

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIMENSIONS OF
CENTRALIZATION AND TEACHER ESPRIT
AND LOYALTY IN OKLAHOMA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By

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CHAPTER I

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Introduction

On November 24, 1980, Wayne K. Hoy, a leader in recent research in the field of educational administration, spoke to a Graduate Student Seminar. At this seminar Dr. Hoy stated that the body of knowledge in the field of educational administration is fragmented and disjointed because of the lack of re-testing and follow-up of previous research in the field. Instead of building on previous research the educational researchers tend to thrash about looking for new concepts to test and new fields to conquer. Hoy admonished educators and researchers to evaluate and replicate past studies; to build on what is known thus developing a reliable, consistent body of knowledge in the field of educational administration. With this admonition in mind this writer has re-examined two dimensions of centralization, hierarchy of authority and participation in decision-making, and their resulting effects on the attitudes of teachers.

Various studies have reported significant relationships between bureaucratic structure of organizations and a variety of attitudinal variables. Flizak (1967), in a study

of the organizational structure of schools, found strong relationships between organizational structure and social and psychological characteristics of teachers. Grassis and Carss (1973) reported highly significant relationships between the nature of organizational structure of grade schools, leadership qualities of principals and job satisfaction among teachers. Coughlan (1971) found significant relationships between the relatively "open" and "closed" organizational structure of schools and job satisfaction among teachers. In a study by George and Bishop (1971), various properties of the organizational structure of schools were investigated and found to have substantial impact on certain personality characteristics of teachers. Hoy, Newland and Blazovsky (1977) found that loyalty to the principal and esprit among teachers were greater with decreased degrees of hierarchy of authority and increased participation in decision-making.

A number of unpublished doctoral dissertations have looked at various aspects of bureaucracy and the effects they have on employees and clients. Anderson (1970) studied various bureaucratic characteristics and student alienation and found there were no significant relationships. Davidson (1980) in a replication of this study arrived at the same conclusions, that is, bureaucracy had little effect on student alienation. Oborny (1970) studied teacher professionalism, organizational structure and leadership of principals. His findings suggested the relationship be-

tween these three variables were far from clear. King (1972) found no significant relationship between teacher militancy and hierarchy of authority. These studies tend to refute the conclusions reported in the literature related to this area.

With some exceptions, the evidence of past studies on organizational structure supports the general assumption that the nature of organizations impacts upon consequent attitudes and behaviors of organizational members. The growing problems which beset the public schools warrant continual investigation of the various items which effect general functioning of schools. One of these factors is hierarchy of authority, an aspect of centralization. Hierarchy of authority has been shown to have considerable impact on worker attitudes and behaviors (Aiken and Hage, 1966; Hoy et al., 1977; Bridges, 1964; Chase, 1952).

Among the attitudinal and behavioral factors which have been found to be significantly affected by various organizational structure variables are esprit and subordinate loyalty. Esprit, also called morale, is vitally important to the work efforts of an organization because it represents a form of incentive for efforts of employees toward the completion of work-related activities (Halpin, 1966). Esprit provides the emotional momentum for workers to pursue work tasks forthrightly. When subordinates show a considerable degree of loyalty for their superiors, subordinates are apparently pleased with the superior's leader-

ship qualities and will likely permit superiors to exercise considerable liberty in making decisions and pursuing certain activities uncontested (Simon, 1965). Such trust is an essential element in the ultimate attainment of organizational goals and objectives.

This study investigated esprit and subordinate loyalty as they relate to the degree of perceived hierarchy of authority and the degree of perceived teacher participation in decision-making in Oklahoma public elementary and secondary schools.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between two aspects of bureaucratic centralization, hierarchy of authority and participation in decision-making, and the esprit of Oklahoma Teachers and the loyalty they have for their principals.

Definition of Terms

In order to maintain consistency between previous studies and this study the following definitions were used:

Centralization: A dimension of bureaucratic organization. The degree to which members participate in decision-making (Aiken and Hage, 1966). The locus of authority to make decisions affecting the organization (Pugh et al., 1965). There are two important aspects of centralization which are:

Hierarchy of Authority. The extent to which members are assigned tasks and then are provided with the freedom to accomplish the task without interruption from their superiors.

Participation in Decision-Making. The degree to which staff members participate in setting goals and policies of the entire organization (Aiken and Hage, 1966).

Esprit: A sense of group morale which arises from the satisfaction of social needs (Halpin, 1966).

Subordinate Loyalty: A quality or state of fealty and support for the directives of an immediate superior. Loyalty to an immediate superior implies an attitude of support for a personality or agent of the organization in whom authority has been officially vested for the purpose of accomplishing the goals and objectives of the organization (Small, 1978).

Assumptions

Several assumptions were made in connection with this study. The measuring instrument has been used in part or totally in previous studies, therefore, it was assumed that the instrument and methodology were adequate for the purpose of this research.

Secondly, it was assumed that the responses provided by the teachers in the Teacher Opinion Questionnaire were representative of their present attitudes toward the school

system of which they are a member. Finally, it was assumed that the sample which was asked to respond were representative of teachers in school systems throughout the State of Oklahoma.

