

A GRID AND GROUP INTERPRETATION OF NEWCOMERS'
VOICE IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS
IN SELECTED ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

BY

BETHANY LYNNETT KANALY

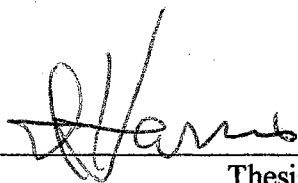
Bachelor of Science
University of Central Oklahoma
Edmond, Oklahoma
1989

Masters of Education
University of Central Oklahoma
Edmond, Oklahoma
1992

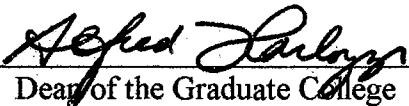
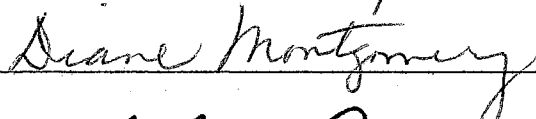
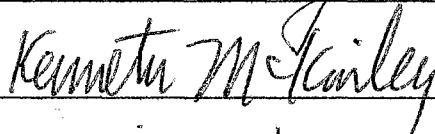
Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
December, 2000

A GRID AND GROUP INTERPRETATION OF NEWCOMERS'
VOICE IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS
IN SELECTED ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Thesis Approved:



Thesis Advisor



Dean of the Graduate College

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank Dr. Harris, dissertation advisor, for his help, encouragement, guidance and friendship throughout this process. I also wish to thank Dr. Martin Burlingame, Dr. Ken McKinley and Dr. Diane Montgomery for their time, valuable input, support and consent to serve as committee members for this study.

When taking on a project such as this, one quickly realizes she can't do it alone. I wish to acknowledge all the people who cheered me on, supported me and talked me through the frustrations. To my sisters Margaret, Trena and Adrienne and my mother Judy, I want you know how invaluable you all are to me. Thank you for all your help.

Most of all I want to thank my husband, Ryan. One never knows how much support is needed from your spouse until he gives it unconditionally. You were continually supportive, patient, and let me invade your office to work. I dedicate this dissertation to you. Thank you for the encouragement, love and support throughout this process. I could not have done it without you!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. DESIGN OF THE STUDY.....	1
Statement of the Problem	3
Purpose of the Study	5
Research Question	5
Theoretical/Conceptual Framework.....	5
Procedures	8
Researcher Biography and Nature of the Study	8
Data Needs	9
Data Sources	9
Data Collection	11
Data Analyses	11
Significance of the Study	12
Research	12
Practice	12
Theory	13
Summary	13
II. THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE	14
Introduction	14
Organizational Decision Making	14
Newcomer Integration	24
Grid and Group	38
Grid Dimensions	39
High Grid	39
Low Grid	40
Group Dimensions	40
High Group	41
Low Group	41
Grid and Group Quadrants	42

Chapter	Page
Summary	44
III. METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES	45
Methodology	45
Data Collection Procedures	49
Surveys	49
Interviews.....	51
Observations	51
Data Analysis Procedures	52
Summary	54
IV. PRESENTATION OF DATA	55
The School District	55
Case One: Oak Elementary	55
The Setting	55
History of the School	58
Organizational Decision Making	60
Curriculum	60
Discipline	63
Newcomer Integration	65
Leadership	70
Case Two: Pine Elementary	76
The Setting	76
History of the School	78
Organizational Decision Making	79
Curriculum	79
Technology	81
Newcomer Integration	83
Parent Involvement	91
Leadership	94
Summary	96

Chapter	Page
V. RESEARCH ANALYSIS	98
Survey Outcomes	98
Oak Elementary	98
Pine Elementary	100
Grid Analysis	103
Oak Elementary	103
Pine Elementary	104
Group Analysis	105
Oak Elementary	106
Pine Elementary	108
Summary of Grid and Group Analysis	110
VI. INTERPRETATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND COMMENTARY	113
Interpretations	113
Summary	113
Data Needs	113
Data Sources	113
Data Collection	113
Data Analyses	113
Limitations	114
Findings	115
Conclusions	115
Summary	115
Implications	117
Theory	117
Research	118
Practice	119
Commentary	120
REFERENCES	121

APPENDIXES	124
APPENDIX A-SURVEY	125
APPENDIX B-PARTICIPANT LETTER	127
APPENDIX C-QUESTIONS	129
APPENDIX D-RESEARCH AGENDA AND STUDY NEEDS	131
APPENDIX E-CONSENT FORM	133
APPENDIX F-INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM	136

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Typology of Grid and Group	7
II. Typology of Oak Elementary	100
III. Typology of Pine Elementary	102

Chapter I

Design of the Study

Leadership in education has been multifarious and struggled with the charge to empowerment of teachers through shared leadership, (Colbert & Kirby, 1994). Colbert and Kirby (1994) go on to say the ability to share leadership is linked to leadership authenticity and the leader's willingness to empower teachers through expanding teacher knowledge. They suggest the culture of the organization may influence leader authenticity and teacher empowerment. Colbert and Kirby (1994) define empowerment as teachers/staff that have greater status, access to decision making, and opportunities for improving their knowledge and skills, suggesting decisions such as addressing issues of school resources, curriculum materials, personnel and curriculum, and instruction will empower teachers and give leaders authenticity. Often, the first consideration in restructuring efforts toward teacher empowerment is giving teachers a voice in decision making (Colbert & Kirby, 1994).

Colbert and Kirby (1994) state the elevation of teachers is dependent on teachers' perceptions of the importance of issues and how they are allowed to voice their opinions. They must see the decisions they are making are important and effective for the good of the whole. "Participatory decisions were defined as those shared decisions which affected more than one teacher or classroom" (Imber, Neidt, & Reyes, 1990, p. 217). According to Imber, et.al. (1990), decision making (DM) is the educational reformers' idea of a way to improve schools, teacher job satisfaction, and student outcomes. Educational reformers feel that by including teachers in the decision-making process they will "...ultimately raise the achievements of students indirectly by increasing teacher productivity, effectiveness,

and job satisfaction” (Imber et. al., 1990, p. 216). While teachers become more accustomed to decision making in site based management, the leader prepares to give up more power.

Hoy and Tarter (1993) present decision making in terms of zones of acceptance, described as decision making for subordinates to school administration. This encompasses all who fall under educational administration leadership. Hoy and Tartar (1993, p.6) believe, “Subordinates should be involved in the decision-making process... they have the knowledge and skill to improve decisions... they have a personal stake in the outcome.”

