 343).

#### Motivation and Human Resource Development (HRD)

Both practitioners and researchers in all environments have long had a strong interest in discovering what conditions in the workplace would create the highest level of worker motivation and worker productivity. Traditional management theory rests on the idea of "what gets rewarded, gets done. The problem with this was that when you ran out of things to barter with, nothing gets done" (Sergiovanni, 1990, p. 22). Early management theory emphasized controlling workers through power and authority. Studies like the Western

Electric research, however, began to show the importance of the human dimensions of the workplace. Initially, however, this human relations theory simply led to a friendlier, more kindly approach to managing workers. Top-down, hierarchical approaches still dominated. According to Owens (1991, p. 37), "Organizations of all kinds, once often revered, are now suspect, viewed with hostility and often described as oppressive". Many other researchers have also been convinced that top-down, bureaucratic, centralized controls have failed to produce the types of organizations our country needs in all work environments (Owens, 1991, p. 38).

More than 40 years ago, Abraham Maslow (1954) proposed a hierarchy of needs consisting of five levels: (a) physiological needs, (b) safety or security needs, (c) affiliation needs, (d) esteem or recognition needs, and (e) the need for self actualization. Fundamental to Maslow's hierarchical theory are the concepts that once a need is satisfied, it is no longer an active motivator. In addition, the most prepotent need would monopolize consciousness.

Frederick Herzberg (1966) proposed his motivation-hygiene theory to explain what motivates workers. He contended that those factors that satisfy workers and those that dissatisfy them were mutually exclusive. The satisfiers are called motivators while the dissatisfiers



are named hygiene factors. Motivators contribute to satisfaction if they were present but they do not contribute to dissatisfaction if they were absent. Similarly, hygiene factors can be a source of dissatisfaction if they were absent, but can not satisfy a worker even if they are present. In Herzberg's view, hygiene factors can not motivate. Herzberg identified motivators as achievement, advancement, the work itself, growth, responsibility, and recognition. Some of the dissatisfiers were salary and benefits, supervisory practices, job security, administrative policy, and status.

Herzberg's research approach was quite basic and qualitative. He simply asked workers to recount experiences when they felt best while on the job and to recount experiences when they felt worst on the job (Bolman & Deal, 1987, p. 84). Herzberg's theory has been heavily tested and criticized, particularly on methodological grounds. Several commentators, for example, have noted that people often attribute good experiences to themselves and bad experiences to outside forces (Bolman & Deal, 1987, p. 85). Further, many researchers have pointed out that salary, in particular, is very important to teachers (McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978, Goodlad, 1984, Johnson, 1990). Even if Herzberg's approach was overly simplistic, it was broadly

consistent with the works of Maslow, McGregor, Argyris and other human resources theorists (Bolman and Deal, 1987, p. 85). In fact, many subsequent researchers, have found Herzberg's theory useful in regard to education because it is consistent with the way teachers think about their work (Johnson, 1986, p. 58).

While not a motivation theory, Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y are relevant to this study. McGregor asserted that relations between management and labor could best be understood by knowing the manager's basic assumptions about workers. Theory X assumes that most people are not self-motivated, but are, in fact, lazy. Workers need and want direction and are primarily motivated by money and security. Therefore, a Theory X manager focused on direction and control. Theory Y asserts that workers have the potential to be motivated by self-direction and creativity. McGregor believed that while both elements are present in the workplace, traditional management is too rooted in Theory X beliefs. He further suggested that work could be as interesting as play, but that most workers have no control over their work. Consequently, the worker becomes stifled and, eventually, disinterested (McGregor, 1960).

Porter (1961) reformulated Maslow's hierarchy based on his assumption that in modern day America, few

skilled workers were still motivated by hunger and thirst. The most fundamental need was for security, then affiliation and self-esteem. This was an important concept for educators in a time when teachers were seeking more influence over their workplace.

A number of studies have sought to apply needs theories to education. Sergiovanni and Carver (1973, pp. 58-59), for example, found that teachers were generally at the esteem level of needs, with large deficits in the autonomy and self-actualization areas. In general, they found that teachers had satisfied the lower order needs and were ready to address higher order needs. Teachers were reasonably secure and reasonably affiliated with their colleagues, therefore, the opportunity to have greater influence in decision-making would be motivating (Sergiovanni & Carver, 1973, p.62). This study also indicated that older teachers reduced their expectations. Job security, and greater salaries and benefits do not motivate teachers to better performances, and that greater motivational needs for teachers were to be found in the areas of achievement, influence, and autonomy (Sergiovanni & Carver, p. 62).

Organizational culture rather than administrative control or hierarchy organizes and controls the work of teachers (Owens, 1991, p. 35). Owens and Shakeshaft

(1992, p. 8) stated that the human resources view is a cluster of five assumptions:

1. Organizational effectiveness depends on the creation of a culture that fosters human growth and increases motivation.
2. Only the involvement of all participants accesses the full potential of an organization.
3. Full participation can only occur in a climate of trust and openness.
4. Organizational flexibility and an emphasis on expertise rather than authority is essential to organizational effectiveness.
5. Alienation, apathy, and poor performance are related to job satisfaction. For teachers, intrinsic rewards are more powerful than extrinsic rewards.

Contemporary theories of motivation state that extrinsic rewards have a limited ability to motivate people and that intrinsic rewards are absolutely necessary to motivate workers (Owens, 1991).

### The Motivation of Teachers

One study found that 70% of teachers are motivation seekers rather than hygiene seekers (Sergiovanni, 1967). Another study (Kaufman, 1984) found that motivation seekers are more committed to the teaching profession

than are the hygiene seekers. The study also noted that more highly motivated teachers are less likely to consider leaving the profession (Kaufman, 1984).

Berry's (1986) study of top college seniors not studying education indicated that frustrating working conditions, bureaucratic requirements and the lack of growth potential rather than pay, kept them away from education. Therefore, the best college students did not consider entering teaching, and many of the best teachers leave the profession (Johnson, 1986). Perhaps this is due to the fact that teachers regard professional efficacy, not money, as the primary motivator in their work. Further, there was some indication that the prospects of extrinsic rewards, like merit pay, are not as effective as intrinsic factors such as inducements designed to engage the teachers in "school wide enterprises" (Johnson, 1986, p. 55). In a sociological study of teachers (Lortie, 1975), it was discovered that teachers were primarily moved by the "psychic" or intrinsic rewards gotten from effective interaction with students. Teachers also complained the most about duties and interruptions that interfered with achieving the intrinsic reward of having successfully reached their students.

While money was not a major reason teachers gave for entering the profession, the lack of it was the

second most important reason for leaving it (Goodlad 1984, p 171-172). However, professional inefficacy was the main reason to leave, confirming the primacy of intrinsic factors. In fact, both McLaughlin and Marsh (1978) and Johnson (1990) found that the issue of efficacy was the main motivator for teachers. Further, teachers who felt they were effective in educating their students derived the most satisfaction from their work.

McGregor and Argyris both believed that organizations often force their workers into a relationship of dependency, making adults act as children (Bolman & Deal, 1987, p. 86). Similarly,

the consequences of not providing people with opportunity and of not sharing power are damaging both to them personally and to their organization. People who view their opportunity for personal growth and advancement and for participation as low tend to be poorer and more disgruntled, less satisfied workers. Opportunity and power were essential characteristics necessary for effective performance in complex work (Kanter, 1977, p. 246).

The goals of human resources development (HRD) as a field of research and practice have been to discover ways for organizations to become more effective while employees become more productive and more satisfied in their work (Owens, 1991, p. 166). One of the fundamental precepts of this body of theory is that participation in decision-making by workers is essential. Further, "many studies of participation at work have found significant improvements in both morale

and productivity. Participation is one of the very few ways to increase both at the same time" (Bolman and Deal 1987, p. 87).

Argyris and Schon found that participative management often exists more in theory than in practice. Many attempts at participative decision-making have failed, not because of the theory, but because they have been less than fully implemented (Bolman & Deal, p. 87). This might be due to the fact that participation "creates the need for changes that are [often] resisted" (Bolman & Deal, 1987, p. 87).

### Workplace Studies

Ouchi (1981) and Peters and Waterman (1982) wrote best sellers that advocated new approaches of more autonomy and participatory influence for workers in the business world. Louis and Smith (1990) reviewed the popular "Quality of Work Life" literature and concluded that it offered greater specificity than the educational literature as to what kind of reform might promote more professional working conditions for teachers. Of seven criteria for a satisfying workplace, two were especially important for teachers:

1. Respect from relevant adults. This was necessary for job commitment. Lack of respect from parents and administration lessened job commitment.

2. Participation in decision-making. Having influence over decisions that affect the way the school operates fostered a sense of teacher autonomy and control over their workplace (Louis & Smith, 1990, p. 35).

The basic problem addressed in the "Quality of Work Life" literature is the fact that human potential is chronically under-utilized in the workplace.

Consequently, this area of research further promotes the notion that those closest to the work that needs to be performed should have great influence over decisions made about that work (Pratzner, 1984, p. 22). From this came one of the keys to education reform: participative management philosophy applied to teachers.

Few studies attempt to connect student achievement and teacher job satisfaction. Many studies, however, have indicated that supportive conditions including involvement of teachers in schoolwide decisions tend to be associated with greater enthusiasm, professionalism and job satisfaction on the part of teachers (Goodland, 1984, p. 176). A study by Rosenholtz (1989), for example, focused more on the desirability of collegiality among teachers, but a large part of that concept included the notion that for teachers to collaborate effectively, participation in school-wide decisions about teaching is essential. In addition,



involvement in decision-making leads to reflective practice among teachers in regard to teaching, and teachers feel more committed to their workplaces when they feel more responsible and are engaged in producing desirable outcomes.

The regulatory reforms of the "First Wave" of reform failed to produce better schools and left many teachers angry and resentful. According to Susan Moore Johnson's analysis (1990), only if the best teachers gained greater influence would these teachers find more satisfaction in their work. As Johnson stated in the foreword of her book, "Workplace deficiencies are demoralizing; they constrain and inhibit good teachers from doing their best work" (1990, p. xix). Teachers burdened with bureaucratic obligations, lacking a say in how and what they teach, withdraw to the isolation of the classroom. Johnson believed that schools must become workplaces that attract the best possible staff. Johnson concluded that "workplaces that inhibit and disable the best staff are unlikely to improve the performance of those who are only average" (1990, p. xxiii).

While the "Second Wave" of reform seemed to be more consistent with what is known about schools as organizations, relating satisfaction to productivity remains tenuous. Johnson (1990), however, believed that

as education was forced to compete for teaching candidates with other professions, the attractiveness of the workplace would become more important (p. 27). Teachers in her study indicated that, among other things, classroom disruptions, a lack of autonomy in their teaching, administrative politics and the failure to involve teachers in decisions of educational policy and practice compromised their efforts at teaching excellence (p. 43). The teachers desired not only higher salaries, but also a greater role in policy making (p. 56). In fact, the teachers in this study did participate in decision-making, but opportunities were sporadic and inconsistent (p. 181). Even those teachers who had participated in formal school councils felt their participation had little effect. Only 7 of the 75 public school teachers believed that they exerted ongoing influence over important schoolwide matters (p. 189).

Principals in Johnson's study (1990) often made unilateral decisions that affected classroom instruction (p. 186). In the few schools where teachers did have great influence, such opportunities contributed a great deal to job satisfaction. For teachers in this study, students and classrooms mattered most, but they were not all that mattered (p. 205). Johnson concluded that more involvement will make more demands on teachers and,

though the study showed some reluctance on the part of teachers to become involved with those demands, she believes that reluctance must be evaluated in the light of past disappointments and failures (p. 203).

### Summary

"Second Wave" reformers believed that the best way to reform schools was to reform the teaching profession. Fundamental to effective change was the notion that teachers needed to be more influential in the key decisions that took place at the school. Reports from the Carnegie Forum (1986) and the Education Commission of the States (1986) maintained that the schools would be able to retain quality veteran teachers and attract quality new teachers only if teachers were empowered and allowed to participate in decisions that had the most impact on their classrooms.

Definitions of empowerment offered by authors such as Bolin (1989), Melenyzer (1990), Moore and Esselman (1992), and Short and Greer (1993) all included the notion that teachers must have the right and responsibility to participate and influence key decisions in schools and that they should have greater freedom and autonomy to make choices and decisions that would impact their classrooms. Such authority put empowerment and the professional approach to teachers in

conflict with the bureaucratic approach which basically tried to routinize and control the work of teachers. Few empowerment advocates, however, have advanced the idea that teachers should have complete control over the decision-making processes in schools. Conley (1989) pointed out the difference between authority and influence and suggested that teacher influence and participation in key school-wide decision-making would not destroy the role or authority of school management.

The foundation for the concept of teacher empowerment could be seen in the Human Resources Development literature of the 1950s and 1960s. Maslow (1954), Herzberg (1966), McGregor (1960), and others advocated more choice, responsibility, and autonomy for workers in order to produce a climate that workers would find more motivating. Traditional criticism of this literature centers around the notion that the motivational theories they espoused are more attuned with the work of philosophers than scientists.

A number of these studies, however, seem to have a very solid basis for the proposition that the teachers themselves believe that greater participation in school-wide decision-making would make their jobs more satisfying. Studies by Sergiovanni (1967), Goodlad (1984), Rosenholtz (1989), and, particularly, Johnson (1990) made strong cases for the idea that teachers feel

a great need to be more involved with key decisions in the school. Teachers' desire for more participation does not, however, prove that desirable outcomes for students would occur if teacher empowerment measures were to be enacted. However, the concept of empowerment appeals strongly to logic and the psychology of workplace motivation theories that are widely accepted today.