Limitations of the Study

This investigation is concerned with the attitudes of public school teachers in the State of Oklahoma toward selected aspects of bureaucratic centralization. The conclusions, therefore, should be limited to the population sampled and not be construed as necessarily applicable to public school teachers in other states.

Need for the Study

The need for this study is twofold: (1) to contribute to the literature on theory and research in educational organization and leadership behavior; and (2) to provide information concerning the effects that elements of bureaucracy have on teacher attitudes. This information can be used as a guide for Oklahoma school administrators when dealing with faculties in such areas as decision-making, motivation, negotiations and staff development. These vital organizational functions depend upon employee (i.e., teachers) attitudes to be successful. Therefore, the more knowledgeable the organization is concerning the items which effect attitudes the better it should be at controlling those items for the betterment of the organization.

More generally, the study provided empirical evidence with which to test conceptual relationships which have been identified. In this way, more knowledge of teacher attitudes is available for future investigations and for the use of school administrators in facing problems of bureaucracy in the schools.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE, RATIONALE AND HYPOTHESES

Introduction

The first part of this chapter will review selected literature which has a relation to the variables under investigation. The chapter concludes with the rationale supporting each hypothesis followed by the statement of the hypothesis tested.

Review of Selected Literature

Centralization has been defined by Pugh et al. (1963, p. 289) as ". . . the locus of authority to make decisions affecting the organization." More specifically, Hage (1965, p. 293) defines bureaucratic centralization as "hierarchy of authority", which, he suggests, is evidenced by the proportion of workers who take part in decisions made in all areas of the organization. Centralization also defines the extent to which they participate in setting organizational goals and policies and the relative amount of initiative employees are allowed to exercise in accomplishing work-related tasks within the organization.

Aiken and Hage (1966) found that workers who were not

afforded the privilege of some degree of self-direction in work-related tasks exhibited high levels of alienation. Pearlin (1962) reported that nurses who worked in environments which were considered impersonal and inflexible or rigid, with respect to the hierarchical structure, exhibited higher levels of alienation than nurses in less restrictive environments. Hoy et al. (1977) found hierarchy of authority to be negatively related to esprit of teachers and the loyalty they had for their principals. Miskel and Gerhardt (1974) found hierarchy of authority to be a significant predictor of the relative amount of conflict teachers experience at work.

Moeller and Charters (1966) reported that teachers in more highly bureaucratic systems had a significantly greater sense of power than teachers in less bureaucratic systems. They speculate, however, that these findings may be as a result of the tendency for school systems to secure teachers who have high senses of power upon employment.

Worker participation has been commonly associated with a variety of work-related factors. It is generally believed that an increase in participation by workers will cause subsequent increases in productivity and employee morale, and corresponding decreases in employee resistance to change, absenteeism and turn-over (Coch and French, 1948).

Participation by teachers in making decisions on policy and program adoption and hiring and promoting staff has been shown to have significant positive influence on a va-

iety of employee behaviors and attitudes. Aiken and Hage (1966) found that increased participation of this type acted to reduce worker alienation--states of powerlessness, normlessness and social isolation among workers (Horton and Hunt, 1964). Hoy et al. (1977) determined that participation by teachers had positive effects on their esprit and loyalty toward their principals.

Research supports the assumption that participation in decision-making on the part of employees often results in relatively high levels of productivity (e.g., Vroom, 1960; Guest, 1960; Wichert, 1951; Coch and French, 1948). In a rather extensive investigation of the effects of participation on productivity and several other variables (viz., turn-over, absenteeism, efficiency and frequency of grievances) in an industrial setting, Coch and French (1948) found a positive relationship between participation in decisions and worker productivity.

Bridges (1964) studied teacher participation in decision-making and found that teachers favored principals who allowed teachers to participate in decision-making. Chase (1952) discovered that teachers are more likely to exhibit considerable enthusiasm about their school system when participating regularly and fully in adoption of policies than are those teachers with limited participatory privileges.

Esprit describes the enjoyment one derives from significant accomplishments as a member of a group. Seashore

(1954) referred to such group engagement as "groupness". The general notion prevails that employees who perceive themselves as having accomplished something of significance on the job tend to exhibit relatively high levels of morale and are prone to become productive employees.

Halpin (1966) views esprit as the result of the combination of perceived social needs satisfaction and occupational accomplishment by employees. He posited, "Esprit seems to measure the 'genuineness' of the relationship between the group and its leader . . ." (p. 163). Thus, Halpin implies that leader behavior has some significant degree of impact on the esprit of subordinates.

Hoy et al. (1977) found esprit to be positively related to job codification--the formulation of rules and regulations governing job related activities. Their findings suggest that the more concise the job specifications are with respect to rules and regulation, the greater the esprit among teachers. In the same study (Hoy et al.), it was found that esprit was inversely related to rule observation --the enforcement of a given set of rules and regulations. This suggests that teacher esprit increases with less enforcement of the rules and regulations. Hoy et al. infer that, while teachers favor rules and regulations to reduce uncertainty on the job, they abhor strict enforcement of the rules and regulations.