To what extent do all teachers have an equal opportunity to participate in DM? For instance, do new teachers have an equal opportunity in DM? Is their voice considered part of the whole? Teachers new to organizations come with their own perceptions of their job-role and their personal values and experiences attached to those perceptions. How newcomers are accepted into the culture may differ from their expectations. Heck and Wolcott (1997) refer to this as organizational socialization and defined it as the process by which newcomers are taught the knowledge and skills necessary in organizational goal setting and perspectives for decision making. Ashforth, Saks and Lee (1998) describe a similar notion for socialization which they term institutional socialization, reflecting a more structured form of socialization. This involves the more mechanical or duty aspects of the newcomers’ role. Role definition such as decision making, committee involvement, and professional development are aspects that will uphold the administrative and professional dynamics of their job. Ashforth et. al. (1998) contend newcomers are not encouraged to participate in innovation and the motivation of organizational responsibilities, but are instead carefully structured into the organization to

protect the investment and to guard against risks newcomers might bring to the organization. With the pressure for newcomers to acclimate themselves to a new setting and the culture that exists, to what degree are they involved in DM processes of the organization? How or do specific cultures foster the inclusion of new teachers into the DM process?

Statement of the Problem

DM is designed to give all teachers a voice in decisions. For instance, ownership by teachers in the decision-making process within their schools has been determined to be valuable in various aspects of their role as teachers (Jones, 1997). Hoy and Tarter (1993) say the value of ownership depends on the type of decisions in which teachers are allowed to participate. Such decisions can include the following questions. How did the decisions impact the teachers and their role? Do the teachers have a stake in the decisions? Are the outcomes equitable? According to Imber, Neidt, and Reyes (1990), DM is educational reformers' idea of a way to improve schools, teacher job satisfaction and student outcomes. Educational reformers feel by including teachers in the decision-making process, they will ultimately raise the achievements of students indirectly by increasing teacher productivity, effectiveness, and job satisfaction (Jones, 1994).

Though DM is designed to give all teachers a voice, not all teachers have an equal opportunity to be involved in DM. According to Ashforth et. al. (1998), newcomers are not always included in the decision-making processes. They stated that some organizations had an inclination toward reproducing the status quo with newcomers, and, therefore, were more likely to conform the newcomers' attitudes and behaviors to fit the organization.

One possible explanation for this dilemma can be found in cultural theory. Cultural theory looks at both context and social behavior. Mary Douglas (1982) posits institutions do not have minds of their own and suggests social order determines the degree to which people in an institution can react and respond to change, use information, and, therefore, effectively integrate new members. Douglas (1982) has developed a typology of grid and group that could be helpful in exploring and explaining how organizations include newcomers in DM and professional socialization. One speculation is the cultural dimensions of grid and group are significant factors in the development and manifestation of socialization characteristics in an organization. Thus, Douglas's (1982) typology of grid and group will be used in this study to explore elementary school organizations and explain the degree to which DM characteristics are manifested in each organization.

School cultures are multi-faceted, thus often making it difficult for new members to feel connected and accepted (Cawyer & Friedrich, 1998). Cultures are diverse because they are made up of the common values and beliefs of the organization that have evolved over time (Sarason, 1996). When entering new schools, newcomers must acclimate themselves to the schools' unique culture and organizational dynamics (Heck & Wolcott, 1997). It is these cultures that newcomers must accept as their own and begin to understand for professional socialization. The acceptance of the newcomer by the members of the organization is integral to the newcomer's sense of organizational socialization (Heck & Wolcott, 1997). Often the newcomers do not gain the socialization they require to clearly understand their role in the organization, and, consequently, become disappointed with organizational reality (Larson, 1996).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the culture of the public school organization and how it impacts the degree of DM and organizational socialization for newcomers including the examination of newcomers' inclusion in DM on issues of site-based management such as curriculum, budget, and staffing. This study examined the degree to which newcomers are socialized into the DM process and the newcomers' perceptions of their roles in DM.

Research Question

The basic research question addressed was, "How do the dimensions of grid and group explain the socialization of newcomers into DM procedures of the organization?"

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

Using Douglas's (1982) grid and group theory of cultural analysis allows for a connection between the organization in terms of how cultures assert themselves. Douglas (1982) offers a framework that allows for participation from the group, to analyze specific dynamics of the organization that delineates common strands of behavior within the unique cultures of the organization. Her framework provides opportunity for self-examination by the members and provides significant application for leadership within the organization. Grid and group interpretation of organizational socialization of newcomers in the DM process submits one more dimension to perceptions of the degree of DM within organizations. By initiating the framework, Douglas (1982) contends that a specific culture will emerge. Many secondary cultures may exist, but progressively one will emanate the characteristics of a culture that influences the dynamics of the organization, one that will guide the values, norms, and beliefs of the group. Analyzing the culture may

allow for the identification of “ways of doing” that influence the degree of DM within an organization.

Douglas’s (1982) framework permits the individual personality to emerge and define the culture of the organization. She use a teacher survey that allows teachers/members to rate labor interests and cultural bias. The survey ultimately determines a specific cultural quadrant that explains and defines the organization’s unique culture. She describes them in terms of grid and group dimensions. Grid dimensions are defined as the degree to which an individual's choices are constrained within a social system by imposed formal prescriptions such as role expectations, rules and procedures (Harris, 1995). Group dimensions is the degree to which people value collective relationships and are committed to a social unit larger than the individual (Harris, 1995). Within the group dimension there is high-group and low-group classifications. Within the grid dimension there is high-grid and low-grid classifications. Douglas intertwines the two dimensions by fusing the classifications into four different quadrants to isolate a culture within each quadrant.

High-group is expressed as a system of criteria that is explicit to the inclusion of the group. This is a set of traditions and standards that have become important in a system that upholds the social survival of the group goals over individual goals. It is what makes the culture feel secure. The group will pull together to maintain the traditions of the system. In low-group communities there is not strong evidence of a consensus of values and goals. The group does not work toward a common goal. The maintenance of individual goals is the primary rule of functioning. The group tend to be parts of groups working at limited goals. They are involved in only short-term activities and participate in varied and low capacities. They do not have strength by allegiance to carry out or even

create traditions for the larger group's goals. They usually act in their own best interests and not for the good of the whole.

The grid continuum also promotes a high and low consideration. High-grid refers to the social context in which rules and roles control the individual life choices. Their actions are constrained by a social system that promotes specific expectations, procedures, and rules that must be emulated by the group. The individual's life must conform to the bureaucratic-type regulations that maintain the social system. Low-grid is typically the decision of individuals to embrace autonomy and the independence to make independent choices. There are few comparisons between members. Individuals are recognized more for their personal character than for their roles in the organization. Douglas's (1982) four quadrant typology can be seen in **TABLE I**.