#### The "Second Wave" of Reform Literature

The "Second Wave" of reform was characterized by calls for greater professionalization of teaching. The Carnegie Forum's report on the teaching profession asserted that teachers must have more power and more authority for what happens in schools:

Giving teachers a greater voice in the decisions that affect the school will make teaching more attractive to good teachers who are already in schools as well as people considering teaching as a career (1986, p. 57).

The Holmes Group report also called for granting teachers a greater role in governance and creating career ladders for professional promotion (1986).

Darling-Hammond's (1984) analysis of the teaching profession pointed out that new recruits to teaching were less academically talented than the teachers who were leaving the profession and that shortages in key areas like mathematics and science were likely. Lack of

input into professional decision-making, overly bureaucratic structures, and lack of administrative support contributed to high levels of teacher dissatisfaction and attrition. Teaching would require a new career structure that would include increased responsibility of teachers for decisions in schools.

She stated:

Teachers express increasing dissatisfaction with the conditions under which they work and the policies that define their classroom activities. Between 1971 and 1981, the proportion of respondents saying they would not teach again more than tripled, rising from about 10% to 40%. (Darling-Hammond, 1984, pp. 10-11).

Teachers in this study felt that they were not treated as professionals: they had limited influence in decision-making in matters that directly affected their classrooms (p. 12). A disturbing aspect of teacher dissatisfaction in this study was that it was the most qualified teachers who were the most dissatisfied (p. 13). If this is true, then schools would be forced to hire more and more marginally qualified teachers unless something drastic were done to the structure of the profession (p. 16).

Teacher empowerment can produce a professional culture that might benefit students (Darling-Hammond, 1988, p. 55). According to Darling-Hammond, "to the extent that education accepts the bureaucratic

conception of school, the more bureaucratic the schools will actually become" (1988, pp. 58-59). Effective new teachers can be recruited only if major changes in the professional work structure of teaching take place (p. 59).

Leadership was compatible with empowerment:

Empowerment makes people free to do the things that make sense to them providing the decisions they make about what to do embody the values that are shared. Empowerment is the natural complement to accountability. One cannot hold teachers, parents, and schools accountable without giving them the necessary responsibility to make the decisions they think are best. Empowerment is more about obligation and duty than freedom (Sergiovani, 1991, p. 137).

Empowerment also relates well to the concept of site-based management. Blase and Kirby (1992, pp. 39-40) stated that not only was site-based management a good idea, but that the notion of administrators sharing power with teachers was also noteworthy as the collaboration would produce better decisions.

Teachers should be empowered because they are the basis of schooling (Maeroff, 1988, p. xiii). They also have the most difficult job in society but they receive little authority or recognition (Maeroff, 1988). Consequently, teachers need the power to help shape their profession (Maeroff, 1988, p. 4). In too many cases, teachers exhibit a child-to-parent relationship

with their principals, a powerless position. The bureaucratic culture of schools is therefore unattractive to bright people who want to exercise reasonable control over their workplace (p. 2).

The literature from business offers evidence that when workers participate in decisions, both satisfaction and productivity increase (Barth, 1988, p. 34). If teachers were allowed to share in power, they would feel more ownership and commitment to the implementation of decisions. In short, the greater the participation in decision-making, the greater the productivity, satisfaction, and commitment. In fact, the cure for strained relationships between teachers and principals is a type of collegiality in which teachers and principals make decisions together. The resulting decisions tend to be of better quality, and are implemented more easily and with higher morale (Barth, 1990).

Bacharach, Bauer, and Shedd (1986, p. 249) noted that given the importance of decision-making structures to organizations, teachers should be highly involved in setting goals, making decisions about teaching, and allocating resources. After all, teachers are in the best position to make judgments about such matters since they are the closest to the educational process. Therefore, only two essential reforms are needed:



1. Let schools shape their own futures.
2. Put teachers in charge of what they do in the classroom day to day (Grant, 1988, p. 220).

The failure of administrators to trust teachers has driven many of them to withdraw their talents and to give less than their best. Grant stated: "Teachers need to be trusted not only in matters of making judgments about professional practice but also with matters of the organization of the school" (1988, p. 225).

Along the same lines, McLaughlin and Yee (1988, p. 28) suggested that teachers who had opportunities to grow were enthusiastic about their work, but those who did not became burned out and frustrated in their work. Capacity (McLaughlin and Yee 1988, p. 29) is defined as the power a teacher has to access and mobilize resources. Teachers with a sense of capacity tend to be more effective in the classroom, and they also exhibit higher levels of satisfaction and commitment.

Professionals have capacity. One reason behind calls for treating teachers as professionals is to make the profession more attractive and allow the best teachers to stay in teaching (Devaney and Sykes 1988, p. 4). The work of school teaching is certainly considered professional since it is "complex and subtle, requiring informed judgment by well-prepared practitioners in

circumstances that are often ambiguous or difficult" (Little, 1988, p. 81).

Not all authors appear to be optimistic about teacher empowerment. Hawley (1988), for example, cautioned that empowerment would work only if the decision-making skills of teachers were greatly improved. In another instance, Heller and Paulter (1990) were skeptical that teacher empowerment would not be misused by teachers' unions. Further, Imber and Neidt (1990) did not believe that teachers, already working 40-60 hours per week, would have the time for participation in decision-making structures. In addition, Imber and Duke (1984) questioned whether or not teacher empowerment would just be another fad. Finally, Huberman's (1993) study showed that collegiality and collaboration were much harder to implement and maintain than advocates of teacher empowerment would like to believe. Of course, the real test of teacher empowerment would be whether or not it improved schools for students. As a case in point, Bruckerhoff's (1991) found in his study a school that reinforced collegial norms but to the detriment of students and the school.

### Summary

Advocates for the professionalization of teaching such as Darling-Hammond (1984, 1988) maintained that quality teachers would be impossible to attract and retain unless the teaching profession was restructured. Maeroff (1988), Barth (1988 & 1990), Grant (1988), McLaughlin and Yee (1988) and Devaney and Sykes (1988) all argued that teachers were largely dissatisfied with the state of their profession and that teacher empowerment was crucial to creating a more satisfied and fulfilled teaching corps.

Skeptics such as Hawley (1988), Heller and Paulter (1990), Imber and Duke (1984), and Imber and Neidt (1990), applauded the concept but questioned whether or not it could be successfully implemented. Time and the difficulty of the process as well as political considerations were offered as reasons for pessimism regarding teacher empowerment.

The arguments for teacher empowerment provided very little research to back up their assertions. The calls for increased teacher empowerment were often based more on logic and philosophy than on research, but as Goodlad (1984) stated in reference to the lack of empirical studies that established the link between increased participation, job satisfaction, and better schools, "It

should not be necessary to establish these relationships scientifically in order to accept the proposition that teachers like other humans, are entitled to a "satisfactory workplace" (Goodlad, 1984, p. 176-177).

### Attitudes toward Teacher Empowerment and Participative Decision-making

#### Teacher Attitudes

Teacher interest in having influence over their workplace conditions is not a recent phenomenon. Pellegrin (1970), for example, discovered that group participation in decision-making was highly regarded by teachers and that higher job satisfaction and increased effectiveness could be attributed to teacher involvement in the decisions affecting their work. In another case, Carson and Friesen (1978) replicated a study they had done nine years earlier. They identified 20 areas of possible teacher involvement in decision-making:

1. salary schedules
2. teaching assignments
3. room assignments
4. selection of new teachers
5. determining daily schedules
6. scheduling of supervisory duties
7. assignment of pupils

8. determining methods of instruction
9. planning school plant expansion
10. discipline
11. instructional innovation
12. financing of school plant expansion
13. organization and context of the curriculum
14. curriculum planning and development
15. selection of instructional supplies
16. developing school budgets
17. educational objectives for grades and levels
18. teacher evaluation
19. educational objectives for grades and levels
20. supplemental teaching materials

All but three categories were considered by teachers to be appropriate areas for teacher participation in decision-making. Only room assignment, hiring of new teachers, and teacher evaluations were rejected by the teachers in this study as appropriate areas for teacher participation in decision-making. In fact, they found that the desire to participate among teachers had increased in the intervening nine years (Carson & Friesen, 1978).

Carnegie Foundation studies in 1988 and 1990 both indicated that teachers seem to be both frustrated about their sense of powerlessness over their workplace and desirous of more involvement in decision-making.

Similiarly, Harris (1986) conducted a survey of over 1,600 teachers and 700 educational leaders. American teachers strongly supported taking steps to increase collegiality in their workplaces (p. 6), and 97% of them thought that school districts should have a team approach to school management. In particular, teachers wanted more of a voice in areas of school life that related to academics, teaching techniques, and students. Fully, 97% of the teachers thought that teachers should have a role in textbook selection, and 73% of them thought that teachers should have a major role in discipline matters. Only 40% of the teachers wanted to have more of a role in traditional administrative areas, while fewer than 30% wanted to evaluate teachers or have a role in hiring new ones (p. 7). Teachers in the Harris study were almost unanimous in their support of the idea of including teachers in school-wide decision-making about school organization and curriculum (p. 45). Most teachers also believed (73%) that they should have a major role in designing and implementing teacher in-service training (p. 47).

In a similiar study, Feistritzer (1990) found that 90% of the teachers she studied wanted more authority and 84% wanted greater flexibility at the site level in determining both curriculum and instructional methodology. Eighty percent of the teachers wanted more

autonomy in determining how and what they taught, and 95% wanted more participation in school decision-making. Private school teachers responded in approximately the same percentages as public school teachers.

In another study, Mills and Stout (1985) indicated that while 88% of teachers were pleased with the flexibility they had on how to teach, only 41% felt they had any influence on what to teach. Ninety percent thought they should also have influence in deciding what to teach. Nearly all (98 %) the teachers wanted input on discipline policy, although only 42% thought they already had it. Most (84%) of the teachers wanted to participate in decisions assigning students but only 21% actually did so. More than three-fourths (78%) thought teachers should participate in the selection of new teachers (p. 7).

In a study of rural Missouri teachers, the research indicated that almost all of the teachers were interested in more involvement with discipline, curriculum, and instructional issues. More than 90% were interested in influencing the shaping of teachers' schedules, designing teacher in-service activities, and evaluating administrators and in determining their class sizes (Bachus, 1992, pp. 2-3). This study included only 67 teachers.

In a study by Darling-Hammond (1984), teachers reported great dissatisfaction with the conditions under which they worked and they felt they were not treated as professionals since they had very little input in decisions that affected their work (p. 12). In this study, 45% of the teachers indicated they would leave teaching if regulation of their teaching practice increased (p. 16). Similarly, Johnson (1990) found that teachers wanted more professional discretion and a role in determining policies that affected their classrooms (p. 52). Teachers in this study indicated they would welcome more participation in the decision-making process (p. 56).

Bacharach, Bauer, and Shedd (1986) analyzed the responses of almost 1,800 teachers to a nationwide survey to find out in which areas teachers wanted more participation, in what areas they wanted less participation and in what areas they thought their participation levels were about right. Generally, an average of about two-thirds or better of the teachers wanted more participation in most areas. In summary, the decisional deprivation data from this survey showed that most teachers thought they should have considerably more opportunities to become involved in decision-making. Very few teachers felt over-involved.



Specifically, teachers wanted more influence over matters that affected their classrooms (p. 250).

Following that study, Shedd (1987) found that teachers had the greatest need to participate in decisions that fell between the most obvious managerial ones and those that most clearly occurred in the classroom. Issues like discipline policies, assigning students, and teacher assignments were particularly important to teachers. However, Bachus (1991) found that discipline, curriculum, expenditures, and class size issues were most attractive to teachers for participation with less involvement preferred in the area of faculty development, inservice, teacher schedules, teacher evaluation and teacher assignments.

Along the same lines, Koppich, Gerritz, and Guthrie (1986) reported on a survey of 800 California teachers regarding school reform. Nearly all the teachers (96%) thought they should participate in determining curriculum. Even more (98%) felt they should work with administrators in developing discipline policies (p. 1). The study further revealed that almost all the teachers felt that administrators should consider teacher preferences when making teaching assignments (p. 2). Virtually all the teachers believed they should be involved in selecting textbooks, and 98% thought they should have input about teaching assignments. About 96%

of the teachers wanted to participate in selecting in-service activities, 85% in setting school scheduling, 84% in student assignment to classes, and 78% in helping to hire new teachers (p. 10).

Other studies found significantly different results. Sick and Shapiro (1991), for example, found in their study of one district's elementary school teachers that they were basically satisfied with their level of involvement in curriculum, teaching, and student issues, but they wanted more involvement in decisional areas related to personnel, supervision, budget and finance, and facilities (p. 14). Teachers in this study were concerned about the time issue, hoping that release time during the day would be provided for participation, and they believed that teacher participants should be selected on the basis of interest, knowledge, and experience (p. 15).

In the same study, (Sick and Shapiro, 1991) identified five major inhibitors of participatory decision-making. They included a) forced involvement in the decision-making process, b) lack of resources, c) the principal, d) legal constraints, and e) lack of a follow-up to a decision. Although, teachers in general were supportive of the idea of participative decision-making, they were concerned with these five obstacles (p. 15).