Kunz and Hoy (1976) studied the relationship between various leader styles of principals and the lateral span of

the professional zone of acceptance of teachers. Zone of acceptance defines the hypothetical boundaries within which actions or decisions of an immediate superior are deemed acceptable or tolerable. The objective of the study was to find the relative extent to which the profession-related decisions of the principal went uncontested and orders gained compliance under varied leader styles. The results revealed a significant relationship between various leader styles of principals and their ability to command the loyalty of teachers.

Bierstedt (1970), in his discussion of "charismatic" leadership qualities, posited that the power which a charismatic individual exerts over others is not essentially a result of the individual's authority, but a form of power the individual enjoys as a result of unique personal and interactive characteristics. Bierstedt suggests that "these unique characteristics provide the charismatic individual with the latitude to operate . . . beyond the boundaries of legitimacy" (p. 331).

Simon (1965) suggests that the expansion of a leader's latitude to operate beyond the authority formally entrusted is a worthy challenge to administrators. It would logically follow that administrators who command such unofficial operational latitude would also command a great deal of loyalty from subordinates.

In a study by Hoy et al. (1977), teacher loyalty to the principal was found to be negatively related to aspects

of centralization in schools. Blau and Scott (1962) found loyalty to be positively related to factors associated with worker productivity. They posited that superordinates who were able to gain the loyalty of subordinates were rather successful in gaining compliance with their orders and in inspiring the efforts of the work force. Blau and Scott suggest that common values (p. 144) shared by the organizational superior and subordinates will contribute significantly to the superior's ability to command the loyalty of subordinates. Hoy and Rees (1974) found that highly authoritarian principals command considerable less loyalty from their teachers than those principals who are less authoritarian.

Rationale

In recent years, researchers have discovered significant relationships between organizational structure and numerous attitudinal and behavioral variables (e.g., Hoy et al., 1977; Stewart and Miskel, 1977; Aiken and Hage, 1966). Researchers have proceeded with the assumption that organizational structure impacts on the attitudes and behaviors of organizational members. It is with this assumption that the present investigation was conducted. This investigation examines the relationships between the degree of loyalty of teachers for principals, the esprit among teachers and hierarchy of authority and participation in decision-making in the Oklahoma public elementary and secondary

schools.

In reaction to the findings of Hoy and Williams (1977) on the topic of hierarchical independence, Stewart and Miskel (1977) posited,

The changes in organizational structure toward decentralized decision-making will provide the independence from a variety of hierarchical sources which, in turn, may change subordinate loyalty (p. 8).

The implication related to subordinate loyalty and bureaucratic centralization is--lowering the degree of centralization (decentralizing) will cause an increase in the degree of subordinate loyalty to superiors.

One aspect of centralization, hierarchy of authority, according to the investigation by Hoy et al. (1977), is among the most influential factors involved in the ability of the principal to gain the loyal support of teachers. By this it may be deduced that the principal's leadership skills in delegating and coordinating the various job-related efforts of the staff will tend to enhance the principal's command of loyalty.

The order in which tasks within a school are assigned to groups and members other than the principal has obvious and logical implications for the relative extent and nature of the participation by the teaching staff in making decisions related to the job. Skillful delegation of responsibilities to subordinates offers a degree of assurance that tasks will be performed in general alignment with the principal's expectations. However, skillful delegation of

responsibilities does not always insure that all will go as expected.

The relative autonomy of teachers in self-directing their teaching activities without worry of having to consult with the principal on every small matter is an important issue. If teachers are not permitted a significant degree of self-direction in their pursuit of work activities, it is extremely unlikely that they will be afforded the privilege of participating in such decision-making tasks as hiring and promoting staff and adoption of programs and policies.

In general, participation in decision-making on the part of teachers is commonly viewed as essential to the feeling of belonging and to the feeling of worth among teachers (e.g., Odetola, 1972; George and Bishop, 1971; Coughlan, 1971). The professional inputs of teachers are likely to have positive impact upon teacher esprit--high group morale. Participation is expected, therefore, to be positively related to both esprit and subordinate loyalty. The degree of hierarchy of authority in schools is expected to be negatively related to the esprit and subordinate loyalty of teachers, since it has been argued that the lack of teacher autonomy in accomplishing work activities (high degrees of hierarchy of authority) has unfavorable influence on teacher esprit and the loyalty they show for principals. Based on these observations and predictions, the following hypotheses are formulated for investigation of the posited

relationships:

- H:1 The degree of ESPRIT among teachers varies negatively with the degree of HIERARCHY OF AUTHORITY in public schools.
- H:2 The degree of LOYALTY among teachers to the principal varies negatively with the degree of HIERARCHY OF AUTHORITY in public schools.
- H:3 The degree of ESPRIT among teachers varies positively with the degree of PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING in public schools.
- H:4 The degree of LOYALTY among teachers to the principal varies positively with the degree of PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING in public schools.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN

Introduction

This chapter will describe the research design. First, the procedure, the pilot study and the sampling technique will be discussed. Detail concerning the instrumentation will be provided. The chapter concludes with a description of the statistical procedure used to analyze the data.