TABLE I
TYOLOGY OF GRID AND GROUP

High-Grid	A. Bureaucratic System	B. Corporate System
Low-Grid	D. Individualist System	C. Collectivist System
	Low -Group	High-Group

SYSTEMS CHARACTERISTICS:

A. Bureaucratic (High grid/Low group):

1. There is little individual autonomy.
2. It maintains a hierarchical environment.
3. Individual behavior is fully defined without question.
4. Relationships are outside of the group.
5. There is little value on group goals.

B. Corporate (High grid/High group):

1. Social relationships and experiences are influenced by group standards.
2. Individual goals are derived from group goals.
3. Roles are hierarchical (at the top the roles have unique power, limited to a small number of experts).
4. There are many role distinctions at the middle and lower levels.
5. Survival of the group goals are most important.

C. Collectivist (Low grid/High group):

1. There are few social distinctions.
2. Role status is competitive, but, due to group influence, rules are stable.
3. Group survival is very important.
4. Corporate goals are valued.
- 5.

D. Individualist (Low grid/ Low group):

1. Individuals are not constrained by enforced rules.
2. Individual autonomy is high.
3. Role status and rewards are competitive and based on merits.
4. Little value is placed on group survival.
5. There is an attitude of "What's in it for me?"

Using this framework provides a clear picture of characteristics of organizations that influence the culture and, ultimately, the function of the organization.

Procedures

Researcher Biography and Methodological Implications

I have taught at the elementary level for twelve years. I have taught in four different systems. Each entry into a new organization was unique. The first year in each school was different, and adjusting to the expectations of the organizations' decision-making processes were difficult for me. In some schools, teachers made no decisions. In others, committees were formed for specific decisions. I feel that newcomers in systems are not always recognized as valid decision makers within the systems. I am not sure whether it is a sense of a need for acclimation by the newcomer or the organizations' need to determine the goals and values of the newcomer. I do feel that cultures of organizations play a

significant role in the outcome of decisions and socialization within an organization.

Education has been expected to be so much to so many, and continues to be scrutinized by public as well as private sectors of communities. I see great things happening in many schools, and applaud their successful efforts to do an extremely difficult job of preparing children for an ever-changing world. Some believe that today we are educating children for jobs that do not even exist at present. With the responsibility of teachers to provide that education, it seems only prudent that teachers have a large part in the decision-making process of the school. Also, newcomers cannot be overlooked as valuable sources of information and resources. I feel it is important for all members of an organization to mentor new teachers to ensure they become active, socialized, and valued members of the system. Researchers must analyze organizations and the dynamics of the cultures that influence them. They must provide information, knowledge, and tools for educators to prepare students for the future. Educators must envision the future to teach our children today!

Data needs

I used a case-study research design in a qualitative format for this study. Data needs for this study included data collection that effectively examined a grid and group interpretation of newcomers' integration and socialization into the decision making processes of two elementary school organizations.

Data Sources

The intentions of this researcher were to collect data, using a case-study design, from a minimum of two selected elementary sites. I used interviews of newcomers and observations which included teacher interactions, faculty meetings, and committee

meetings. Sources were also collected through examination of documents and materials such as mission statements, faculty agendas, administrative correspondence, committee directives, and other relevant records. Schools were chosen and examined in correlation with Douglas's (1982) grid and group typology.

This study required at least two elementary schools falling in at least two separate quadrants of the grid and group typology. Using two schools for the study allowed me to examine and compare the way groups functioned within each school. The use of two schools with two different cultures gave me a lens to use to examine the degree of newcomer socialization at each school. The requirements of this study were for two different cultures for comparison, thus requiring two different schools for study. By using two different schools the researcher is able to present information that will give a clearer picture of how cultures impact newcomer integration. I wanted to study the unique cultures of each school and attempt to determine to what degree each culture contributed to newcomer involvement in the decision making process.

At least three schools were preliminarily examined. However, four schools were ultimately examined due to the failure of one school to return a sufficient number of teacher surveys. The preliminary actions of this researcher included a grid and group questionnaire to all willing members of each school site studied. The surveys gave an initial placement of school cultures for later examination. The surveys were not the determining factor of each school's culture. The ensuing data gathered from the schools was used to triangulate information using observations, interviews, and documentation to determine if data collections upheld the survey findings. This provided necessary information to determine each school's ultimate cultural typology. Each school was given

pseudonyms and confidentiality was upheld to ensure the integrity of each school and district used in this study.

Data Collections

This study consisted of a collection of three sources of documentation: interview, observations, and review of documents. Interviews were conducted using open-ended questions with floating prompts to allow for exploration into the social construct of the organization. The recorded interviews along with observation, through field notes and documentation, were examined for analysis. Once the data was collected, I determined the common strands of the culture. I then compared this to newcomers' perceptions to find similarities or differences that helped explain the impact of the culture on newcomers' inclusion into the DM processes of the organization. I presented each newcomer with primary questions and followed them with floating prompts and secondary questions (Appendix C).

Data Analyses

This study was done as a case study in a qualitative format using observations, field notes, and short interviews. This design allowed the best opportunity to gather data in a non-threatening yet substantive manner. Using a case study with observations coupled with interviews, allowed the researcher to be actively involved in the case. It provided rich, thick description that was a bounded system within a specified context to relay information the reader can understand and apply to his/her own situation (Merriam, 1988). Data was organized and examined to determine the relationships between each school site and its correlation to Douglas's grid and group typology. Information gathered and

categorized provided a picture of how and to what degree each culture integrates newcomers in the DM process.

Significance of the Study

Research

Research on DM and site-based management in relation to cultural impact has been important as a leadership tool for administrators. Adding the dimension of newcomers to this vein of research will enhance and magnify DM processes in organizations for increased leadership authenticity and organizational understanding. Using the cultural dimension may allow organizations to reassess their culture and how socialization processes are addressed within their systems. Administrators as well as others interested in education can use this research as a tool to aid in educational cultural change and reform.

Practice

In education, leaders appear to be responsive to ways that help explain situations in education or ways that education may be enhanced. The utmost outcome for educators is for students to receive the ultimate education. Often it can be as simple as creating an organization that responds to that mission. A leader must understand the culture of the group he/she is leading to be able to equip students with the best education possible. Leaders often turn to research to find what enhancements or tools already exist in education that may positively affect their organization. Leaders can use Douglas's (1982) framework to determine cultural tendencies of his/her group. Understanding the culture may lead to creating awareness within the organization and to establishing an organization fulfilling to all its members. This type of study may give leaders additional information

that will aid them in preparing the organization for the transition of newcomers into the DM process.