Hallinger, Murphy, and Hausman (1992) interviewed both teachers and principals. Both groups believed that teachers should be included more in the decision-making process and that this process would lead to better decision-making (p. 5). They further thought that restructuring would lead to more power for teachers and less for principals (p. 9). The teachers in this study favored an increase in their role in areas directly related to curriculum and teaching (p. 20), and they wanted more influence, not just participation. They were also very skeptical about their prospects for real influence, but they neglected to address the issue of accountability if they were involved in a more influential way (pp. 21-22).

R. High, Achilles and K. High (1989, p. 5) found that the 203 teachers in their study of 18 Tennessee schools did not want involvement in such things as scheduling, personnel, and discipline, but they did want more involvement in areas related to curriculum and instruction. Similarly, Bredeson (1992, p. 12) found that teachers had ambivalent feelings toward increased involvement in decision-making. On the one hand, they wanted more involvement, but on the other hand, they were fearful that more involvement would take them away from their classrooms and students.

Not all teachers are interested in participative decision-making. For example, Goldman (1992) pointed out that more than 20% of Kentucky school districts had to designate a school to participate in a pilot program involving participative decision-making because no schools in the districts volunteered. Apparently, teachers had little confidence in the program. This might simply reveal, however, not a lack of desire for more participation, but a disbelief that it would actually be done in a meaningful way (p. 15). Along the same lines, Melenyzer (1990) found that teachers were often limited in their ability or desire to be empowered because they often accepted institutional and societal constraints on themselves. Conley, Schmidle and Shedd (1988, p. 261) also discovered that many teachers viewed teacher empowerment as a meaningless exercise because of previous bad experiences.

In a similar manner, Brown (1994, p. 27) conducted a study that indicated that only a handful of teachers in the one school he studied were really ready to participate in school-wide managerial decisions. His study was supported by Davidson and Dell (1994) who indicated that teachers were skeptical about plans to empower them. Some were unsure of what demands the new processes would place on them, while others simply wanted to be left alone to teach (p. 9). In addition,

Duke, Showers, and Imber (1980) stated that while teachers voiced the opinion that the benefits of increased participation were desirable, they appeared less anxious to participate in fact. The reality of the majority of the teachers was that when they had participated, their involvement had made very little difference. Here again, this fact simply showed the need for influential involvement and not ritual or perfunctory involvement.

#### Principal Attitudes

One study of teachers and principals indicated that principals supported many of the participatory reforms but not quite to the same degree as teachers (Harris, 1986). About 97% of teachers favored team management compared to 90% of administrators. Again, 97% of teachers favored teacher involvement in textbook selection, contrasted with smaller majorities of administrators and other educational leaders. Administrators favored teacher involvement in discipline policies, but not to the same degree as teachers. In areas where teachers did not by majority favor involvement, administrators favored teacher involvement by even less of a percentage (about 40% to 30%). These areas included assigning students, scheduling, selecting new principals, and deciding budget allotments (p. 7).

Harris stated that both teachers and educational leaders were in favor of increasing the role of teachers in school management, but differed in their level of commitment (p. 45). Principals overwhelmingly favored the approach, but they had a much higher perception of at what level it was actually occurring at than the teachers. The most optimistic groups were principals and superintendents, many of whom thought that teacher empowerment had already occurred (p. 7). Given the differences between teacher and administrator views, it is clear that studies that indicate wide administrative support for empowerment will have to be followed up with actual status studies. Specifically, teachers in the West see a bigger gap between desired and actual practice than those elsewhere, and secondary school teachers see a bigger gap than elementary school teachers (p. 46).

Another study indicated that principals of team-based schools felt their influence over classroom teaching had been increased rather than decreased by team approaches (R. Johnson, 1976). On the other hand, Bredeson conducted several studies on principals' attitudes and beliefs toward empowerment and participative decision-making and found somewhat different results. In one study (1989), for example, Bredeson asked 10 principals how they saw teacher

empowerment played out in their schools and what they thought were the primary advantages and disadvantages. Principals in this study thought that teachers most wanted to be involved in decision-making regarding curriculum and teaching and were most concerned about matters that affected their classrooms (p. 1). They also thought that the advantages of empowerment far outweighed the disadvantages and that empowered teachers would have better attitudes and be more positive, energetic, and enthusiastic. In short, the principals believed there were considerable benefits of empowerment to teacher morale. They also felt that the teachers would have more ownership over decisions, and as a result they would work harder to implement them (Bredeson, 1989, p. 12). Although some teachers and a few principals were not comfortable with the notion of teacher empowerment (p. 13), the vast majority of principals in this study did not feel threatened by the idea of teacher empowerment (p. 14). They did feel that they would have to develop better communication skills to make the concept work (p. 17).

In another Bredeson study (1992), 20 principals were basically in favor of reforms in teacher influence, but they seemed far more cognizant of problems that would have to be faced than were the principals in the earlier study. Both teachers and principals noted more

role tension for teachers, and both groups agreed that the movement toward teacher empowerment could not be unidirectional but rather it would depend on cooperation between teachers and principals (p. 19).

A third Bredeson study (1993) indicated that some principals did, in fact, fear loss of control and being overwhelmed. They felt their superiors kept adding to their jobs without taking anything out. Some principals feared a loss of identity, and all of the principals believed that trust, time, money, and system-wide support were crucial elements in making shared decision-making work.

A study by Hallinger, Murphy, and Hausman (1992) found that a majority of teachers and principals thought that restructuring schools was an outstanding idea. The principals thought that teacher ownership and participation in decisions could lead to increased motivation, initiative, and commitment. Principals pointedly noted that teacher empowerment would not be easy on teachers, but would, in fact, require greater effort of them (pp. 5-6).

Two principals in this study supported the notion of empowerment with reservations and 2 others of the 14 interviewed opposed the idea altogether. The two principals with reservations thought that major changes were unnecessary and that teacher empowerment might slow



down the decision-making process. The opponents of empowerment felt that accountability would be lost, and one principal thought it would negatively affect the principals' jobs. The advocates among the principals thought they would get better decisions (p. 6). One of the common worries of all the principals was the amount of time it would take for teachers to become involved and the possible negative effects on their teaching (p. 7). However, even the skeptics thought it would increase teacher ownership of decisions (p. 8). Both teachers and principals thought the other would need more training.

At the same time, many principals hoped it would give them more time to work on teacher development, but they also thought that teacher power would be enhanced and principal power diminished (p. 9). The principals noted that while the teachers clearly wanted more influence in curriculum, few really had the professional expertise to do it. Clearly, they discounted the teachers' daily experience in the classroom as a qualifier (pp. 12-13). Principals in this study tended to doubt how much teachers would want to be involved in decision-making once they found out how much of a time commitment and how much conflict the process would demand (p. 20). Clearly too, the principals were concerned with the accountability issue. They did not

want to be in trouble or accountable for decisions they did not make (p. 22).

Lucas, Brown, and Markus (1991) conducted a study of more than 2,500 principals in the Southeast that showed that the less empowered principals felt, the more they were inclined to hold on to power. The vast majority of principals felt empowered enough over teachers in regard to instruction to grant teachers the power to control what instructional strategies they used. The principals also believed that they had enough power to allow teachers voice in curriculum, and a large majority (over 95%) believed teachers were competent enough and caring enough to do so. However, only 58% of the principals believed teachers could exercise influence in the areas of using financial and other resources, and only 45% of the principals thought teachers should have any say in staffing decisions (p. 58). The investigators concluded that where principals felt more constrained by district policy, they were more unwilling to give teachers a voice in decision-making in those policy areas. This study suggested that the first step in giving teachers more autonomy and influence would be to give principals more autonomy and influence (pp. 59-60).

A study by J. Blase and J. R. Blase (1994, p. 10) stated that principals believed the key component in

empowerment was trust. In another study, Weis and Cambone (1994, p. 287) found that principals were positive toward shared decision-making even though they believed it lessened their authority. Lursford (1993, p. 9) discovered that most principals thought teachers could make good decisions and that they provided a rich source of knowledge which would yield better decisions as result of shared governance. Kshensky and Muth (1991, p. 2) found that principals who believed in strong leadership sought to narrow rather than broaden the decision-making process. These principals felt that empowering teachers was too time consuming, inefficient, and inconsistent with strong leadership.

### Summary

Studies of teacher attitudes toward greater empowerment indicated that teachers in very high percentages wanted more involvement in decision-making. It seemed clear from the literature that teachers desired more influence in schools. Major studies of large numbers of teachers such as those conducted by the Carnegie Foundation (1988, 1990), Harris (1986), Koppich, et al. (1986), and Bacharach, et al. (1986), all indicated that more than anything else, teachers wanted more power and influence in areas directly related to their teaching. The research does indicate

that teachers were aware of the possible time problems (Bredeson, 1992) and a study by Duke, Showers, and Imber (1980) revealed a certain level of cynicism on the part of teachers regarding the possibilities that empowerment might actually happen.

Principals, in general, seemed to endorse the concept of empowerment with large majorities in agreement with teachers, albeit with lesser percentages than the teachers (Harris, 1986). Principals basically believed that empowerment could lead to better decisions and decision implementation, but they were worried about the time commitment of teachers and accountability issues.

The research suggests that the tolerance of principals for teacher empowerment has just begun to be identified since the concept is new and rarely tried. Little (1988, p. 100) stated, "the consistently high approval rates among the administrators on survey measures (despite considerable variations in observed practice) suggest that we have not yet constructed a set of measures that will tap the threshold of administrators' tolerance for teacher initiative."

### Status of Teachers' Involvement in Decision-making

Feistritzer (1983) stated that the majority of teachers were not involved in decision-making regarding a number of school-wide decisions including teacher evaluation, staff development, school budgets, and student promotion and retention policies. Darling-Hammond's (1984) report further noted that teachers felt more and more constrained in their decisions and more and more left out of the process. Furthermore, the teachers who most felt this way were the most qualified teachers (p. 13).

Harris (1986) revealed that there were large gaps between teachers' desires for participation and their perceptions of their actual participation. Furthermore, administrators were far more convinced that participative decision-making took place than were the teachers. Almost all teachers felt that teachers should be more involved in decision-making, but only about half the teachers thought they were (p. 7). In every category, whether it was involvement in curriculum, instructional strategies, budget, teacher evaluation, textbook selection, or student discipline policy, teachers reported that the reality fell far short of the ideal level of participation. Harris also noted that teachers in the West saw more of a difference between

the ideal and the real than any other region and that secondary school teachers felt more decisionally deprived than elementary teachers (p. 46).

A 1987 study asserted that only 28% of teachers felt empowered. Most of these teachers (85%) believed that instruction would be improved if teachers were more involved in curriculum. Only 30% said they were involved in textbook decisions, and only 20% had any influence in hiring new teachers (DuFour & Eaker, 1987, p. 85). Mills and Stout (1985, p. 7) stated that while 88% of teachers were pleased with the flexibility they had on how to teach, only 42% had any influence on what to teach. Most (92%), however, influenced teaching assignments. Few of the teachers (28%) had any say in assigning students and only 15% participated in selecting new teachers.

Boyer (1990, p. 34) stated that teachers were not involved enough in key decisions. About one-third of the teachers in his study had no say in shaping the curriculum they were teaching. A majority did not participate in selecting in-service activities, and more than two-thirds of the teachers had no role in shaping retention policies. Additionally, a majority of teachers had no role in assigning students to classes.

Conley and Cooper (1991) studied participation patterns in schools. They found that principals

selectively and occasionally involved teachers in decision-making. About 50% of the time, principals simply announced their decisions at a faculty meeting. In another 20% of the cases, the principals announced the decision but asked for faculty reaction, again usually at a faculty meeting. Informal polling of teachers occurred in about 10% of the cases. Principals invited some teachers to participate, but not all teachers were included. The researchers found no instances of principals delegating a decision to the faculty (p. 115). The area where teachers were most involved was curriculum (p. 117).

The Carnegie Foundation conducted a survey of over 20,000 teachers in 1988. The following results were found:

1. In choosing textbooks, 79% of the teachers were involved, 21% were not (p. 6).
2. In shaping the curriculum, 63% were involved, 37% were not (p. 7).
3. In setting standards for student conduct, 47% were involved, 53% were not (p. 8).
4. In deciding whether students were tracked into special classes, 45% were involved, 55% were not (p. 9).
5. In deciding staff development activities, 45% were involved, 55% were not (p. 10).

6. In setting promotion and retention policies, 34% were involved, 66% were not (p. 11).

7. In deciding school budgets, 20% were involved, 80% were not (p. 12).

8. In evaluating teachers, 10% were involved, 90% were not (p. 13).

9. In selecting new teachers, 7% were involved, 93% were not (p. 14).

10. In selecting new administrators, 7% were involved, 93% were not (p. 15).

Another Carnegie Foundation study did find that there had been a significant increase in teacher involvement in decision-making in schools. More than half the teachers said their involvement in setting school goals, shaping curriculum, and selecting textbooks had increased, while only about 10% thought their involvement had decreased (Carnegie Foundation, 1990).

Despite some improvements, Rice and Schneider (1994, p. 45) did not find that teachers had reached either equilibrium or saturation in decision-making in any category of decision issues. Teachers had more influence in classroom issues than in management ones, but even in classroom decisions, there was still plenty of room to include teachers.