Procedure

A three page questionnaire was used for this study. One page requested background information about the teacher. This section asked questions concerning teacher employment, school setting and teacher professional affiliations. A sincere effort was made to keep the respondents anonymous while obtaining information which can be used for additional or for more refined research. Obviously, no two teachers nor no two schools are alike; therefore, the more information available the more refined the research. While it is not the intent of this study to go beyond the stated hypotheses the demographic information gathered in the questionnaire can be used in future research activities (see Appen-

dix A). The remaining sections of the questionnaire measure the independent variables of Hierarchy of Authority and Participation in Decision-Making and the dependent variables of Esprit and Subordinate Loyalty.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to verify the reliability of the Teacher Opinion Questionnaire and to help determine what problems might arise during the survey of the sample population. The pilot study involved 35 Oklahoma public school teachers enrolled in graduate courses in the College of Education at Oklahoma State University. No attempt was made to statistically select this group; rather, their selection was due to chance.

The responses of the pilot group were tested with a Cronbach Alpha Internal Consistency Reliability Scale. This statistical procedure examines the reliability of the instrument by means of coefficients of internal consistency. The Cronbach Alpha statistical process was conducted on the overall questionnaire and each of the subtests. By convention, .70 is generally the minimum acceptance alpha score an instrument should have to be considered internally consistent (Olson, 1981, p. 66). The findings (Table I) indicate a strong reliability for both the overall questionnaire and the various subtests.

TABLE I
CRONBACH ALPHA RELIABILITIES FOR THE
TEACHER OPINION QUESTIONNAIRE
AND THE VARIOUS SUBTEST

Tests	Alpha's
AUTHORITY	.89
PARTICIPATION	.89
ESPRIT	.81
LOYALTY	.88
OVERALL (27 items)	.80

The pilot group responses were then tested with a Pearson correlation coefficient, as this is the statistical procedure selected to test the hypotheses. The Pearson correlations (Table II) were used as a cross reference with the scores of the sample population which are reported in the following chapter.

TABLE II
PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS

	Loyalty	Esprit
Participation	0.4550 P=0.003	0.2074 P=0.116
Authority	-0.5973 P=0.000	-0.4856 P=0.002

Sample

It was determined that a sample of 500 Oklahoma elementary and secondary public school teachers would be the acceptable minimum number needed for this survey. To obtain this sample group the random selection process was

used.

In the 1980-81 Oklahoma Educational Directory each county is listed alphabetically and numbered from 1 to 77. Within each county there are a number of dependent and independent school districts. Using a table of random numbers (Bartz, 1976) fifteen counties were selected (Table III). A second group of random numbers were used to select the school districts within each county which were surveyed (Table III). An effort was made to have a balance between elementary and secondary teachers.

After the districts were selected by the random process the administrator of each district was contacted by telephone. Permission was obtained to survey the teachers in the district. The Administrator, or his designee, either conducted the survey at a regularly scheduled faculty meeting or placed the questionnaires in the teachers' mail boxes to be completed at the teachers' leisure. The questionnaires were then returned to Oklahoma State University in a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

TABLE III
RANDOM SAMPLE OF OKLAHOMA COUNTIES
AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Counties	School Districts	Teachers
# 3 Atoka	#2 Caney	20
	#4 Tushka	21
#13 Cimarron	#2 Felt	11
	#4 Texhoma	6
#15 Coal	#2 Olney	11
	#4 Centrahoma	6
#17 Cotton	#2 Temple	25
	#4 (No fourth district)	
#19 Creek	#2 Depew	23
	#4 Kellyville (Secondary School)	24
#20 Custer	#2 Butler	18
	#4 Custer	24
#21 Delaware	#2 Grove (High School)	37
	#4 Kansas (Secondary School)	23
#30 Harper	#2 Laverne (Elementary School)	13
	#4 (No fourth school district)	
#41 Lincoln	#2 Carney	19
	#4 Davenport	22
#43 Love	#2 Thackerville	15
	#4 Marietta	5
#56 Okmulgee	#2 Dewar	29
	#4 Morris (High School)	21

TABLE III (Continued)

Counties	School Districts	Teachers
#63 Pottawatomie	#2 Bethel (Junior High School)	15
	#4 Earlsboro	17
#64 Pushmataha	#2 Clayton	30
	#4 Albion	6
#71 Tillman	#2 Frederick (High School)	25
	#4 Tipton	34
#77 Woodward	#2 Mooreland	40
	#4 Woodward (Secondary Schools)	84
15 Counties	28 School Districts	594 Teachers

Instrumentation

Independent Variables. Centralization was measured by an index of hierarchy of authority and an index of participation in decision-making developed by Aiken and Hage (1966). The index of hierarchy of authority contains the following five items:

1. Even small matters must be referred to someone higher up for a final answer.
2. There can be little action taken here until a supervisor approves a decision.

3. I have to ask my principal before I do almost anything.
4. Any decision I make has to have my principal's approval.
5. A person who wants to make his own decisions would be quickly discouraged here (p. 501).

Respondents were asked to reply to each statement on a four point scale ranging from 1 (DEFINITELY FALSE) to 4 (DEFINITELY TRUE). A high score indicates a high degree of hierarchy of authority. Aiken and Hage (1966) reported reliability coefficients between .80 and .85.

The index of participation in decision-making consists of the following four items:

1. How frequently do you participate in decisions on the adoption of new policies?
2. How often do you participate in decisions on the promotion of any of the professional staff?
3. How frequently do you participate in the decisions to hire new staff?
4. How frequently do you participate in the decisions on the adoption of new programs (p. 502)?