Theory

Mary Douglas's (1982) grid and group typology allows for examination of social culture and organization and will provide the conceptual framework for inquiry into the role of newcomers in the DM process.

Summary

Participatory decision making is a relevant part of site-based management in school reform. It is intended to promote teacher influence over administrative issues that ultimately affect student achievement and outcomes. Newcomers into organizations may be overlooked in the DM process. They may not be embraced or encouraged to contribute resources. Douglas's (1982) grid and group cultural framework provides a way to examine the characteristics of the culture that influence the degree of socialization of newcomers into the DM process.

Chapter II will include the research context for this study with three differentiating components. It will research Douglas's cultural framework, decision making, and the socialization of newcomers into organizations. Chapter III will proceed with a detailed description of the procedures and methodology to be conducted throughout this study. Chapter IV will provide a presentation of data collected. Chapter V will include analysis of information obtained through data collection procedures. Chapter VI will consist of interpretation of information, limitations, conclusions, and implications for practice and summary.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Introduction

This chapter consists of the necessary review of professional literature to present a pragmatic explanation of decision making in organizations and newcomer integration. In addition, this chapter will review literature which substantiates Douglas's (1982) grid and group model as the conceptual/theoretical framework for this study.

Organizational Decision Making

Organizations of education have seen many efforts at reform. One endeavor has been largely focused on teachers' voice in organizational decision making. Literature suggests organizational decision making (participatory decision making, shared decision making, teacher empowerment, teacher voice, etc.) was part of a national reform by schools to include teachers at all levels to enhance, improve, and positively change student outcomes (Hoy & Tarter, 1993; Imber, Neidt & Reyes, 1990). Numerous studies have concluded that teacher participation in decision making could increase significant outcomes in student and organizational performances (Hoy & Tarter, 1993; Imber, Neidt & Reyes, 1990; Jones, 1997; Kirby & Colbert, 1994; Lampe, 1997; Riley, 1984).

Organizational decision making (ODM) took on many aspects. It was initially part of site-based management reforms. Site-based management required many things at the building level. It encompassed shared decision making, school-based management, decentralized management, and school-based governance (Lewis, 1989). This move set the precedence for organizational decision making. Where teachers once had little say in organizational decisions, they found they were becoming more involved in areas of decision making that affected how their schools would function. Site-based management

would allow teachers more autonomy, less administrative involvement, and teacher empowerment with more control over their jobs and power in organizational decisions (White, 1989).

While ODM allowed for more teacher ownership and empowerment it was not contiguously prevalent among all teachers or the administrators expected to implement ODM. Cambone, Weiss, and Wyeth (1992) looked at the conflicts of organizational decision making. They found that teachers were initially eager to help make decisions. They felt a sense of ownership and, thus, felt like the decisions would be implemented. When conflicts arose, Cambone et. al. (1992) discovered teachers did not like having to confront colleagues on issues to resolve controversial decisions. ODM required demands on their time. ODM also required teachers to make decisions about managerial aspects, social aspects, and teacher performance aspects and not just curriculum and classroom-student involved decisions.

One realm of decision making that created conflict was the teachers who chose to be actively involved in decision making and those who were content to let others make the decisions, known as the saboteurs, skeptics, etc. (Cambone et. al., 1992). The conflicts were not necessarily or specifically related to the lack of involvement in decision making. Conflicts might evolve when the group of non-decision makers did not like the outcomes of the decisions made by their colleagues. The teachers who were eager to decide then became frustrated with the process, and began to feel they were losing something in the process of ODM. Committees were then created. Teachers found themselves making decisions about the performance of colleagues and having to develop ways to correct those problems. In an environment such as a school, telling someone how to do their job

is not easy for peers to do. If the decisions to be made were generic enough, the teachers were comfortable. The more interactions and involvement decisions required, the more teachers found themselves having a difficult time. They were dealing with colleagues and the differences in their ideas of the way things should be or their lack of willingness to tell how they thought things should be.

Imber, Neidt, and Reyes (1990) defined decision making as shared decisions which affected more than one teacher or classroom. According to Imber, Neidt, and Reyes (1990), ODM is the educational reformers' idea of a way to improve schools, teacher job satisfaction, and student outcomes. The reformers feel that by including teachers in the decision-making process, they will "...ultimately raise the achievements of students indirectly by increasing teacher productivity, effectiveness, and job satisfaction" (Imber et. al., 1990, p. 216).

The Imber et. al. (1990) study focused on secondary teachers using dependent and independent variable for his findings. The dependent variables were satisfaction and specific satisfaction. The independent variables were knowledge of topic, complexity of topic, involvement, influence, phase of the decision process entered, effect of the decision, benefit from the decision, implementation, expected and unexpected rewards, and attitude toward teaching. The reason for this research was to learn which combination of variables resulted in teacher satisfaction in specific and general decisions of ODM. The results of this study were the distinctions of specific and general satisfaction of teachers involved in a specific ODM experience. Imber et. al. (1990) state that specific and general satisfaction should be considered by principals and school administrators as separate domains. Imber et. al. (1990) found that teachers rated benefit to self higher than benefit to school in

specific satisfaction of ODM. They suggest that teachers need to feel influential in the decision-making process, not just cast votes, attend meetings, express ideas, etc. They need to know that they are not just part of the decision making, but that the outcomes were a result of the decisions they made. Imber et. al. (1990) further suggests that administrators need to find out what kind of rewards the teachers expect as a result of ODM.

Brown, Perry, and McIntire (1994) looked at teachers' desired involvement in shared decision making. Their study insinuates that teachers with the highest levels of expertise were interested in the schools where they were actively involved in ODM. This study goes on to suggest that teachers do not want to participate in decisions that are trivial and outside of their areas of expertise (Brown et. al., 1994).