Sick and Shapiro (1991) found that teachers participated frequently in decisions involving



curriculum, teaching strategies, and student personnel policies. In addition, a West Virginia study (1989) of exemplary schools found that teachers were more significantly involved in the decision-making process than was commonly reported, although the study had only a 39% return rate. Finally, in a district where empowerment was heavily emphasized, White (1992, p. 72) found in a study of 100 teachers and principals that 78% of the teachers were involved in budget decisions, 90% were involved in curriculum decisions, and 37% had participated in hiring a new teacher.

#### Summary

Studies of teacher involvement in decision-making generally show that a majority of teachers have not been effectively involved in many areas of formulating school policy. Teacher views of their own level of involvement indicate that teachers believe they have been far less involved than they thought they should be and far less involved than administrators thought they were (Harris, 1986). Selected studies showed improvement in some districts, but studies of decisional deprivation such as Rice and Schneider (1994) indicate that decisional saturation points had certainly not been reached in any category of decision-making.

### The Effects of Teacher Empowerment

Proponents of teacher empowerment pointed to positive results both for teachers and, at least tentatively, for students. According to Blase and Kirby (1992), involving teachers in school-wide decision-making and increasing teacher autonomy would improve schools. Their questionnaire was distributed to 1,200 teachers who were enthusiastic about opportunities offered by participatory school governance. Increased job satisfaction, commitment, and focus were all attributed to the increase in decision-making opportunities (p. 40).

Job satisfaction among teachers is reflected in the way teachers respond to students (McLaughlin, 1993). When teachers are alienated, few of them extend themselves. Similarly, Bacharach, Bauer, and Shedd (1986, p. 249) conducted a study of responses from almost 1,800 teachers nationwide. Based on their survey, they observed that in effective organizations, workers participate in key decisions. Participative decision-making gives administrators important information with which to make decisions; therefore better decisions are made and workers are more committed to them. As Bacharach, et al. (1986) stated:

Over time, participation has been shown to result in higher levels of satisfaction, increased cooperation, lower levels of turnover and

absenteeism, and reduced stress. Alternately, a highly centralized decision-making system may breed suspicion, contempt, and a general dissatisfaction with work (Bacharach, et al., 1986, p. 240).

A survey by Shreeve (1984, p. 4) indicated that principals who encouraged teacher influence in decision-making had a very positive effect on teacher attitudes and job satisfaction. Another study suggested that participation in decision-making led to higher job satisfaction and better performance (Pellegrin, 1970). Along the same line, Smylie (1990, pp. 60-61) cited the 1977 Rand study that discovered positive relationships between teacher effectiveness and their involvement in the decision-making process. Taylor and Bogotch (1992, p. 1) asserted that both organizational theory and school effectiveness research have found that participation in decision-making is linked to job satisfaction and job performance. Rice and Schneider (1994, p. 56) also found that when teachers perceived their influence to be real, their interest in decision issues and their job satisfaction rose. When they thought their influence was not real, interest and job satisfaction dropped.

Conley, Schmidle, and Shedd (1988, p. 260) found a number of significant benefits of teacher empowerment. Among them were better morale, greater job satisfaction, stronger organizational commitment, and greater

acceptance of change with increased cooperation and less conflict. They warned, however, where actual teacher influence was constrained by management, resource limitations, or other organizational conditions, the purported benefits of teacher empowerment disappear. Five major benefits may be attributable to increased teacher authority:

1. improved teacher morale,
2. better informed teachers,
3. improved communication between teachers,
4. improved student motivation, and
5. increased ability to attract and retain quality teachers (White, 1992, p. 71).

Teachers also reported that they had a higher energy level and a more positive attitude in the classroom.

In one study that included Catholic high schools, the Catholic school teachers had more teacher influence over school policies resulting in higher levels of motivation and engagement (Rowan & others, 1991, p. 257).

Some studies have tried to link teacher participation in decision-making to better outcomes for students. In one attempt, Little (1981) stated that a characteristic of successful schools was that teachers and administrators planned and worked together. In a similar vein, Purkey and Smith (1983) tied more

democratic decision-making to effective schools. Among the 13 factors associated with effective schools, two of them related to teacher empowerment: school site management and democratic decision-making along with collaborative planning and collegial relationships among administrators and principals. Neither study, however, was able to link empowerment with any improved results in regard to student achievement.

Ellett and Walberg (1979) found a relationship between teacher participation in decision-making and student achievement, while the 1980 Phi Delta Kappa study related a consistent pattern of staff involvement with high achievement in elementary schools. Taylor and Bogotch (1992) further stated that the research of both organizational theory and effective schools links job satisfaction to higher rates of participation in decisions and that "school effectiveness studies found that improved student achievement, attendance and behavior occur in schools where teachers are involved in decision-making" (Taylor & Bogotch, 1992, p. 2).

Other studies had similar findings. A study of high and low achieving California schools found that the ability of teachers to participate in decisions regarding the instructional programs had a positive impact on student achievement (Heck, Larsen, & Marcoulides, 1990). Along the same lines, Glickman

(1990) stated that his research on Georgia schools suggested that where teachers had a voice in school governance, student achievement increased and dropout rates decreased.

One way to improve teacher performance and their attitudes toward work is to pay attention to relational aspects of the workplace (Chase, 1991). Chase stated, "Efforts to establish a caring community within schools is not a soft headed, touchy-feely notion-- it is a pragmatic functional approach to making schools centers of effective teaching and learning" (Chase, 1991, p. 21).

Some researchers found that teacher empowerment attempts have had mixed results. For example, Jenkins (1994, p. 370) stated that teacher empowerment showed that principals and teachers could work together and that both groups viewed programs more positively; however, teacher empowerment did not impact students. In addition, Gamoran and others (1994) stated that the data supported letting teachers control methods of how to teach, but did not support teacher control of content.

In a meta-analysis, Conway (1984) summarized that while two-thirds of studies confirmed a relationship between shared decision-making and job satisfaction, the other one-third did not. Teachers moderately involved

in shared decision-making were considered the most effective by their students, therefore, Conway concluded that too much participation was almost as detrimental as not enough. In a similar observation, Frase and Sorenson (1992) commented that autonomy and involvement in shared decision-making work for some teachers but not for all. Perhaps, teachers need training in decision-making.

Other researchers have indicated that teacher empowerment has not led to any significant improvements in schools. Blase and Kirby (1992, pp. 43-45) were told by teachers in their study that some of them were concerned that the time demanded by participation would take time away from their classroom preparation. Additionally, the teachers did not want their time wasted on trivial decisions. This appears to be a common concern. For example, in a study of one school district (Brown, 1994) increased teacher involvement in decision-making improved communication, but serious problems over time, agreement over goals, and general lack of trust between teachers and administration appeared. In fact, the principal seems to exhibit a greater impact on feelings of job satisfaction than teacher empowerment does (Taylor & Tashakkori, 1994). Involvement in decision-making has little impact on the teacher's sense of efficacy.

Conley and Cooper (1991) found that while shared decision-making improved a number of skills for teachers including instructional delivery techniques, no relationship was found with student learning. Time was a serious problem for the teachers and shared decision-making increased conflict and role ambiguity.

Similiarly, Weiss and Cambone (1994) found that while some positive changes had occurred, the process took a great amount of time and brought some conflict out into the open. They concluded that shared decision-making was such a difficult process that it could only succeed with a system of support rarely found in schools.

Imber and Duke (1984) were not able to establish that higher levels of teacher participation in school decision-making had led to any school improvements. High and Achilles (1986) stated that in their study, principals in less effective schools tended to involve faculty more, and principals in more effective schools tended to involve their faculties in decision-making to a lesser degree. Another study found that schools that ranked midrange on a shared decision-making index made greater gains in student math and reading achievement than high or low ranking schools and that neither attendance nor achievement was affected by shared decision-making (Elenbogen & Hiestand, 1990).



In a study of the consequences of teacher participation in six high schools that had adopted structures for increased teacher participation against the consequences for six high schools that had not, Weiss (1992) found no significant evidence that major school improvement had taken place because of the new governance structures. Weiss (1992) concluded that the natural conservatism of teachers and the desire of the principals to maintain control undermined whatever positive outcomes might have occurred. The study did indicate, however, that most teachers liked having more say in matters, but that the time demands of the process were significant. As a result, in some situations, the teachers' influence was diminished by the lack of time available to collaborate on issues.

#### Summary

Research on the effects of teacher empowerment appeared to offer some evidence for both sides of the argument. Neither proponents of teacher empowerment nor the critics of teacher empowerment have developed strong studies supporting their positions. Studies such as Blase and Kirby (1992); Conley, Schmidle, and Shedd (1988); White (1992); Rowan and others (1995); McLaughlin (1993); Bacharach, et al. (1986); and others linked teacher empowerment to increased job satisfaction

and motivation for teachers. None of these studies showed, however, that such empowerment led to better results for students. Teacher job satisfaction, though, would seem logically connected to the retention of quality teachers; so this has remained a promising reason to advocate teacher empowerment. A few studies such as Little (1981); Purkey and Smith (1983); Ellett and Walberg (1979); Glickman (1990); and Heck, Larsen and Marcoulides (1990); as well as others have tried to link increased decision participation with improvements in student achievement. These links are tenuous at best. It may be that teacher empowerment has not yet been tried for a long enough time or at a sufficient level to impact student learning.

### Conclusion

Teacher empowerment as a way to improve schools has been debated more on the theoretical level, primarily because it has been a difficult concept to implement. Old habits are difficult to change for both teachers and principals. Bimber (1994) pointed out that many constraints have not really been relaxed. Weiss, Cambone, and Wyeth (1992) asserted that the concept made tremendous demands on teacher time and that it increased conflict and confusion about roles. Teachers and principals therefore need training in the sharing of the

decision-making process. Hallinger and Hausman (1993) stated that the principal, in particular, would need training in managing change and in the process of working with groups. It is also logical to assume that if the concept were really tried in a meaningful way, the impact on students would be indirect and it might take years to see how a more satisfying workplace would impact students. It is clear that the concept poses difficulties for both teachers and principals in terms of authority, time, and effort. The attainment of needed skills by both groups in order to implement is absolutely essential.

Hawley (1988) asserted that the ability of teacher empowerment to improve schools was directly tied to the overall quality and competence of the staff. Owens (1991) further suggested that, while teachers want more influence, they do not want to be administrators, and not all decisions are important to them. Owens cited Bridges (1967) who identified three tests for deciding which decisions teachers should participate in:

1. the test of relevance. Was it a decision that really affected teachers? If it were, then interest in participation would be high.
2. the test of expertise. Were teachers really qualified to make the decision?

3. the test of jurisdiction. In some cases, it was not a decision that teachers have a right to make (Owens, 1991, p. 280).

Many educators and researchers believe that empowerment is an extremely important concept for the future well-being of the teaching profession. Therefore, indirectly at least, the students of tomorrow may benefit. The concept of teacher empowerment will need to be balanced by other realities and training, and time will have to be provided for teachers and principals alike for success. Many educators and researchers hope the potential for improving the teaching profession and schools will not be lost in the meantime.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools toward aspects of teacher empowerment. Teacher empowerment was defined in this study as having provided for teacher influence in decisions that most directly impacted the teaching and learning processes in schools.

More specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools toward increasing teacher influence in key decision areas. Factor analysis identified three decision domains: a) a manager-controlled decision domain, b) a teacher-controlled decision domain, and a c) collaborative decision domain.
2. determine the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools about the effects of implementing teacher empowerment measures in schools. Factor analysis identified two groupings: a benefit of empowerment grouping and a problems with empowerment grouping.

3. determine if there were any meaningful attitudinal differences among the principals studied based upon certain characteristics of the principals or the schools. Characteristics considered were the lay or clerical/religious status of the principal, the gender of the principal, and the number of years in the principal's position. The school characteristic considered was the size of the school.

#### Population

The unit of analysis for this study was the principals of the secondary schools of the Western region of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). The Western region of the NCEA encompasses the 15 states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. At the time of the study, the 15 states were divided into 51 dioceses. A diocese is the basic governing unit of the Catholic Church and is composed of a geographical area surrounding a large city in a particular region. Each diocese is headed by a bishop or archbishop.

At the time of the study, there were 216 schools in the Western region of the NCEA that included secondary school grades. Of these 216 schools, 14 either did not include all high school grades through the 12th grade or

included elementary grades below the 7th grade. Because of the possibly very different climates in these schools, they were eliminated from the study. The investigator's school was also in the region and removed from the study. Of the remaining 201 schools, 182 had configurations of grades 9 through 12, one school had a configuration of grades 8 through 12, and 18 schools had a configuration of grades 7 through 12. All 201 of these schools were included in the study. The questionnaire developed for this study was sent to 201 principals, representing 41 dioceses, in 14 states. Wyoming, while in the region, did not have a school which qualified for the study. In addition, the Western region of the NCEA had 10 dioceses that did not have a school that qualified for the study (Mahar, 1994).

The region was selected because it had great variety in the sizes of the schools, dioceses, and states. There was a mixture of large urban areas, suburban areas, medium-sized cities and rural and small-town areas. Catholic schools in the West usually do not have the long traditions of many schools in the East. In addition, because of their smaller size, their existence appears to be more tenuous. The average size of the responding principal's schools was 566 students. Additionally, many were more isolated geographically from other parochial schools, making it harder to find

qualified teachers, resulting in greater concerns about staff retention.