Respondents were asked to answer in terms of the relative frequency of participation--NEVER, RARELY, SOMETIMES, OFTEN, VERY FREQUENTLY. The scale of response ranges from

1 (NEVER) to 5 (VERY FREQUENTLY). A high score indicates a relatively high degree of participation in decision-making. Aiken and Hage (1966) have reported coefficient Alphas for the index between .70 and .75.

Dependent Variables. Esprit and subordinate loyalty were measured by an index of esprit and an index of subordinate loyalty, respectively. Esprit was measured by a ten item index from the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire developed by Halpin and Croft (1966). The following are examples of the items included in the index of esprit:

1. Teachers at this school show much school spirit.
2. Most of the teachers here accept the faults of their colleagues.
3. The morale of teachers is high.
4. In faculty meeting there is the feeling of 'let's get things done.'

Respondents were asked to answer in terms of how often or to what extent each situation occurs--NEVER, RARELY, SOMETIMES, OFTEN, VERY FREQUENTLY. The scale ranges from 1 (NEVER) to 5 (VERY FREQUENTLY). A high score indicates a relatively high degree of esprit. Halpin (1963) has reported a split-half reliability coefficient of .75 for the index of esprit and has documented support for the construct validity of the measure.

Subordinate loyalty was measured by an eight item

Likert-type index developed by Hoy and Williams (1971). The following are examples of the items contained in the index of subordinate loyalty:

1. About how often is your principal responsible for the mistakes in your work unit?
2. If you had a chance to teach for the same pay in another school under the direction of another principal, how would you feel about moving?
3. All in all, how satisfied are you with your principal?
4. Generally speaking, how much confidence and trust do you have in your principal?

Respondents were asked to answer each question on a five point scale ranging from 1 (NEVER, HIGHLY INTERESTED, DEFINITELY WOULD NOT, EXTREMELY DISSATISFIED and ABSOLUTELY NONE) to 5 (VERY FREQUENTLY, HIGHLY UNINTERESTED, DEFINITELY WOULD, DEFINITELY IS, EXTREMELY SATISFIED and THE UT-MOST). A high score indicates a relatively high degree of subordinate loyalty. Construct validity for the measure has been supported by several studies and the subtest has consistently achieved reliability Alphas between .90 and .95 (Hoy and Williams, 1971).

Analysis

The data obtained from this study were keypunched and computer processed. The Statistical Package for the Social

Sciences (Nie et al., 1975) was utilized in all the statistical analyses. To test the hypotheses the Pearson Correlation was used. The Pearson r is a statistical procedure used to summarize the relationship between two variables. The closer the correlation coefficient is to 1.0, the stronger the relationship between the two variables.

A Pearson r was calculated for the relationship between each independent variable and the two dependent variables. These coefficients and other findings of the study are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Introduction

In this chapter the presentation and analysis of the data will be reported as they relate to each of the hypotheses examined. Six hundred questionnaires were mailed to the 28 randomly selected public schools in 15 counties across the State of Oklahoma. Of this number, 505 were returned and tabulated. This is a return rate of 84%. The statistical treatment used for this study was the Pearson Moment Product Correlation (Tables IV and V). Adhering to common practice, the writer accepted hypotheses which were supported at the .05 level of significance.

Hypothesis One

H:1 The degree of ESPRIT among teachers varies negatively with the degree of HIERARCHY OF AUTHORITY in public schools.

The calculated correlation coefficient was -0.3462 . With 500 degrees of freedom an r value of $.088$ was needed at the 0.05 level. There, the hypothesis was supported.

TABLE IV
MEASURE OF CENTRAL TENDENCY

Variable	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.
Participation	505	8.3980	3.2419
Authority	505	9.6495	3.8128
Loyalty	505	29.9723	5.8601
Esprit	505	37.1822	6.2690

TABLE V
PRODUCT-MOMENT CORRELATIONS BETWEEN MEASURES
OF CENTRALIZATION AND ESPRIT AND
SUBORDINATE LOYALTY

Measures of Centralization	Esprit	Subordinate Loyalty
Hierarchy of Authority	-0.3462	-0.3425
Participation in Decision-Making	0.2869	0.2125

$p < .001$

Hypothesis Two

H:2 The degree of LOYALTY among teachers to principal varies negatively with the degree of HIERARCHY OF AUTHORITY in the public schools.

The calculated correlation coefficient was -0.3425 .

With 500+ degrees of freedom, an r value of $.088$ was needed at the 0.05 level. Therefore, the hypothesis was supported at a weak to moderate level of significance.

Hierarchy of Authority

Oklahoma teachers perceived a fairly low to moderate level of hierarchy of authority in the public schools. The mean score of central tendency for hierarchy of authority for all teachers sampled was 9.65 with a standard deviation of 3.81 (see Table IV). However, the teachers do react to the hierarchy of authority with negative attitudes as evidenced by the correlation of -0.351 in both esprit and loyalty to their principals (see Table V). The pilot group responses to hierarchy of authority were much stronger than the sample group. The calculated coefficients for the pilot group's authority/esprit was -0.4856 and for authority/loyalty it was -0.5973 . These stronger relationships by the pilot group can probably be explained by the fact that they are somewhat dissatisfied with their present positions. Their enrollment in administrative courses indicates they plan to move into higher positions in the schools' hierarchy of authority, thereby, becoming part of the power structure.