Brown et. al. (1994) conducted a survey of fifteen schools with about 160 K-12 grade teachers returning the survey. The instrument was designed to ask the following questions. Are teachers presently involved in decision making? Do teachers favor involvement in decision making? Do teachers differentiate their present involvement or desired decision making involvement by issues? Do teachers differ in present or desired decision making involvement by instructional level? These questions were asked in regard to the following areas of decision making: mission/goals as they relate to the school, teachers, and classrooms; curriculum; communication and how it involves staff, students, parents, etc., and assessing student progress. They found that teachers desired more involvement in ODM. Most teachers believed their major involvement in decision making was in the areas of curriculum and student assessments. Elementary teachers perceived themselves as being most involved in the areas of mission and goals, communication, and

student assessment. Secondary teachers felt their decision making involvement was mainly in the areas of curriculum. The teachers all desired a greater involvement in all four areas of decision making. The elementary teachers were unanimously much more adamant about being involved in all four areas. The middle and secondary teachers were less concerned in this aspect. Brown et. al. (1994) contend that teachers' involvement in decision making should be organized so that the outcomes of decision making is not a trite and wasted endeavor. Their study shows that ODM in schools lends teachers a sense of empowerment and ownership within their schools. Schools making a commitment to employ shared decision making need to establish decision-making policies based on the staff's desires and needs for involvement.

Duke and Imber (1984) also studied the ODM process and teacher involvement. They studied the results of questionnaires from across the U.S. that surveyed teachers' desires for ODM and principals' perceptions of teacher involvement in ODM. Interestingly, the teachers returned surveys indicating their desire to be involved in decision making while the principals' survey suggests that teachers don't want involvement in ODM. Duke and Imber (1984) found that within the group of decision makers, there are the passive participant and active participants. This suggests that teachers who actively involve themselves in ODM are the ones that are responsible for the outcomes of the decisions while the passive participants are willing to agree with whatever the active groups decide. However, Duke and Imber (1984) found within the groups there are actually involvers and influencers. Those involved are usually easier to identify because they are in the active group of decision makers. The influencers are harder to recognize, because they may be embedded in the administration, within the active group or in the passive group. The

teachers of this study felt, although they were involved in the decision-making process, they did not always influence the results or final decisions. Teacher participation varied in this study. They found that shared decision making was most effective in innovative organizations where the principal or organizational structure embraced ODM. The research from Duke and Imber (1984) generalized, based on their study, the schools with principals that actively seek ODM have staffs that actively seek and enjoy involvement and influence decision making within their schools. Consequently, in schools where principals saw ODM as a threat to their positions, teachers were less enthused about involvement and influencing decision making. Duke and Imber's (1984) hypotheses in ODM are: 1) teachers participate in decision making more than is commonly believed, 2) teacher participation is still the exception rather than the rule in all decision categories in schools, and 3) the influence of teachers in all categories and in most schools is not nearly proportional to their involvement.

Riley (1984) studied the patterns for using ODM and their characteristics. He researched in two sections. The first contained questions related to biographical data or level of instruction, sex, teaching experience, district size, and academic qualifications. The second section was designed to determine the desired level and type of teacher participation in 30 areas such as text book selections, teacher selections, and policies. A questionnaire-type format was mailed to 750 teachers. There were 637 usable samples returned out of 750. His findings state that teacher involvement and influence was significantly greater at the classroom level than at the district or building levels. The teachers felt like they were influencing decision makers at the classroom level while at the other levels they provided more information. The majority of respondents actually

reported they preferred more involvement and influence at all organizational levels.

"Testing revealed that the more actual participation experienced, the more that is desired"

(Riley, 1984, p. 39). Tests also revealed that the more decisionally deprived the teachers

were, the more they would attend school board meetings and other organizational

meetings. Riley's (1984) findings state that the teachers with 5-12 years of teaching

experience had the greatest need for ODM while the teachers with 12 or more years

desired less. He implies that teachers want to be part of the decision-making process.

They don't want to be limited to just making decisions, they want to influence and impact

decisions at each organizational level. The administrators are then faced with the dilemma

of how to accommodate their staff and let go of the decision-making reins.

Bacharach, Bamberger, Conley, and Baer (1990) discovered ways in their research to determine the types of decision making in which teachers were likely to be actively involved. They explained ODM in an evaluative and non-evaluative approach. The evaluative approach assesses the differences of the members actual and desired levels of participation. It tells the degree to which a member's level of participation exceeds or fails that member's expectations while the non-evaluative approach tells the assumptions that all members of an organization are expecting the same degree of participation. The non-evaluative approach is not realistic, because not all members are going to want the responsibilities of decision making. The non-evaluative and evaluative approach to ODM, is looked at in two ways by Bacharach et. al. (1990). They looked at ODM in the single domain approach and the multi-domain approach. In the single-domain approach researchers look at all decisions in a single dimension while in the multi-domain approach

researchers look at the decisions by identifying several domains of decisions (Bacharach et. al., 1990).

The single domain of non-evaluative and evaluative approach to decision making is the approach most researchers take to measure the degree of ODM which is by taking the number of decisions made by members of an organization and not the types of decisions that were made. The problem with this is that they may have excluded certain decisions from consideration (Bacharach et. al., 1990). Bacharach et. al. (1990) take the multi-domain approach to non-evaluative and evaluative decision making.

By taking the multi-domain approach to ODM, Bacharach et. al. (1990) found that teachers in elementary schools preferred a different scope of decision making than did the secondary teachers. They found that elementary teachers preferred to be involved in organizational and strategic domains of decision making while secondary teachers preferred the organizational and personal domains of decision making. The conflicts that they encountered had to do with the types of decisions each teacher was expected to make. They suggest that if principals and union leaders want to maximize job satisfaction in schools and increased positive ODM, they need to discover the types of decisions their perspective groups are willing and culturally able to make. They contend that by looking at all the domains of decision making and applying those to the appropriate class of teachers, decisions made may be more affective for positive outcomes of schools.

Hoy and Tarter (1993) have developed a normative theory to ODM. They present a theory that helps administrators determine if a decision should be made a part of ODM. This article answers some of the questions of the previous articles. Hoy and Tarter (1993) approach ODM from the aspect of zones of acceptance. This is a theory developed to

describe employees that accept decisions because of their indifference to them.

Propositions for this theory as discussed by Hoy and Tarter (1993) are: 1) As subordinates are involved in making decisions located in their zone of acceptance, participation will be less effective. 2) As subordinates are involved in making decisions clearly outside their zone of acceptance, participation will be more effective. There are decisions which fall outside the zone of acceptance. Decisions outside the zones of acceptance occur when subordinates have a personal stake in the outcome of the decisions. Because of this, Hoy and Tarter (1993) add two additional propositions: 1) As subordinates are involved in making decisions for which they have marginal expertise, their participation will be marginally effective. 2) As subordinates are involved in making decisions in which they have marginal interest, their participation will be marginally effective.