There were 161 usable responses to the questionnaire. Of the 161 respondent principals, 101 (62.8%) of the principals studied were males and 60 (37.2%) of the principals studied were females. Of the principals studied, 83 (51.6%) were clerics or religious, and 78 (48.4%) were laypersons. The average number of years in the position of principal was 9.98 years and the average size of the schools of the respondent principals was 566 students.

#### Data Collection

In May, 1995, 201 questionnaires were sent out to the selected secondary school principals of the Western region of the NCEA. Included in the mailing was a cover letter that explained the purpose and scope of the research (See Appendix A). The letter guaranteed anonymity, and a stamped return envelope was also included. Following the mailing, 63 responses were received in the first week. This represented 31.3% of the targeted population. Another 45 responses ( 22.4%) were received the second week for a total of 53.7% of the targeted population responding in the first two weeks. In the third week, another 18 (9%) arrived. The total response from the first mailing was 126 responses



representing 62.7% of the targeted population. The responses were not coded in any way in order to insure complete anonymity.

In June, 1995, a second set of questionnaires and stamped returned envelopes was sent to all 201 principals selected for the study. A complete mailing was necessary since no attempt was made to identify who had responded to the first request for participation. A second cover letter was sent explaining the purpose and scope of the research. Once again, complete anonymity was guaranteed. Respondents to the first letter were asked simply to discard the second mailing. The second mailing generated another 39 responses (19.4%). In total, 165 responses were received for a total of 82.1% of the targeted population. Since the response level was so high, no further attempts to solicit responses were made.

Of the 165 questionnaires returned, 138 were filled out completely and exactly as indicated in the instructions. Irregularities were found in 27 questionnaires and 4 were unusable. Of these, three respondents left the demographic information completely blank, and one respondent left an entire page of questions blank. The other 23 irregular surveys had minor response flaws and were retained for the study. There were six responses that left one or more questions

blank and used a mid-point response on the Likert scale offered on one or more questions. An additional nine surveys left one or more questions blank, and eight other surveys had mid-point responses on at least one question.

### Instrumentation

The foundation for the development of the questionnaire used in this study to examine the attitudes of principals toward aspects of teacher empowerment was found, first of all, in Witherspoon's questionnaire developed for his 1987 study of the attitudes of selected principals in Indiana toward the implementation of shared decision-making. Permission to use and adapt the Witherspoon questionnaire is included in Appendix B.

Having used the Witherspoon questionnaire as a beginning, a thorough review of the literature helped create an item pool to develop the questionnaire that was used in this study. The initial item pool consisted of 98 possible questions, not including demographic questions. After five revisions, the final version of the questionnaire consisted of 43 attitude items and 4 demographic questions. The first section of the questionnaire had 29 decision areas that respondent principals rated in terms of whether they favored a high

or low involvement of teachers in decisions involving that area. A 5-point Likert scale was used with 5 representing the highest level of involvement and 1 representing the lowest level of involvement on the continuum. The second section of the questionnaire contained 14 questions that explored the principals' views on the effects of teacher empowerment. A Likert-type scale was used with the following choices for answers: 1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- undecided, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree. Items 44 and 45 were categorical questions about the lay or clerical/religious status of the respondents and about their gender. In item 46, the principal was asked to indicate the number of years he or she had been a principal, and in item 47 the principals indicated how many students were enrolled in grades 9 through 12 in their school. The results of the four-page questionnaire were transferred to an SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) spread sheet for statistical analysis.

#### Expert Panels and Validity

Witherspoon established content validity for his questionnaire using criteria described by Kerlinger (1986). For this study, expert panels were used. The fourth revision of the questionnaire was sent to two different expert panels in the spring of 1995 to

establish content validity. One panel consisted of six current or former Catholic high school principals of the Archdiocese of Chicago. The panel included three members who were, at the time of the study, principals; two who were, at the time of the study, presidents of Catholic high schools, which is a chief executive position that appoints the principal; and one who was a professor of educational administration at a Chicago-based college at the time of the study. The second panel consisted of five current or former University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) doctoral students who were either familiar with the concept of empowerment because of their own research or had experience as Catholic high school teachers or administrators.

The two panels were asked to review the questionnaire for clarity and improvement. Based on the responses from the panel, one item was dropped and several others were reworded. In the second section of the questionnaire dealing with the effects of teacher empowerment measures in schools, five items were reverse-worded and reverse-scored in order to control for response bias. The final version of the questionnaire was sent to the 201 principals of the Western region of the NCEA.

### Data Analysis

A factor analysis was conducted to reduce the data. Then, three levels of analysis were conducted, corresponding to the three research questions. The first major analysis used descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations to describe the attitudes of the respondent principals toward increasing teacher involvement in key decision areas contained in the three decision domains identified by the factor analysis. The second major analysis also used statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations to describe the respondent principals' attitudes about the effects of teacher empowerment measures in schools. Through factor analysis, two different groupings were identified to be scored in the second part of the questionnaire.

The third analysis used the Pearson Product Moment Correlation to compare the responses of the principals to the questionnaire based upon the principal's lay or clerical/religious status, gender, experience, and size of school.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools toward aspects of teacher empowerment. Teacher empowerment is defined here as providing for teacher influence in decisions that most directly impact the teaching and learning processes in schools.

More specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools toward increasing teacher influence in certain key decision domains. Three decision domains were identified through factor analysis.
2. determine the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools about the effects of implementing teacher empowerment measures in schools. Two effects groupings were identified through factor analysis.
3. determine if there were any meaningful attitudinal differences among the principals studied based upon certain characteristics of the principals or

the schools. Principal characteristics considered were the lay or clerical/religious status of the principal, the gender of the principal, and the number of years in the principal's position. The school characteristic considered was the size of the school.

The following research questions were addressed in the data analysis:

1. What were the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools toward increasing teacher influence in the decision domains identified by the factor analysis?
2. What were the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools about the effects of implementing teacher empowerment measures?
3. Were there any meaningful attitudinal differences among the principals studied based upon certain characteristics of the principals such as lay or clerical/religious status, gender, and years as a principal or the school characteristic of size of the school?

#### Decision Domains

The range and type of decisions discussed in teacher empowerment studies have been so broad that several researchers have attempted to cluster decisions into decision or participation domains. Long before teacher empowerment became a widely discussed topic in

education, Parsons (1951) hypothesized two decision domains: the technical and the managerial. Moore and Esselman (1992) also found two dimensions, but they equated the technical domain with classroom-based decision-making and the managerial domain with school based decision-making.

Conley, Schmidle, and Shedd (1988) started with a two-dimensional approach. They used the term operational instead of technical to refer to decisions pertaining to specific tasks or means. The other dimension they termed strategic which parallels the managerial domain in regard to decisions that addressed overall goals and ends of the school. Bacharach, Bamberger, Conley, and Bauer (1990) and Conley (1989) found four decision areas. They also renamed the technical domain as the operational domain and then divided the operational domain into the operational-individual domain and the operational-organizational domain. The managerial domain was renamed the strategic domain and was also divided into the strategic-individual domain and the strategic-organizational domain. Along similiar lines, Taylor and Bogotch (1994) developed a decision framework that included four domains as well:



Domain I Associated Technology-- matters related to teachers and students but not involving classroom instruction.

Domain II Managerial-- matters closely related to managerial prerogatives in organizing and administering most the school.

Domain III Core Technology A-- instructional materials like textbooks.

Domain IV Core Technology B-- how and what to teach and subject grade assignments.

The decision-domain research most relevant to the findings of this study was conducted by Shedd (1987). Shedd found that the area where teachers felt the most deprived in terms of decision participation was the area that addressed the strategic and operational interface. Stated another way, the decision area that encompassed the space between clear managerial decisions and clear classroom teacher decisions was the one for which teachers most desired more inclusion. Decisions in this area did not fall neatly inside or outside the classroom; in fact, they fell somewhere in between. Shedd maintained that this type of decision regulated the perimeter of the teacher's classroom activities and consequently, limited teacher decision-making.

### Factor Analysis

The questionnaire had two sections. The first section (items 1 through 29) dealt with the various types of school decisions that teachers could participate in. A factor analysis was conducted on the first 29 items in order to reduce the number of items for analysis and to obtain a measure of construct validity. Bartlett's test of sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy were used to help determine suitability of the data for factor analysis. A principal component analysis with varimax rotation led to the determination that the first section of the questionnaire had three weighted factors. (See Appendix C). Consistent with the findings of Shedd (1987), the three factors that emerged were the manager-controlled decision domain which dealt with decisions usually controlled by school management, the teacher-controlled decision domain which dealt with decisions usually controlled by classroom teachers and the third domain which dealt with decisions over which management had final authority, but teachers sought to have more influence in these decisions as they impacted their classrooms to a large degree. This domain was called the collaborative decision domain indicating that

responsibility for these decisions was shared to some degree between managers and teachers.

The management domain accounted for 29.6% of the variance and consisted of 12 items. The collaboration domain accounted for 7.5% of the variance and consisted of eight items. The classroom domain accounted for 5.4% of the variance and consisted of three items. Tables 1, 2, and 3 summarize the factor loadings for the manager-controlled decision domain, the teacher-controlled decision domain, and the collaborative decision domain.

Table 1

Manager-Controlled Decision Domain (N = 161)

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Item #	Decision Description	Factor Loading
<hr/>		
27	Scheduling supervisory duties	.70641
29	Determining room assignments	.67541
28	Determining admissions policies	.64270
25	Determining prep periods	.63895
16	School finance and budget issues	.63895
22	Determining personnel policies	.62718
9	Determining process for teacher evaluation	.61480
19	Planning of new or remodeled facilities	.60771
24	Assisting in hiring new teachers	.60543
26	Selecting new department chairs	.59895
6	Teaching assignments	.59749
10	Evaluating other teachers	.55366

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Table 2

Teacher-Controlled Decision Domain (N = 161)

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Item #	Decision Description	Factor Loading
<hr/>		
3	Determining goals for courses taught	.69569
2	Developing curriculum	.69409
5	Choosing textbooks	.46754

---

Table 3

Collaborative Decision Domain (N = 161)


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Item #	Decision Description	Factor Loading
<hr/>		
15	Determining faculty in-service	.63600
14	Formulating discipline policies	.60075
18	Determining use of facilities and resources	.56218
1	Determining school goals	.55824
12	Selecting standardized tests	.54923
20	Purchasing instructional supplies	.54456
8	Formulating academic policies	.52485
23	Determining agenda for faculty meetings	.44897

---

Factor analysis indicated that there were six items that did not clearly load on to any of the factors. These six items were interpreted in such a way by the respondents that they loaded fairly evenly on two or more factors. These items were discarded. Table 4 illustrates the factor loadings for these items.

Table 4

Discarded Items (N = 161)

Item #	Decision Description	Factor Loadings		
		1	2	3
4	Deciding what electives will be taught	.43247	.22497	.43042
7	Determining appropriate instructional methods	.04433	.40961	.38379
11	Evaluating and assessing students	-.02562	.37612	.32092
13	Placing students in honors and remedial courses	.08174	.39051	.35109
17	Departmental budget issues	.29185	.35221	.23878
21	Determining the school calendar	.50875	.50775	.09418



A factor analysis was also performed on the second part of the questionnaire (items 30 through 43). This part of the questionnaire dealt with the effects of increased participation in school decision-making by teachers. As with the first section, the factor analysis reduced the number of items for analysis and obtained a measure of construct validity. Bartlett's test of sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy were used to help determine the suitability of the data for factor analysis. A principal component analysis with varimax rotation led to the determination that there were two weighted factors for the second part of the questionnaire. (See Appendix C). The two factors that emerged were the positive effects of empowerment grouping and the problems with empowerment grouping. The positive effects grouping measured the principal's attitudes about beneficial results that would occur if teacher participation in school decision-making increased. The positive effects grouping accounted for 36.1% of the variance and included eight items. The problems with empowerment grouping measured the respondent principals' attitudes about difficulties that could occur if teacher participation in school decision-making increased. The problems with empowerment grouping accounted for 8.9% of

the variance and included five items. Tables 5 and 6 summarized the factor loadings for the positive effects of empowerment grouping and the problems with empowerment grouping.

Table 5

Positive Effects of Empowerment Grouping (N = 161)

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Item #	Effect Description	Factor Loading
<hr/>		
41	Improved decision implementation	.76998
39	Improved quality of decisions	.71060
40	Increased decision acceptance	.66813
30	School improvements	.66732
38	Does not diminish the authority of the principal	.62034
42	Increased teacher commitment	.60226
31	Higher student achievement	.58982
33	Higher teacher morale	.48987

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Table 6

Problems with Empowerment Grouping (N = 161)

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Item #	Effect Description	Factor Loading
<hr/>		
34	Teachers unwilling to invest time	.71835
43	Process is too difficult	.65477
37	Teachers unwilling to do the work	.63813
36	Teacher effectiveness diminished	.63794
32	Will slow down decision making process	.39441

---

Factor analysis indicated that there was one item that did not clearly load on either factor. The item (#35) dealt with whether or not teachers had the expertise to participate in the decision-making process. The item loaded heavily on both factors (-.55052 on factor loading one and .49568 on factor loading two) and therefore was discarded from further analysis.

### Research Questions

#### First Research Question

The first research question was: what are the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools toward increasing teacher participation in the decision domains identified by factor analysis? Factor analysis identified three decision domains: a) the manager-controlled decision domain, b) the teacher-controlled decision domain, and c) the collaborative decision domain. Respondent principals were asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert scale to what degree they favored teacher participation in important school decisions where 5 indicated favoring a high level of involvement and 1 indicated favoring a low level of involvement.