Hypothesis Three

H:3 The degree of ESPRIT among teachers varies positively with the degree of PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING in the public schools.

The calculated correlation coefficient was 0.2869. With 500 degrees of freedom, an r value of .088 was needed. Therefore, the hypothesis was supported at a weak level of significance.

Hypothesis Four

H:4 The degree of LOYALTY among teachers to the principal varies positively with the degree of PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING in public schools.

The calculated correlation coefficient was 0.2125. With 500 degrees of freedom, an r value of .088 was needed at the 0.05 level. Therefore, the hypothesis was supported at a weak level of significance.

Participation in Decision-Making

A mean score of 8.3980, standard deviation of 3.2419, was achieved by the Oklahoma teachers sampling group indicating that participation in decision-making rarely occurs in the public schools. However, the teachers do respond to this limited participation with positive, if weak, attitudes as evidenced by the correlation of 0.2869 for esprit and 0.2125 for loyalty to the principals (see Table V). The pilot group responses to participation in decision-making was mixed and somewhat puzzling. They responded much more strongly than the sample to the participation/loyalty test

with a correlation of 0.4550, but for the participation/esprit test they had a weak correlation of 0.2074 which did not reach the 0.05 level and was not significant. Perhaps these findings can be explained, as previously mentioned, by noting that the pilot group could be unhappy with their present positions (low esprit). By studying to become administrators they feel an obligation to support their principals as they may someday be a peer (strong loyalty).

Esprit

Oklahoma teachers perceived esprit among teachers to be moderate. The mean score of the sample group was 37.1822 with a standard deviation of 6.2690 (see Table IV). This seems to indicate that teacher morale is good although they have little opportunity to be involved in organizational decisions and are faced with greater degrees of hierarchy of authority than they like.

Loyalty

A group mean of 29.9723 with a standard deviation of 5.8601 (see Table IV) was obtained by Oklahoma teachers sampled on the index of subordinate loyalty for this study. This suggests a weak to moderate level of loyalty shown principals by Oklahoma teachers. Loyalty does not appear to be a major item which teachers are expected to deal with on a day to day basis. In the typical school, the teachers

expect the principal to perform certain functions while the teachers carry out their duties. Loyalty is not an issue in this scheme.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this investigation was to examine the relationships between two aspects of bureaucratic centralization, hierarchy of authority and participation and the esprit of Oklahoma teachers as well as the loyalty they have for their principals. Four hypotheses were formulated. Two of these hypotheses predicted that hierarchy of authority would be negatively related to esprit and subordinate loyalty. Both hypotheses were accepted. Two additional hypotheses predicted that participation by teachers in decision-making would be positively related to esprit and subordinate loyalty. These hypotheses were supported. In summary, hierarchy of authority and participation in decision-making were significantly related to both esprit and subordinate loyalty.

Oklahoma teachers perceive hierarchy of authority as being low in Oklahoma schools. The participants of this study seemed to indicate a low amount of participation in decisions related to the job. Despite the low level of participation, Oklahoma teachers retain a moderate to high amount of esprit and loyalty for their principals. The

teachers apparently feel quite content to do their jobs and leave the decision-making to the principal and other superordinates.

Oklahoma teachers generally have a considerable degree of autonomy with respect to pursuing job-related tasks. They apparently are afforded adequate leeway to self-direct work-related tasks and are, therefore, not hampered by having to consult with superiors on small matters. Under these general work conditions, the teachers who participated in this study maintained a relatively high degree of esprit and were significantly loyal to their principals.

Participation in decision-making was shown to have a modest influence on teacher esprit. Apparently, esprit is greater with more participation by teachers in making decisions on matters which have been considered primarily the responsibilities of the principal or other superordinate (i.e., adoption of new policies and programs, hiring and promotion of staff). This agrees with the findings of Hoy et al. (1977) who reported a weak significant positive relationship (.24, $p < .05$) between the two variables. The present study revealed a correlation of .28 ($p < .000$), between the variables. It appears that Oklahoma teachers would rather have greater participation in decision-making matters. As this involvement is limited, perhaps they maintain a fairly high level of esprit because of the freedom afforded them to pursue their job of teaching. At least the esprit and loyalty of Oklahoma teachers are not

adversely affected by the lack of their participation in making decisions on adoption of programs and policies and hiring of staff. The studies of Bridges (1964) and Chase (1952) suggest that such participation is viewed by teachers as being administrative in nature and, therefore, decisions for the principal.

The high degree of loyalty to principals indicated by Oklahoma teachers suggested they favored the leadership qualities of their principals. Moreover, if given the opportunity to move to another school under another principal, for the same pay, most indicated they would have little interest in such a move. However, a majority of teachers indicated they would not consider transferring to another school, doing the same job at the same pay, with their principal if it meant separating from the rest of their staff. This suggests that the teachers value cohesiveness or "groupness," discussed by Seashore (1948), above the loyalty they otherwise have for their principals. This might imply that the administrator should do his job well and not expect the staff to give total loyalty to him.