Administrators need to know when a decision falls outside the subordinates' zone of acceptance. Two rules to use when determining this question is the relevance rule and the expertise rule. The relevance rule is: Do subordinates have a personal stake in the decisions outcome? The expertise rule is: Do subordinates have expertise to contribute to the decision? This, then, defines the following four decision situations. If the decision is outside the zone of acceptance, the subordinates should be included. If the subordinate has a personal stake in the outcome, but not as an expert, involvement should be marginal. If there is lack of expertise and the absence of a personal stake, teachers should not be involved in the decision. If the teachers do not have the desire or the skill to aid in the decision-making process, they should leave the decisions up to the administrator (Hoy & Tarter, 1993).

Hoy and Tarter (1993) also describe five structural arrangements for ODM. They are: 1) group consensus, 2) group decision, 3) group advisory, 4) individual advisory, and 5) unilateral decision. Group consensus is defined as when the administrator involves participants in the decision making, then the group decides. Total consensus is required before the decision can be made. Group decision is defined as when the administrator involves participants in the decision making, then the group decides, using parliamentary procedures. Decisions are then made by the majority. Group advisory is defined as when the administrator solicits the opinion of the entire group, discusses the implications of group suggestions, then makes a decision that may or may not reflect the groups desires. Individual advisory is defined as when the administrator consults with relevant subordinates individually who have expertise to assist in the decision, then makes a decision which may or may not reflect their opinion. Unilateral decision is defined as when the administrator makes the decision without consulting or involving subordinates in the decision. These are good guidelines to follow when determining the scope of involvement by the staff in ODM. However, these structures are contingent upon the degree and situation of the decision. Hoy and Tarter (1993) have developed this theory for ODM but caution against the absolute success of the theory due to lack of implementation and testing. After reviewing the previous articles I think this theory would be useful in solving some of the problems of determining who makes decisions.

In summary, several of the same aspects of ODM are supported by studies from these articles. Each article I reviewed came to some of the same conclusions. Almost all of the articles suggested the following correlations to ODM: 1) The decision making process is multi- dimensional and decisions must be addressed based on the specific

decision to be made. 2) Teachers want to be involved and influencers in decisions that are meaningful and conclude in positive meaningful results. 3) Teachers must be involved in some aspects of decision making for job satisfaction and increased positive student outcomes. 4) There are teachers that will create conflict within the ODM process because of their lack of desire to be involved. 5) Almost all of the research suggests that the majority of teacher voice in decision making was at the classroom level, and the decisions directly influenced their students and classrooms. The research compiled only touches on some of the aspects of teacher involvement in organizational decision making. However, unanimously all articles stated that the push by education reformers was for the teachers to be actively involved in the decision-making process for increased job satisfaction, positive student outcomes, and a sense of empowerment and ownership by the teachers.

Newcomer Integration

Louis (1996) contends that in order to understand how newcomers are acclimated and integrated into a new organization, one must first comprehend the experiences of the newcomer. Louis calls this sense-making or coping for newcomers. She postulates that there are key characteristics that define the model for newcomers' experiences. These characteristics are change, contrast, and surprise. All of these, she contends, refer to differences associated with entering new settings.

Louis (1996) defines change as the "objective differences" in the new setting in comparison to the previous setting. It is the adjustment period of the individual from the old organization to the new organization. The more variant the new setting over the old setting, the more the newcomer has to adjust to changes and "cope." She does not contend that the change is necessarily unfavorable, but that any identifiable evidence of

difference is indeed change. An example of identifiable evidence might include changes as fundamental as new location, new faces, new job description, salary, etc. These changes are primarily predictable. These changes can be anticipated. Other changes are not so obvious. Schein (1996) states that change takes on additional dimensions such as inclusion, hierarchy, and functional boundaries. He contends that within these change boundaries the newcomers find their place and make the transition from the previous setting into the new one. The inclusion dimension is crucial in that it formulates the newcomers' information and influences networks. He goes on to state that it is impossible to transfer influence networks from previous situations. Eventually, the newcomer may access influence bases, but initially they will be "on the outside."

Louis's (1996) second characteristic discussed is contrast. She defines contrast as personal rather than public. It is the feature that concentrates on the recognition of the background or features of the new setting. The degree of the characteristic on the newcomer will also depend on the newcomer's previous experiences and setting. Contrast, for example, would involve the way people dress, the physical setting, or the ambiance in comparison to the newcomer's previous setting. Thus, contrast is individual specific. For instance, if a newcomer came from an organization that had a relaxed dress code and a building full of windows to a setting where the dress code was more specified and professional and a building with no windows, his/her perceptions of the new setting may be drastically different from another individual that comes from a setting that resembles the new setting. Acclimation to the contrast of the settings can be intimidating depending on the capabilities of the newcomer to process the contrasts, according to Louis (1996). Louis (1996) concludes, "The contrasts represent subjective differences

between new and old settings by which newcomers characterize and otherwise define the new situation” (Louis, 1996, p. 444).

The third characteristic is the surprise experience. Louis (1996) describes this in four stages of surprise. The first one is when the newcomer’s conscious expectations about the job are not attained. The second surprise is when expectations, conscious or unconscious, are unmet. The newcomer chooses the job based on his/her perceptions of his/her skills, values, needs, etc. When newcomers recognize errors in their perceptions of “self,” they then must reconcile themselves to the recognition of a different self. The fourth form of surprise is difficulty in predicting reactions to new experiences. The external experience may be expected, but the internal reaction to that experience may be a “surprise” to the newcomer. Van Maanen (1996) sums it up by stating that the neophyte discovers there are others significant in the new setting that do not share the newcomer’s beliefs and assumptions. Thus, the newcomer must face surprises and reorient him/herself to new assumptions. Louis (1996) goes on to say that surprise can be both pleasant and unpleasant. Ultimately, “...it will be important to include both overmet and undermet expectations in considering surprises that contribute to newcomers’ entry experiences” (Louis, 1996, p. 445).

Consequently, newcomers attach meaning to actions, contrast, and surprises in the new setting and, as a result, make interpretations using comparisons to their previous settings. Based on these comparisons, the newcomer may assume inappropriate or unclear meanings to the new setting. According to Louis (1996), newcomers may not form assumptions that are concrete. In fact, they may be emergent based on the experiences of the individual in the new setting. In addition, the individual may realize that assumptions

about oneself may lead to enlightenment and surprises and impact the overall expectations and integration patterns of the job.