The manager-controlled decision domain represented those decisions that, traditionally, were the most controlled by school administration. The manager-controlled decision domain consisted of 12 items.

The mean score for this grouping was 3.101 which indicated that the respondent principals advocated neither a very high or very low level of teacher participation in decisions representing this domain. Of the 1,922 responses to items in this domain, 554 (28.8%) favored a low involvement of teachers in decisions comprising this domain, represented by responses of 1 or 2 on the Likert scale. The mid-point on the scale was selected in 609 (31.7%) of the responses in this domain. The higher levels of involvement represented by response selection numbers 4 and 5 on the Likert scale, were chosen in 759 (38.5%) of the responses in this domain. Table 7 included the means and standard deviations for items in the manager-controlled decision domain. Table 8 displays the frequencies and percentages on the survey's Likert scale for items in the manager-controlled decision domain.

Table 7

Manager-Controlled Decision DomainMeans and Standard Deviations (N = 161)

Item #	Decision Description	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
6	teaching assignments	3.224	0.987
9	determining process for teacher evaluation	3.863	0.952
10	evaluating other teachers	3.082	1.145
16	school finance and budget issues	2.839	0.935
19	planning of new or remodeled facilities	3.460	1.006
22	determining personnel policies	3.013	1.073
24	assisting in hiring new teachers	3.463	1.098
25	determining prep periods	2.439	1.117
26	selecting new department chairs	3.317	1.175
27	scheduling supervisory duties	3.031	1.092
28	determining admissions policies	2.863	1.064
29	determining room assignments	2.602	1.108
Averages for grouping		3.101	1.063

Table 8

Manager-Controlled Decision DomainFrequencies and Percentages (N = 161)

<u>Item #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
6	Teaching assignments	1	10	6.2
		2	20	12.4
		3	69	42.9
		4	48	29.8
		5	14	8.7
9	Determining process for teacher evaluation	1	4	2.5
		2	11	6.8
		3	28	17.4
		4	78	48.4
		5	40	24.8
10	Evaluating other teachers	1	17	10.6
		2	31	19.3
		3	47	29.2
		4	48	29.8
		5	15	9.3
16	School finance and budget issues	1	12	7.5
		2	44	27.3
		3	68	42.2
		4	32	19.9
		5	5	3.1
19	Planning of new or remodeled facilities	1	7	4.3
		2	18	11.2
		3	52	32.3
		4	62	38.5
		5	22	13.7
22	Determining personnel policies	1	19	11.8
		2	26	16.1
		3	55	34.2
		4	52	32.3
		5	7	4.3



Item #	Description	Value	Frequency	Percentage
24	Assisting in hiring new teachers	1	9	5.6
		2	23	14.3
		3	39	24.2
		4	63	39.1
		5	26	16.1
25	Determining personnel policies	1	40	24.8
		2	41	25.5
		3	48	29.8
		4	23	14.3
		5	5	3.1
26	Selecting new department chairs	1	12	7.5
		2	29	18.0
		3	44	27.3
		4	48	29.8
		5	28	17.4
27	Scheduling supervisory duties	1	17	10.6
		2	30	18.6
		3	57	35.4
		4	45	28.8
		5	12	7.5
28	Determining admissions policies	1	19	11.8
		2	39	24.2
		3	55	34.2
		4	41	25.5
		5	7	4.3
29	Determining room assignments	1	31	19.3
		2	45	28.0
		3	47	29.2
		4	33	20.5
		5	5	3.1
Totals for Frequencies and Percentage Averages		1	197	10.2
		2	357	18.6
		3	609	31.7
		4	573	29.8
		5	186	9.7

The teacher-controlled decision domain represented those decisions that, traditionally, were the most controlled by classroom teachers. The teacher-controlled decision domain consisted of three items.

The mean score for this grouping was 4.762 which indicated that the respondent principals advocated a very high level of teacher participation in decisions in this domain. Low levels of involvement represented by numbers 1 and 2 on the Likert scale were selected by none of the respondent principals. The mid-point on the scale was chosen in only three (0.6%) of the responses in this domain. The higher levels of teacher involvement, represented by numbers 4 and 5 on the Likert scale, were chosen in 480 (99.4%) of the responses in this domain. Table 9 includes the means and standard deviations for items in the teacher-controlled decision domain, and Table 10 displays the frequencies and percentages on the survey's Likert scale for items in the teacher-controlled decision domain.

Table 9

Teacher-Controlled Decision DomainMeans and Standard Deviations (N = 161)

Item #	Decision Description	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
2	Developing curriculum	4.783	0.414
3	Determining goals for courses taught	4.851	0.374
5	Choosing textbooks	4.609	0.514
Averages for grouping		4.762	0.437

Table 10

Teacher-Controlled Decision DomainFrequencies and Percentages (N = 161)

Item #	Description	Value	Frequency	Percentage
2	developing curriculum	1	0	0.0
		2	0	0.0
		3	0	0.0
		4	35	21.7
		5	126	78.3
3	determining goals for courses taught	1	0	0.0
		2	0	0.0
		3	1	0.6
		4	22	13.7
		5	138	85.7
5	choosing textbooks	1	0	0.0
		2	0	0.0
		3	2	1.2
		4	59	36.6
		5	100	62.1
Totals for		1	0	0.0
Frequencies		2	0	0.0
and Percentage		3	3	0.6
Averages		4	116	24.0
		5	364	75.4

The collaboration decision domain, represented by those decisions that teachers seek to share with administrators, consisted of eight items. The mean score for this grouping was 3.978 which indicated that the respondent principals were in favor of increasing teacher participation in the decisions that comprised this cluster. Lower levels of involvement, as represented by the selections of numbers 1 and 2 on the Likert scale, were advocated by 64 (5%) of the 1,283 responses in this grouping. The mid-point on the scale was selected in 260 (20.3%) of the responses in this domain. The higher levels of teacher involvement, represented by the selection of numbers 4 and 5 on the Likert scale were chosen in 959 (75.6%) of the responses in this domain. Table 11 included the means and standard deviations for items in the collaborative decision domain, and Table 12 displays the frequencies and percentages on the survey's Likert scale for items in the collaborative decision domain.

Table 11

Collaborative Decision DomainMeans and Standard Deviations (N = 161)

Item #	Decision Description	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
1	Determining school goals	4.283	0.704
8	Formulating academic policies	4.149	0.800
12	Selecting standardized tests	3.906	0.817
14	Formulating discipline policies	4.012	0.758
15	Determining faculty in-service	4.130	0.726
18	Determining use of facilities and resources	3.331	0.969
20	Purchasing instructional supplies	4.106	0.926
23	Determining agenda for faculty meetings	3.901	0.846
Averages for grouping		3.978	0.818

Table 12

Collaborative Decision DomainFrequencies and Percentages (N = 161)

Item #	Description	Value	Frequency	Percentage
1	Determining school goals	1	0	0.0
		2	1	0.6
		3	20	12.6
		4	71	44.7
		5	67	42.1
8	Formulating academic policies	1	0	0.0
		2	6	3.7
		3	23	14.3
		4	73	45.3
		5	59	36.6
12	Selecting standardized tests	1	0	0.0
		2	6	3.7
		3	43	26.7
		4	70	43.5
		5	40	25.2
14	Formulating discipline policies	1	0	0.0
		2	4	2.5
		3	33	20.5
		4	81	50.3
		5	43	26.7
15	Determining faculty in-service	1	0	0.0
		2	4	2.5
		3	21	13.0
		4	86	53.4
		5	50	31.1
18	Determining use of facilities and resources	1	8	5.0
		2	18	11.2
		3	62	38.5
		4	57	35.4
		5	15	9.3

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Item #	Description	Value	Frequency	Percentage
20	Purchasing	1	5	3.1
	instructional	2	3	1.9
	supplies	3	22	13.7
		4	71	44.1
		5	60	37.3
23	Determining	1	1	0.0
	agenda for	2	8	5.0
	faculty	3	36	22.4
	meetings	4	77	47.8
		5	39	24.2
<hr/>				
	Totals for	1	14	1.1
	Frequencies	2	50	3.9
	and Percentage	3	260	20.3
	Averages	4	586	45.7
		5	373	29.1

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### Second Research Question

The second research question was: What were the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools about the effects of implementing teacher empowerment measures in schools? Factor analysis identified two effects groupings: the positive effects of empowerment grouping which measured the principals' attitudes about whether or not beneficial results would occur if teacher participation in school decision-making increased and the problems with empowerment grouping which measured the principals' attitudes about whether or not difficulties or problems would occur if teacher participation in school decision-making increased. Respondent principals were asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert scale to what degree they agreed with the statements about the effects of increased teacher participation in school decision-making. On this scale, 1 represented "strongly disagree", 2, "disagree", 3, "undecided", 4, "agree", and 5, "strongly agree".

The positive effects cluster consisted of eight items. Items 30, 33, and 42 were reverse-worded and scored to control for response bias. The mean score for this grouping was 4.234 which indicated that, on the whole, the respondent principals believed that increasing teacher participation in school decision-

making would lead to beneficial results for teachers and schools.

Disagreement, represented by response selection numbers 1 and 2 on the Likert scale, were chosen in only 41 (3.1%) of the 1,286 response selections. The mid-point represented the undecided category which was chosen in 78 (6.1%) of the responses. Agreement with the statements, indicating positive results of empowerment and represented by the points 4 and 5, were chosen in 1,167 (90.8%) of the responses. Table 13 includes the means and standard deviations for items in the positive effects of empowerment grouping, and Table 14 displays the frequencies and percentages on the survey's Likert scale for items in the positive effects of empowerment grouping.

Table 13

Positive Effects of Empowerment GroupingMeans and Standard Deviations (N = 161)

Item #	Effect Description	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
30	School improvements	4.534	0.742
31	Higher student achievement	4.137	0.855
33	Higher teacher morale	4.400	0.953
38	Does not diminish the authority of the principal	3.447	0.580
39	Improved quality of decisions	4.391	0.654
40	Increased decision acceptance	4.304	0.767
41	Improved decision implementation	4.438	0.679
42	Increased teacher commitment	4.230	0.924
Averages for grouping		4.234	0.769

Table 14

Positive Effects of Empowerment GroupingFrequencies and Percentages (N = 161)

Item #	Description	Value	Frequency	Percentage
30	School improvements	1	2	1.2
		2	2	1.2
		3	6	3.7
		4	49	30.4
		5	102	63.4
31	Higher student achievement	1	2	1.2
		2	2	1.2
		3	31	19.3
		4	63	39.1
		5	63	39.1
33	Higher teacher morale	1	7	4.3
		2	2	1.2
		3	5	3.1
		4	52	32.5
		5	94	58.8
38	Does not diminish the authority of the principal	1	0	0.0
		2	2	1.2
		3	1	0.6
		4	81	50.3
		5	77	47.8
39	Improved quality of decisions	1	1	0.6
		2	1	0.6
		3	6	3.7
		4	79	49.1
		5	74	46.0

Item #	Description	Value	Frequency	Percentage
40	Increased decision acceptance	1	2	1.2
		2	3	1.9
		3	9	5.6
		4	77	47.8
		5	70	43.5
41	Improved decision implementation	1	0	0.0
		2	3	1.9
		3	8	5.0
		4	65	40.4
		5	84	52.2
42	Increased teacher commitment	1	2	1.2
		2	10	6.2
		3	12	7.5
		4	62	38.5
		5	75	46.6
Totals for Frequencies and Percentage Averages		1	16	1.2
		2	25	1.9
		3	78	6.1
		4	528	41.1
		5	639	49.7

The problems with empowerment grouping consisted of five items. Items number 34 and 37 were reverse-worded and scored to control for response bias. The mean score for this grouping was 2.179 which indicated that the respondent principals were not convinced that increasing teacher participation in school decision-making would lead to great difficulties in implementing the process, nor did they believe that empowering teachers would have any negative effects on the quality of teaching in their schools. Disagreement with the statements, represented by the selection of numbers 1 and 2 on the Likert scale were selected in 576 (71.5%) of the possible 805 responses. The midpoint of the scale, which represented the undecided category, was chosen in 115 (14.3%) of the response selections. Agreement with the statements, represented by the selection of points 4 and 5, consisted of 114 (14.2%) of the response selections. Table 15 includes the means and standard deviations for items in the problems with empowerment grouping and Table 16 displays the frequencies and percentages on the survey's Likert scale for items in the problems with empowerment grouping.