Another significant finding was that most Oklahoma teachers felt their principals generally acted in their interests and would have confidence in the principal's decisions even when the decisions seemed against the current interests of the teachers in the long run. Therefore, teachers who perceive their principals as performing work tasks favorably exhibit relatively high levels of esprit

and loyalty to their principals. The implication of this seems to be the teachers tend to prefer a task-oriented principal over the people-oriented principal.

It has been summarized in the present study that Oklahoma teachers are afforded an ample opportunity for self-direction in regard to basic teaching activities. The autonomy they are given relative to specific day to day teaching activities is, perhaps, more important to them than administrative concerns such as promotion and hiring of staff. It is logically this self-directional element common in Oklahoma schools which partially accounts for the considerable degree of esprit among the teachers. Their apparent trust and general satisfaction with the leadership qualities of their principals support the notion that teachers like the administrative practices presently being employed in the schools. If these conclusions are accurate the weak relationships between participation in decision-making and esprit and loyalty in the present investigation is quite understandable. The data show that teachers do not participate in decision-making on administrative matters. However, they make their own decisions on matters related specifically to the activities of teaching.

Hage (1965) cited evidence supporting the assumption that esprit, which refers to as job satisfaction, is higher when centralization is low, low hierarchy of authority and high participation in decision-making. Aiken and Hage (1966) found alienation, implying an absence of esprit, a-

mong workers increased when they were denied participation in decision-making. Hoy, Newland and Blazousky found esprit and subordinate loyalty among teachers to be negatively related to hierarchy of authority and participation in decision-making. This study offers support for the findings of the forementioned studies. It has been shown in the present study that Oklahoma teachers maintain a high level of esprit and loyalty to their principals despite the low level of their participation in decision-making. Significant relationships between esprit and subordinate loyalty were found in the present study (see Table V).

Recommendations

The following research recommendations are made as a result of this study:

1. Additional research is needed to supplement the present literature on hierarchy of authority, participation in decision-making and their relationships with esprit and subordinate loyalty.

2. The development of instruments which will obtain the teachers' opinion as to what the hierarchical structure should be and to what extent teachers should be involved in decision-making.

3. A sampling technique needs to be devised which will ensure representation of the teachers from the major urban areas of the state.

The amount of research which has been conducted in the

area of teacher attitudes and elements of bureaucracy has been limited and fragmentary. This study of Oklahoma public school teachers verifies the literature which is available. However, it must be emphasized that the conclusions reached in this study apply only to the State of Oklahoma during the Spring of 1981.

It is possible that history plays an important part with attitudes and behaviors. A quick review of the literature, Wichert (1951), Chase (1952), Pugh et al. (1963), Bridges (1964), indicates workers attitudes toward bureaucracy has been constant for the last thirty years. To the present time no general study has been conducted. The various isolated studies need to be pulled together and used as a foundation for a thorough nation wide effort to determine the attitudes of the nations teachers.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

PRODUCT-MOMENT CORRELATIONS BETWEEN MEASURES
OF CENTRALIZATION AND ESPRIT AND SUB-
ORDINATE LOYALTY BY TEACHING LEVEL,
LOCATION, EXPERIENCE AND
PEER LEADERSHIP

Measures of Centralization	Esprit	Subordinate Loyalty
<u>Elementary</u>		
Hierarchy of Authority	-0.3166	-0.2882
Participation in Decision-Making	0.1705	0.1117*
<u>Secondary</u>		
Hierarchy of Authority	-0.4528	-0.4338
Participation in Decision-Making	0.3143	0.2302
<u>Urban</u>		
Hierarchy of Authority	-0.0975*	-0.3341
Participation in Decision-Making	0.0599*	0.1248*
<u>Suburban</u>		
Hierarchy of Authority	-0.4452	-0.3687
Participation in Decision-Making	0.3284	0.2956
<u>Rural</u>		
Hierarchy of Authority	-0.4103	-0.3771
Participation in Decision-Making	0.2796	0.1788

Continued

Measures of Centralization	Esprit	Subordinate Loyalty
<u>Experience (less than 11 years)</u>		
Hierarchy of Authority	-0.3699	-0.3937
Participation in Decision-Making	0.2819	0.1874
<u>Experience (more than 11 years)</u>		
Hierarchy of Authority	-0.4294	-0.3592
Participation in Decision-Making	0.2292	0.1908
<u>Peer Leadership</u>		
Hierarchy of Authority	-0.3325	-0.4494
Participation in Decision-Making	0.2963	0.2187
<u>No Leadership</u>		
Hierarchy of Authority	-0.4145	-0.3603
Participation in Decision-Making	0.2844	0.2470

*p > .05

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for letting me use your school as part of the research study for my doctoral dissertation. I am trying to identify attitudes of Oklahoma public school teachers concerning loyalty and morale based on perceived levels of bureaucracy within the school organization.

You, or your designee, may hand the enclosed questionnaires to the teachers at a regularly scheduled faculty meeting or place them in teachers mail boxes to be completed at their leisure. When the questionnaires are completed, please return them in the enclosed stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Again, I wish to thank you for your cooperation in this study.