Louis (1996) states that practical implications of this research suggests the newcomer be given legitimate realistic job previews. This suggests the newcomer be introduced and helped to make sense of the surprises of the job rather than attempting to prevent the newcomer from surprises. Also, Louis (1996) suggests the newcomer be given timely formal and informal guidance from superiors about job performance. In conclusion, this article suggests newcomers get adequate preparation for new settings and unanticipated expectations through institution and people responsible for the preparation of the newcomer. Louis (1996) postulates that the newcomers' ability to make sense out of the new setting will enhance integration practices within the organization, limit newcomer turnover, and facilitate newcomer adaptations.

Riehl (1998) conducted research on teacher/faculty meetings as a way to examine how social structures are formed through work groups and collective dialogue. While Louis (1996) presented a framework for adaptations and integration for newcomers in new settings, Riehl (1998) discusses teacher meetings and how these meetings can establish integration structures within the school.

Riehl (1998) conducted a participant-observer case study of one school for one academic school year. She attend regular faculty meetings, monthly meetings, and monthly school governance meetings with parents and community representatives. She also interviewed teachers and the principal and did brief observations of classrooms. The school was a partnership school with a local university. Often, the university would conduct meetings, provide teaching assistance, and take over teaching classes so that the

regular teacher could leave for in-services, meetings, etc. Riehl (1998) had been a liaison for the university with this school and often facilitated discussions during teachers' meetings. She attend several events within the school to become more familiar with the school and its participants.

There were 18 regular faculty meetings lasting from 3:30 - 5:00 p.m. after school. Most regular teachers showed up with few occurrences of absences. There were three meetings that took place in the afternoons when the students were gone, and a three-day retreat for the principal, faculty, and university facilitators was planned. The teachers were paid an honorarium for attending each meeting and meals were served at each meeting.

Riehl (1998) discusses several aspects and frameworks studied throughout her research. One of the sections of her research focused on the meetings as social actions. What Riehl (1998) found was that teachers formed social structures through delimiting ways during faculty meetings. She found that if teachers were involved in positive learning meetings, not critical ones with teachers having autonomy over their learning, the meetings were more inclined to become social. If the meetings took on a sharing mode rather than a mandatory mode, the social interaction was more positive and conducive to learning. Riehl (1998) also reported that new teachers and special service personnel were able to offer specific ideas, but did not question school values and practices. They tended to raise questions that were student-behavior specific and not related to student learning and classroom academic techniques.

Riehl (1998) goes on to explain that the majority of the faculty meetings were spent on planning and coordinating tasks. The meetings were primarily principal led, organized,

and facilitated. She felt this was so "...the principal maintained authority over external human resources....in terms of knowledge and skills that outsiders might bring to the meetings as well as the personal and professional interests they might represent" (Riehl, 1998, p. 122).

Riehl's (1998) conclusions on faculty meetings as constitutive social action is the fundamental key of communicative behavior. Discussion, dialogue, and communication within faculty meetings is a means of reinstating and reestablishing values, rules, and resources that facilitate the school's social organization. By conducting these meetings, Riehl (1998) suggests it creates and manifests communication that would not otherwise exist. This communication forum then enables faculty to gather and informally reinforce the school culture and the position of each faculty member within the organization.

Cawyer and Friedrich (1998) wrote an article on organizational socialization and continues to support Riehl's (1998) contention of communication for socialization and integration. Cawyer and Friedrich (1998) suggest that in academic settings, one of the key factors involved in teacher socialization/integration is communication. They state that communication is "...used to reduce uncertainty and discomfort during organizational entry, thereby allowing new teachers to develop personally and professionally" (Cawyer & Friedrich, 1998, p. 236). The intentions of this study were to assess the socialization/integration patterns of new faculty, but felt it may also provide implications for resocialization of employees being promoted within the same department or organizational group.

Cawyer and Friedrich (1998) define integration as "...acts that take place as an individual becomes integrated into an organizational culture" (Cawyer & Friedrich, 1998,

p. 235). They use Van Maanen's model of organizational assimilation to help define the integration process. This model suggests the assimilation process is a reciprocal one that allows the newcomer to negotiate his/her role in the new organization while the organization accepts responsibility for information networking to aid the newcomer in the assimilation process. They go on to explain that the assimilation process is conceptualized by focusing on the communication strategies necessary to facilitate both information sought by the newcomer and the information networks the newcomer needs to understand.

Cawyer and Friedrich (1998) focus their study on the socialization/integration of new faculty. They conducted a survey/questionnaire quantitative design study. Their study was done at the university level with a total of 171 questionnaires being returned. The questionnaires included close-ended type questions using a 5-point Likert scale. However, there were four questions that allowed the respondent to give open-ended responses. Questions Cawyer and Friedrich (1998) intended to answer were the following. 1) What are the components of the socialization/integration process as viewed by new faculty? 2) Do new faculty members' evaluations of the socialization/integration process differ as a result of demographic variables? 3) What aspects of the socialization/integration process do new faculty perceive to be valuable? 4) What advice do new faculty have for improving the socialization/integration process? The components for question 1 was job interview and orientation activities. For question 2, the demographic variables were found to hold no statistical significance. Therefore, the results are not reported by demographics. Question 3 found the activities new faculty valued during

socialization/integration included knowledge of job and position responsibilities that they felt should be addressed during job interviews and orientation activities.

Cawyer and Friedrich's (1998) findings resemble the frameworks of Louis (1996). They found that new faculty had to contend with differences in their expectations and the realities of the job. They felt that the job interview and formal orientation needs to play a bigger role in socialization/integration of new faculty. The new faculty claimed that their responsibilities needed to be more clearly defined before they felt socialization/integration was effectively achieved. They believed that the administrators needed to provide more opportunities for social situations for new faculty. They expressed the view that the veterans should be more aware of new faculty and endeavor to reduce new faculty anxiety and increase the environment socially. Advice from those surveyed to new faculty included encouraging them to initiate more contact and take the lead in interpersonal relationships. They also felt that during orientation more information on resources should have been available. The overall best predictor of satisfaction on socialization/integration issues was the amount of time, quality, and depth spent on orientation of new faculty. Ultimately, the investigation suggests that newcomers felt they needed more support than they were getting to successfully negotiate organizational entry.

Larson (1996) continues to support the literature on organizational integration of newcomers. Larson's (1996) research focuses on the transition of recent undergraduate interns in business, participating in a business writing class. These students were in professional positions as interns and were asked to record in a journal their experiences of integration and communications within each specific organization where they were interning. Larson (1996) uses the qualitative design of research by doing a case study on

one group of undergraduate students. She acted as a participant observer in the class that met weekly, gathering data through the students' journals, class discussions, and final reports from the students, coupled with interviews with their instructors.