Table 15

Problems with Empowerment GroupingMeans and Standard Deviations (N = 161)

Item #	Effect Description	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
32	Will slow decision making process	2.981	1.207
34	Teachers unwilling to invest time	2.230	0.882
36	Teacher effectiveness diminished	1.667	0.721
37	Teachers unwilling to do the work	2.267	0.857
43	Process is too difficult	1.739	0.810
Averages for grouping		2.179	0.895

Table 16

Problems with Empowerment GroupingFrequencies and Percentages (N = 161)

Item #	Description	Value	Frequency	Percentage
32	Will slow down decision-making process	1	26	16.1
		2	33	20.5
		3	27	16.8
		4	68	42.2
		5	7	4.3
34	Teachers unwilling to invest time	1	30	18.6
		2	81	50.3
		3	34	21.1
		4	15	9.3
		5	1	0.6
36	Teacher effectiveness diminished	1	67	41.6
		2	85	52.8
		3	6	3.7
		4	0	0.0
		5	3	1.9
37	Teachers unwilling to do the work	1	24	14.9
		2	87	54.0
		3	35	21.7
		4	13	8.1
		5	2	1.2
43	Process is too difficult	1	68	42.2
		2	75	46.6
		3	13	8.1
		4	2	1.2
		5	3	1.9
Totals for Frequencies and Percentage Averages		1	215	26.7
		2	361	44.8
		3	115	14.3
		4	98	12.2
		5	16	2.0



### Third Research Question

The third research question was: Are there any meaningful attitudinal differences among the principals studied based upon certain characteristics of the principals such as the lay or clerical/religious status of the principals, their gender, or their number of years as a principal or based upon the school's size? For the first part of the questionnaire dealing with decision areas (items 1 through 29), the Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to determine if any of the demographic variables correlated in a meaningful way with any of the three decision domains identified by factor analysis. A 7 X 7 square correlation matrix was produced using the manager-controlled decision domain, the collaborative decision domain, the teacher-controlled decision domain, the lay or clerical/religious status of the principal, the gender of the principal, the number of years on the job of the principal and the size of the school. No meaningful relationships were found indicating that mean scores on the decision domains were not meaningfully influenced by the demographic variables tested in the third research question. Table 17 includes the Pearson Product Moment Correlation for the demographic variables with the decision domains.

Table 17

Pearson Product Moment Correlation for Demographic  
Variables with the Decision Domains (N = 161)

	MCDD	CDD	TCDD	State	Sex	Years	Size
MCDD	1.000	.0000	.0000	-.1192	.0877	-.0799	-.0036
CDD		1.000	.0000	-.0183	.1586	.2066	-.1302
TCDD			1.000	-.0175	-.0031	-.0004	.1134
State				1.000	-.1046	-.1004	-.0078
Sex					1.000	.0829	-.3137
Years						1.000	.0502
Size							1.000

Note.

MCDD = manager-controlled decision domain

CDD = collaborative decision domain

TCDD = teacher-controlled decision domain

State = lay or clerical/religious status of principal

Sex = gender of the principal

Years = number of years as a principal

Size = size of the school

For the second part of the questionnaire dealing with the effects of implementing empowerment measures in schools (items 30 through 43), the Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to determine if any of the demographic variables correlated in a meaningful way with either of the effects groupings identified by factor analysis. A 6 X 6 square correlation matrix was produced using the positive effects of empowerment grouping, problems with empowerment grouping, the lay or clerical/religious status of the principal, the gender of the principal, the number of years on the job of the principal and the size of the school. No meaningful relationships were found indicating that mean scores on the effects groupings were not meaningfully influenced by the demographic variables tested in the third research question. Table 18 included the Pearson Product Moment Correlation for the demographic variables with the effects of empowerment groupings.

Table 18

Pearson Product Moment Correlation for  
Demographic Variables with the Effects  
Groupings (N = 161)

	PEEG	PWEG	State	Sex	Years	Size
PEEG	1.000	.0000	-.0320	.2320	.0169	-.1818
PWEG		1.000	.0067	-.1387	-.1048	.2053
State			1.000	-.1046	-.1004	-.0078
Sex				1.000	.0829	-.3137
Years					1.000	.0502
Size						1.000

Note.

PEEG = positive effects of empowerment grouping

PWEG = problems with empowerment grouping

State = lay or clerical/religious status of principal

Sex = gender of the principal

Years = number of years as a principal

Size = size of the school

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools toward aspects of teacher empowerment. Teacher empowerment was defined in this study as having provided for teacher influence in decisions that most directly impacted the teaching and learning processes in schools.

More specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools toward increasing teacher influence in key decision areas.
2. determine the attitudes of principals of selected Catholic secondary schools about the effects of implementing teacher empowerment measures in schools.
3. determine if there are any meaningful attitudinal differences among the principals studied based upon certain characteristics of the principals or the schools. Characteristics considered were the lay or clerical/religious status of the principal, the gender of the principal, and the number of years in the

principal's position. The school characteristic considered was the size of the school.

### Summary

One of the recent reforms advocated by many researchers has been to change the roles of teachers in the nation's schools. It has been reasoned that since teachers were the closest to and the most knowledgeable about the students, their expertise should be used to help improve schools. Empowering teachers by increasing the amount of influence they have in school-wide and classroom decisions was seen to be a critical aspect of future school improvement. In addition, workplace studies revealed that teachers were frustrated by their lack of influence in school decisions. Concerns were expressed by numerous authors that the education profession would be unable to attract and then retain quality teachers unless workplace conditions improved.

Catholic schools also have reason to be concerned with attracting and retaining quality teachers. Given the fact that teachers' salaries are almost universally lower than their public school counterparts, Catholic school administrators have great reason to be concerned about work place conditions. In light of this problem, a review of the pertinent literature was conducted. It revealed that no major previous studies of Catholic

school principals' attitudes toward teacher empowerment have been published. Given the general operational autonomy each Catholic school has, a study of principals' attitudes may help determine if Catholic schools are places where this type of education reform might flourish.

The literature further revealed that teachers generally perceive themselves to be decisionally deprived in terms of their influence in schools. A wide gap exists between the amount of influence teachers think they actually have and the amount of influence they desire. Public school principals studied have generally been in favor of teacher empowerment although they were prone to see difficulties with the process in terms of time commitments and accountability.

In regard to the effects of empowering teachers, a majority of studies indicated that despite problems with the empowerment process, job satisfaction was increased for most empowered teachers. Results for the students were less clear, and it may be that this type of reform needs to be implemented more consistently and for a much longer period of time before results for students can be adequately ascertained.

In order to address the problem, a questionnaire was developed to determine in which important school decisions principals thought teachers should be

involved. The decision items were taken from an item pool developed after reviewing a survey developed by Witherspoon (1987) and a thorough review of the literature. Two expert panels were then asked to review a draft of the questionnaire and, upon their recommendations, several changes were made to produce the final document.

A second part of the questionnaire was developed to determine the principal's attitudes about what they thought the effects of empowerment would be. The two expert panels also reviewed this section of the questionnaire and minor revisions were made. The questionnaire was then sent to all 201 principals of the Western region of the NCEA selected for this study. The response rate of the principals was very high, and 161 usable surveys were received.

A factor analysis was performed on both sections of the questionnaire. For the first part of the questionnaire (items 1 through 29) the analysis indicated that three decision domains were apparent:

1. Manager-controlled decision domain which consisted of 12 items.
2. Teacher-controlled decision domain which consisted of three items.
3. Collaborative decision domain which consisted of eight items.



The principals were most in favor of high involvement of teachers in decisions in the teacher-controlled decision domain. The mean score for responses in this group was 4.762 on a 5- point Likert scale. The higher levels of involvement were favored in 99.4% of the responses while none of the responses favored the lower levels of involvement.

The mean score for the manager-controlled decision domain was 3.101. The higher levels of involvement were favored in 38.5% of the responses while 28.8% of the responses favored the lower levels of involvement.

The mean score for the collaborative decision domain was 3.978. Higher levels of involvement were favored in 75.6% of the responses while 5% favored lower levels of involvement.

The factor analysis on the second part of the questionnaire (items 30 through 43) indicated the presence of two effects of empowerment groupings:

1. Positive effects of empowerment grouping, which consisted of eight items.
2. Problems with empowerment grouping, which consisted of five items.

The mean score for the positive effects grouping was 4.234. Higher levels of agreement with the positive effects statements were chosen in 90.8% of the responses

while higher levels of disagreement with the positive effects statements were chosen in 3.1% of the responses.

The mean score for the problems with empowerment grouping was 2.179. Higher levels of disagreement with the problems of empowerment grouping were chosen in 71.5% of the responses while higher levels of agreement with the problems with empowerment grouping were chosen in 14.2% of the responses.

Characteristics of the principals such as their status as lay or clerics/religious, their gender, or their number of years of experience as a principal were also analyzed to see if they had any effect on the pattern of responses to the questionnaire. The principals in the study were 62.8% male and 37.2% female. Clerics/religious were 51.6% of the population studied while laymen and laywomen were 48.4% of the population studied. The average number of years as a principal was 9.98. No meaningful influence was found in the relationship of these characteristics to the response selections of the principals studied.

The characteristic of school size was also studied. The average size of the schools of the respondent principals was 566 students, with the smallest school having just 30 students and the largest school having 2,100 students. No meaningful influence was found in

the relationship of this characteristic to the response selections of the principals studied.

### Conclusions

The call for empowering teachers does not mean an abdication of responsibility by school managers. A review of the literature revealed a very helpful distinction between authority and influence which led to defining empowerment as increasing teacher influence.

It is also clear from the literature that the process of involving teachers more in the decision-making processes in schools requires large time commitments, and a real openness on the part of both teachers and principals. Therefore, teachers will have to do more than simply want more influence, they will have to work hard on the decision-making process. Principals will need to become more facilitative than directional as leaders, and conflict and change will have to be mastered by both principal and teacher. In addition, who is accountable for which decision will have to be clearly spelled out. Further, the process will have to be constantly monitored to see if it is having any deleterious effects on teaching effectiveness. Ultimately, it must be determined whether or not the students benefit in any way from the teacher empowerment process.

It is apparent, however, from the review of the literature that teachers are frustrated and discouraged with the current state of affairs in the teaching profession. Motivational psychology maintains that autonomy and influence are important factors in job satisfaction, and logic dictates that an increase in job satisfaction would have positive benefits for the teaching profession and, ultimately, for students as well. Logic also dictates that if someone has expertise, it is folly for an enterprise not to use it, and it is obvious that teachers have knowledge and expertise about students and teaching that administrators would be foolish to ignore.

It is also a fact that attempts at empowering teachers are recent and incomplete. It is impossible to pass judgment on the wisdom of this reform until it has been tried in a more consistent manner and over the long term. The implementation is difficult, but it is consistent with what is being advocated for business and other organizations all over the world.

The factor analysis confirmed previous research on decision domains. A technical or operational dimension which in education relates to decisions closest to the classroom is certainly apparent. A managerial dimension which in education relates to decisions made by school administrators is also evident. Confirming the research

of Shedd (1987), this study revealed a third dimension somewhere between the classroom and the principal's office. The presence of this domain confirms that there are decisions on which principals seek to collaborate with teachers. Similarly, Shedd's research indicated that teachers have a strong desire to participate in these decisions and that the failure of principals to include teachers in these decisions can constrain their work in the classroom as well.

The Catholic school principals who participated in this study were certainly enthusiastic about including teachers in key school decisions. It is apparent that decisions that most directly involve teaching and classrooms received very high scores from the principals for teacher involvement. It is also clear that in the collaborative domain, Catholic school principals very much want to involve their teachers. Even in the managerial domain, there is an apparent desire to involve teachers at least at a modest level.

More items need to be written for the teacher-controlled decision domain. A number of the discarded items from the questionnaire used for this study were intended to reflect more directly classroom and teaching areas, but factor analysis indicated that they loaded strongly on the collaborative decision domain as well.

The second part of the questionnaire served as a reality check for the first part of the questionnaire. If principals thought that the problems with empowerment would be major obstacles to its implementation or if they had doubts about the benefits of empowerment for teachers, then their high responses to the decision domains might be discounted. However, the responses to this part of the questionnaire were consistent with the responses to the first part. The principals who participated in this study were not worried about difficulties with the process. Additionally, the principals were quite convinced about the positive effects of teacher empowerment. The principals studied appear to be, in fact, strong proponents of teacher empowerment and seem to want to involve their teachers in key decisions in their schools. While a few items reflect a belief that certain decisions are primarily managerial, it appears that the principals studied believe that most important decisions should include teacher influence.

The results of the demographic questions analysis indicated that lay or clerical/religious status had no meaningful impact on the responses. Because hierarchical and clerical authority is a prominent feature of the Catholic church and since Catholic schools have a long history of employing clerics and

religious others in administrative roles, the researcher believed that clerical/religious or lay status would have an impact on the responses of the principals. This was not the case. In addition, gender of the principal, years on the job, or size of the school do not matter. Catholic schools in the West, however, tend to be small compared with western public schools, so it may be that the generally smaller size contributes to a collegial atmosphere.

In conclusion, it is clear that the principals in this study are strong proponents of including teachers in key decisions in their schools. In addition, the principals are optimistic about the positive school effects of empowering teachers. Teacher empowerment is a concept very much favored by the Catholic school principals in this study, and it appears that their schools are a very ripe place for this reform to blossom. If both teachers and principals can sustain the commitment to the process, these Catholic schools will be very positive workplaces for teachers.

#### Recommendations

This study could be replicated in other regions of the NCEA in order to determine if Catholic high school principals in other parts of the country have views similar to those studied in this investigation. The

richness of this study could also be improved if further items were developed for the teacher-controlled decision domain.

Further studies of empowerment practices in Catholic schools need to be done. For example, studies that would parallel the Carnegie and Harris type surveys cited in this study might help determine the actual participation levels of Catholic secondary school teachers in the decision-making processes in schools. In addition, studies need to be conducted to determine the actual empowerment practices of principals in the Western region of the NCEA. Given their strong support for empowerment concepts as revealed in this study, it is important to know whether or not administrative behavior in the schools is consistent with the stated attitudes.