Yours very truly,

Jim Parker

APPENDIX C

BACKGROUND INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE INTENDED TO GATHER SOME IMPORTANT INFORMATION WHICH WILL AID IN THE ANALYSES RELATED TO THIS STUDY. PLEASE RESPOND AS ACCURATELY AS YOU POSSIBLY CAN.

1. What are the grade levels at your school?
(Circle the appropriate grades)
K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
2. At what grade level do you teach?
(Circle the appropriate grades)
K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
3. Please specify your teaching area(s). _____
4. What is the approximate size of your average class?
Less than 10() 10-15() 16-20() 21-30() More than 30()
5. How many full-time teachers (including yourself) teach at your school?
1-10() 11-15() 16-20() 21-30() More than 30()
6. How many assistant principals does your school have?
0() 1() 2() 3() 4() 5 or more()
7. In what type of demographic area is your school located?
Urban() Suburban() Rural()
8. How many years have you been teaching in public or private school?
0-2() 3-5() 6-8() 9-11() 12-15() 16-20() 21 or more()

9. How long have you taught under your present principal?
 $\frac{1}{2}$ year or less() 1 year() $1\frac{1}{2}$ years - 3 years() More than 3 years()
10. How long have you taught in the present school system?
 $\frac{1}{2}$ year or less() 1 year() $1\frac{1}{2}$ years - 3 years() More than 3 years()
11. Are you a member of any local, state or national professional organization?
YES() NO()
12. Do you hold office or assume any duties in any professional organization?
YES() NO()
13. Do you have an official leadership role at your school among your professional peers?
 YES() NO()
14. Professionally, have you worked in a capacity other than as a classroom teacher?
YES() NO()
15. Have you ever been employed as an administrator in the field of education?
YES() NO() If "YES", specify number of years_____)

APPENDIX D

TEACHER OPINION QUESTIONNAIRE

TEACHER OPINION QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS: THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS CONCERN SOME OF THE CONDITIONS AT YOUR SCHOOL. PLEASE RESPOND TO EACH QUESTION ALONG THE SCALE RANGING FROM "DEFINITELY FALSE" TO "DEFINITELY TRUE".

	DEFINITELY FALSE		DEFINITELY TRUE	
1. There can be little action taken here until a supervisor approves a decision.	1	2	3	4
2. A person who wants to make his own decisions would be quickly discouraged here.	1	2	3	4
3. Even small matters must be referred to someone higher up for a final answer.	1	2	3	4
4. I have to ask my principal before I do almost anything.	1	2	3	4
5. Any decision I make has to have my principal's approval.	1	2	3	4

PLEASE INDICATE HOW FREQUENTLY YOU PARTICIPATE IN THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITES.

	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	VERY FREQUENTLY
6. How frequently do you participate in decisions on the adoption of new policies?	1	2	3	4	5
7. How often do you participate in decisions on the <u>promotion</u> of any of the professional staff?	1	2	3	4	5
8. How frequently do you participate in the decisions to <u>hire</u> new staff?	1	2	3	4	5
9. How frequently do you participate in the decisions on the adoption of new programs?	1	2	3	4	5

TEACHER OPINION QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS: FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS AND QUESTIONS, CIRCLE THE NUMBER WHICH BEST INDICATES HOW OFTEN EACH SITUATION OCCURS. 1 NEVER; 2 RARELY; 3 SOMETIMES; 4 OFTEN; 5 VERY FREQUENTLY.

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Teachers at this school show much school spirit. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. There is considerable laughter when teachers gather informally. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Most of the teachers here accept the faults of their colleagues. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. School supplies are readily available for use in classwork. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Custodial service is available when needed. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Teachers spend time after school with students who have individual problems. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. The morale of teachers is high. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. The teachers here accomplish their work with great vim, vigor and pleasure. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. In faculty meetings there is the feeling of 'let's get things done'. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Extra books are available for classroom use. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

11.	About how often is your principal responsible for the mistakes in your work unit?	NEVER				VERY FREQUENTLY
		1	2	3	4	5
12.	If you had a chance to teach for the same pay in another school under the direction of another principal, how would you feel about moving?	HIGHLY INTERESTED				HIGHLY UNINTERESTED
		1	2	3	4	5
13.	If your principal were transferred and you and you alone in your staff were given a chance to move with the principal (doing the same work at the same pay), would you feel like making the move?	DEFINITELY WOULD NOT				DEFINITELY WOULD
		1	2	3	4	5
14.	Is your principal the kind of person with whom you like working?	DEFINITELY IS NOT				DEFINITELY IS
		1	2	3	4	5
15.	All in all, how satisfied are you with principal?	DISSATISFIED				SATISFIED
		1	2	3	4	5
16.	Generally speaking, how much confidence and trust do you have in your principal?	ABSOLUTELY NONE				THE UTMOST
		1	2	3	4	5
17.	Principals at times must make decisions which seem to be against the current interests of their subordinates. When this happens to you as a teacher, how much trust do you have that your principal's decision is in your interest in the long run?	ABSOLUTELY NONE				THE UTMOST
		1	2	3	4	5
18.	How much loyalty do you feel toward your principal?	ABSOLUTELY NONE				THE UTMOST
		1	2	3	4	5

VITA²

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Thesis: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIMENSIONS OF
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