Finally, studies in both Catholic and public schools need to be conducted to determine if empowerment practices have any real impact on either teachers or students. Proponents of empowerment claim that teachers will be more satisfied with their workplace conditions; therefore, they will be more committed to their work which, in turn, improves the learning environment for students. The truth of this claim should be further investigated. Consequently, studies are needed to determine if any connection between empowerment



practices and benefits for students exists. After all, the real "coin of the realm" in schools is student learning. For the empowerment of teachers to become a lasting and permanent reform, it will have to be shown that it impacts positively on student achievement and benefits teachers. In excellent schools, quality teaching and student learning are what education is all about.

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## Appendix A

### ATTITUDES TOWARD TEACHER EMPOWERMENT SURVEY

#### First Letter to Principals of the Western Region of the NCEA

May, 27, 1995

Dear Principal,

I am the Principal of Bishop Gorman High School, and I am completing a doctorate in Educational Administration at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

I am writing a dissertation on the attitudes and beliefs of Catholic secondary school principals toward teacher empowerment. Participative decision-making, collaboration, and teacher empowerment are all popular phrases to express the idea that teachers should be included in the decision-making process in schools. While there have been studies that have investigated the attitudes and beliefs of public school principals, research on Catholic school principals is scant. I have developed a survey instrument to measure attitudes and beliefs toward teacher empowerment.

The study is a survey of Catholic secondary school principals in the western region of the NCEA. I am asking you for your assistance in this study. Your participation in this study is absolutely crucial if I am to gather the data needed to complete my study and my degree. Your identity will be confidential and your answers are anonymous. There will be no attempt to establish the identity of the respondent, nor examine the answers of any one respondent alone.

Enclosed you will find a copy of this survey instrument along with a pre-addressed, stamped envelope. This survey instrument requires 10-15 minutes of your time. Your prompt response is of great assistance to me in the completion of my study. I ask that you complete and place the survey in the mail quickly: by June 15th at the least. As a colleague in Catholic education here in the west, I know how demanding your days can be at any time of the year. I hope you can find a few minutes to help me with my study. I greatly appreciate your assistance and I thank you in advance for your help.

May God bless your work in Catholic education and my best wishes for you and your school.

Sincerely,

David W. Erbach  
Principal

Second Letter to the Principals  
of the Western Region of the NCEA

June 8, 1995

Dear Principal,

On May 27, 1995 I wrote to you concerning my dissertation study at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

I am writing a dissertation on the attitudes and beliefs of Catholic secondary school principals toward teacher empowerment. Participative decision-making, collaboration, and teacher empowerment are all popular phrases to express the idea that teachers should be included in the decision-making process in schools. While there have been studies that have investigated the attitudes and beliefs of public school principals, research on Catholic school principals is scant. I have developed a survey instrument to measure attitudes and beliefs toward teacher empowerment.

To protect anonymity, I made no attempt to identify the respondents so I have to send the second mailing to the entire survey group. If you have already responded, please simply discard this letter and the enclosures. Please do not send the instruments back a second time. If you have responded, please accept my sincere thanks for your participation in my study. If you have not responded, I am sending you a second survey in case you misplaced the first one. Again I would ask, if at all possible, to please return the survey to me. For my study to be completed, it is important that I get as many responses from my fellow principals in the western region of the NCEA as possible. If you can assist me, please return the enclosed survey in the pre-addressed stamped envelope by July 1. I appreciate your help and I hope your summer is going well.

Sincerely.

David W. Erbach  
Principal

### Attitudes Toward Teacher Empowerment Survey

This is a survey that attempts to study attitudes toward teacher empowerment. Teacher empowerment is defined here as allowing teachers to have influence in practice and policy decisions that most affect their classrooms.

Below are some statements concerning teacher empowerment. Circle the number which most closely approximates your opinion about the statement. Respond to the statement with your specific school setting in mind. There are no right or wrong answers.

Scale: On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 signifying a low level of involvement and 5 signifying a high level of involvement, indicate the degree to which teachers in your school should be involved in the decision-making process regarding the following items. It is very important that your response reflects your view on what should be rather than on what is the level of teacher empowerment in your particular school.

Teachers in your school should participate in decisions involving:

	Low			High	
1. determining goals and priorities for the school	1	2	3	4	5
2. developing departmental curriculum	1	2	3	4	5
3. determining goals and objectives for courses they teach	1	2	3	4	5
4. deciding what electives will be taught	1	2	3	4	5
5. textbook selection	1	2	3	4	5
6. determining specific faculty teaching assignments	1	2	3	4	5
7. determining appropriate instructional methods in their classes	1	2	3	4	5
8. the formulation of academic policies (grading, homework, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
9. the development of the process for teacher evaluation	1	2	3	4	5
10. evaluating other teachers	1	2	3	4	5

	Low			High	
	1	2	3	4	5
11. the evaluation and assessment of students	1	2	3	4	5
12. the selection and use of standardized tests	1	2	3	4	5
13. the placement of students in honors and remedial courses	1	2	3	4	5
14. the formulation of student discipline policies and procedures	1	2	3	4	5
15. determining the content and type of inservice programs	1	2	3	4	5
16. school financial and budget issues	1	2	3	4	5
17. departmental budget issues	1	2	3	4	5
18. the use of facilities and resources	1	2	3	4	5
19. the planning of new or remodeled facilities	1	2	3	4	5
20. the purchasing of instructional supplies	1	2	3	4	5
21. determining the school calendar	1	2	3	4	5
22. determining personnel policies (e.g. sick leave, grievance policy, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
23. determining agendas for faculty meetings	1	2	3	4	5
24. assisting in the hiring of new teachers	1	2	3	4	5
25. determining their prep periods	1	2	3	4	5
26. selecting department chairs	1	2	3	4	5
27. determining scheduling of supervisory duties	1	2	3	4	5
28. determining admissions policies	1	2	3	4	5
29. determining room assignments for teachers	1	2	3	4	5

Listed below are a number of statements about teacher empowerment. Circle the number that best describes your belief. Respond to the statement with your school setting in mind. There are no right or wrong answers.

Scale:

Strongly disagree = 1   Disagree = 2   Undecided = 3   Agree = 4  
Strongly agree = 5

	sd	d	u	a	sa
30. Teacher influence in school-wide decision making does not lead to school improvements.	1	2	3	4	5
31. Involving teachers in the school decision-making process will lead to higher student achievement.	1	2	3	4	5
32. Teacher empowerment will slow down the decision-making process.	1	2	3	4	5
33. Involving teachers in the school decision making process will not lead to higher teacher morale.	1	2	3	4	5
34. Teachers would be willing to invest the time needed to participate in the decision-making process.	1	2	3	4	5
35. Teachers do not have the expertise needed to participate in the decision-making process.	1	2	3	4	5
36. Teacher effectiveness in the classroom will be diminished because of the commitment needed to implement teacher empowerment.	1	2	3	4	5
37. Teachers would be willing to do the work needed to participate in the decision-making process.	1	2	3	4	5
38. Sharing influence with teachers does not diminish the authority of the principal.	1	2	3	4	5
39. Educational decisions are improved in this school when teachers participate in the decision-making process.	1	2	3	4	5
40. Teacher empowerment will lead to increased decision acceptance by teachers.	1	2	3	4	5

sd d u a sa

- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| 41. Implementation of decisions is improved when teachers participate in the decision-making process. | 1   2   3   4   5 |
| 42. Teacher empowerment does not increase the commitment of teachers to their school.                 | 1   2   3   4   5 |
| 43. Involving teachers in decision-making is a process too difficult for a school to sustain.         | 1   2   3   4   5 |

The following demographic information is needed to analyze the responses from the instrument. Please circle or fill in the response that describes you or your school.

1. I am a                                      a. cleric or religious                      b. layperson
2. I am    a. male    b. female
3. I have been a principal for \_\_\_\_\_ years.
4. My school has an enrollment in grades 9 through 12  
of \_\_\_\_\_ students.

Appendix B

DR. ERIC WITHERSPOON SURVEY

Permission Letter from Dr. Witherspoon

Metropolitan School District of Pike Township,  
Indianapolis, Indiana

November 22, 1993

Mr. David Erbach  
2954 Burnham Ave.  
Las Vegas, NV 89109

Dear Mr. Erbach,

Please accept this letter granting you permission to use the survey instrument and any other pertinent parts of my dissertation for your research and your doctoral dissertation.

Best wishes for a successful research project and completion of your degree.

Sincerely,

Eric A. Witherspoon, Ph.D.

Superintendent,

Note.  
Original available upon request.

Dr. Eric Witherspoon Survey

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

- |   |    |   |   |    |
|---|----|---|---|----|
| 1. I feel that teachers should be involved in the decision-making process within this school.                         | SA | A | D | DA |
| 2. Parents should be involved in decisions affecting this school  | SA | A | D | DA |
| 3. Community representativeness should be involved in decisions affecting this school.                                | SA | A | D | DA |
| 4. Students should be involved in decisions affecting this school   | SA | A | D | DA |
| 5. I feel that teachers do have input in the decisions affecting this school.   | SA | A | D | DA |
| 6. Teachers should be involved in only the decisions which affect them directly.                                      | SA | A | D | DA |
| 7. Teachers should be involved in most of the decisions affecting this school   | SA | A | D | DA |
| 8. The principal supports using the building-based shared decision making process in this school.                     | SA | A | D | DA |
| 9. Building-based shared decision making leads to school improvements   | SA | A | D | DA |
| 10. Teachers have meaningful input in establishing goals and setting priorities in this building.                     | SA | A | D | DA |
| 11. Better decisions are made in this school when teachers are involved in a shared decision-making process.          | SA | A | D | DA |
| 12. Teachers have the expertise to be involved in decisions in this school.   | SA | A | D | DA |
| 13. Building-based shared decision-making SIP teams are involved in meaningful decisions, not just "token" decisions. | SA | A | D | DA |



- |   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| 14. Building-based shared decision-making diminishes the authority of the principal.  | SA    A    D    DA |
| 15. Teachers are provided with enough information to make decisions in this building. | SA    A    D    DA |

Use the statement below with items 16-27.

The building-based shared decision-making process should include teachers in decisions involving:

- |   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| 16. School budget and expenditures          | SA    A    D    DA |
| 17. Inservice training and faculty meetings | SA    A    D    DA |
| 18. Principal/teacher relations             | SA    A    D    DA |
| 19. Certificated support personnel          | SA    A    D    DA |
| 20. Parent/ teacher relationships           | SA    A    D    DA |
| 21. Teacher personnel policies              | SA    A    D    DA |
| 22. Student personnel policies              | SA    A    D    DA |
| 23. Evaluation of teachers                  | SA    A    D    DA |
| 24. Curriculum content and philosophy       | SA    A    D    DA |
| 25. Instructional materials                 | SA    A    D    DA |
| 26. Instructional methods and grouping      | SA    A    D    DA |
| 27. School priorities                       | SA    A    D    DA |
| 28. School procedures                       | SA    A    D    DA |

The following descriptive information is needed to analyze the information from the opinionnaires. Please circle the response which best describes you

29. Age:            20-30            31-40            41-50            51-60            over 60

30. Sex:            Male            Female

31. What is the highest degree which you presently hold?

Bachelors    Masters    Masters + 30    Doctorate

32. How many years have you been an educator?

0-3            4-9            10-15            16-20            over 20

33. How many years have you worked in your present position?

0-3            4-9            10-15            16-20            over 20

34. Are you currently a member of or have you served on a SIP team?

Yes            No

## Appendix C

### FACTOR ANALYSIS

#### Factor Analysis of Items 1 through 29

Analysis number 1    Pairwise deletion of cases with missing values

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = .86239

Bartlett Test of Sphericity = 1728.1600, Significance = .00000

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<u>Factor</u>	<u>Eigenvalue</u>	<u>Variance (%)</u>	<u>Cumulative (%)</u>
1	8.58423	29.6	29.6
2	2.18616	7.5	37.1
3	1.57816	5.4	42.6
4	1.48658	5.1	47.7
5	1.27030	4.4	52.1
6	1.18541	4.1	56.2
7	1.15975	4.0	60.2
8	1.00453	3.5	63.6
9	.91792	3.2	66.8
10	.88573	3.1	69.9
11	.78107	2.7	72.6
12	.74684	2.6	75.1
13	.68122	2.3	77.5
14	.65650	2.3	79.7
15	.61514	2.1	81.9
16	.56707	2.0	83.8
17	.54438	1.9	85.7
18	.53641	1.8	87.5
19	.46873	1.6	89.2
20	.42720	1.5	90.6
21	.39228	1.4	92.0
22	.37043	1.3	93.3
23	.35583	1.2	94.5
24	.34178	1.2	95.7
25	.32305	1.1	96.8
26	.28919	1.0	97.8
27	.23827	.8	98.6
28	.20771	.7	99.3
29	.19810	.7	100.0

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Factor Analysis of Items 30 through 43

Analysis number 1 Pairwise deletion of cases with missing values

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = .86873

Bartlett Test of Sphericity = 667.62359, Significance = .00000

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<u>Factor</u>	<u>Eigenvalue</u>	<u>Variance (%)</u>	<u>Cumulative (%)</u>
1	5.05327	36.1	36.1
2	1.24688	8.9	45.0
3	1.09679	7.8	52.8
4	1.01834	7.3	60.1
5	.82581	5.9	66.0
6	.77182	5.5	71.5
7	.68320	4.9	76.4
8	.64707	4.6	81.0
9	.57346	4.1	85.1
10	.54278	3.9	89.0
11	.49452	3.5	92.5
12	.41118	2.9	95.5
13	.34493	2.5	97.9
14	.28996	2.1	100.0

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