Larson (1996) based her findings on four stages of organizational integration of newcomers. They are: 1) Anticipation—how newcomer envision the new workplace and their role in it. 2) Encounters—the adjustment of newcomers' initial expectations. 3) Motivation—when initial expectations are not met, maintaining aspirations to do well and adjust. 4) Settling in—this is the resolution of previous issues and learning to become a member of the organization.

In stage one, Larson (1996) contends that the transition and anticipation of newcomers begins prior to the new experiences. She believes that each individual's background, information network, and previous experiences build the newcomers' expectations for their new position. Typically the newcomer's anticipation stage will render impractical high hopes of how the experience will be. The newcomer is then forced to adjust to the situations that do not fulfill those expectations in relationship to the reality.

During stage two, the newcomer works at building relationships through encounters with members of the organization. Larson writes, "To become productive members of an organization, new workers need to learn what is expected of them" (Larson, 1996, p. 355). She calls it a part of becoming encultured and a necessary way for the newcomer to learn about the organizational characteristics, values, and dynamics. The difficulty the newcomer has is acquiring the needed information networks required to successfully meet the organization's expectations. The newcomers come with their own sense of self. What they may find is that their personal interpretation of their sense of self and role in the

organization is not what the rest of the members of the organization interpret their role to be. One other difficulty they have in this area, according to Larson (1996), is the communication through writing memos and correspondence throughout the organization. Many of the students in her study expressed this problem in their journals. She found that they were more familiar with the way writing was done in classes rather than in practical application in the job. Learning the correct way to communicate based on each organizations' criteria and "way of doing things" became a challenge for some of the students.

During stage three, the motivation stage, Larson (1996) found that the newcomers were beginning to encounter doubt about their capabilities in their position. They are trying to locate their place in the organization (Larson, 1996). This is the point where they must continually reassure themselves about their role and their ability to succeed in that role. They must find ways to motivate themselves to accomplish their jobs to meet the organizations' expectations. They begin to doubt their capabilities because their expectations and the reality of the job are not synonymous. "Newcomers' self-concepts affect how they negotiate their new roles. It is important to feel self-confident and skilled and able to make a contribution to the organization" (Larson, 1996, p. 356).

Finally, in stage four, the settling-in stage, the newcomers begin to come to terms with their role in the organization. They begin to understand what is expected of them and are better able to adjust their expectations in accordance. During the earlier stages, the newcomer often encounters conflict and is not sure why, and is unaware of how to deal with it. By stage four, they begin to recognize differences between members and themselves and react or interact conformably. The newcomers must define their image

and role by this stage and decide if the organization is for them. It is a learning process, one filled with mistrust, doubts and redefinition of self.

Larson's (1996) conclusion articulates the dynamics of the students she observed and their experiences as interns. Her findings support the notions in previous literature that newcomers must face countless adjustments when entering into a new organization. She upholds the findings of Louis (1998), Riehl (1998), and Cawyer and Friedrich (1998) in that she postulated one main area of adjustment is the reformulation of the newcomers' expectations and their perceptions of their role in the organization. She contends that these expectations require the newcomers to rethink their thinking and may cause conflict for them until they can adjust their expectations to the reality of the position.

Ashforth, Lee, and Saks (1998) present a little different aspect to the socialization/integration of newcomers. While they recognize certain characteristics such as expectations, adjustment, and relationships are relevant to the socialization/integration of newcomers, they veer toward a different supposition for consideration. They take notions of institutional socialization/integration and individual socialization/integration and represent these in context with organizations and newcomer socialization/integration by presenting a quantitative study. The study surveyed 350 students from a university in Canada. The students were selected at random from two consecutive graduating undergraduate business programs. The students answered three questionnaires, one during their final semester prior to graduation, the second after four months on the job, and the third after ten months on the job. Of the 350 students graduating and having jobs, 295 returned the questionnaires.

Ashforth et. al. (1998) defined institutional socialization/integration as reflecting a more structured form of socialization/integration while they define individual socialization/integration as a less structured form of socialization. They continue to define institutional socialization/integration as being organizations where conformity to the rules and the “way things are done” are the norm rather than encouraging innovation from the newcomer which would be a component of the individualized socialization/integration definition. By encouraging innovation, the organization feels it would be losing some of the structure and would be opening itself up to problems and conflict. By keeping everyone “in-line,” it can ensure that the culture and values stay intact. “Institutional socialization is simply a process through which individuals learn the behaviors, attitudes, and skills necessary to fulfill their new roles, it need not convey certain content” (Ashforth et. al., 1998, p. 899). The role this plays in newcomer adjustment, as suggested by Ashforth et. al. (1998), is that it provides the newcomers with a process by which they learn about the organization and its requirements for their job or role in the system. Considering this is a structured form of socialization/integration and gives replete expectations, the contention is that this form will help reduce newcomer incertitude and aid in the transition into the system.

Individualized socialization/integration is characterized by what it does not do. “They do not involve grouping of newcomers and subjecting them to common experiences” (Ashforth et. al., 1998, p. 899). The organizations fostering and encouraging individual socialization/integration are not going to expect them to follow specific timetables or expect role modeling to occur, and may be used to exacerbate innovation. The newcomers can expect to be able to create and present new ideas, and although they may

not be used, they will be acknowledged. Relationships in this type of social structure are not engineered. They are developed at random and not discouraged. This form of socialization/integration may create problems for the newcomer in that it can be ambiguous. Newcomers may need role definition and job performance feedback based on a set of expectations or criterion. Whose expectations and criterion may be questions the newcomer struggles with. Newcomers not accustomed to working independently or with expected innovation may not do well in this setting.

Ashforth et. al. (1998) applied these two types of social structures in three contexts. They are mechanistic/organic, organization size, and job design (motivational potential). Mechanistic is defined as organizations that are set on maintaining the status quo resembling the institutional socialization structure. Organic systems are the opposite following the components of the individual socialization structure. Hypothesis 1 from Ashforth et. al. (1998, p. 901) is, "The more mechanistic the structure, the greater the use of institutionalized socialization (or, alternatively, the more organic the structure, the greater the use of individualized socialization)." The second context for study was the organization size. Ashforth et. al. postulate that large organizations require a degree of structure. One reason is that they procure a greater number of newcomers than a small organization. They contend there must be some form of structure in order to facilitate information networking and orientation for the large numbers. So, consequently, they present Hypothesis 2: "The larger the organization, the greater the use of institutionalized socialization (or, alternatively, the smaller the organization, the greater the use of individualized socialization)" (Ashforth et. al., 1998, p. 901). The third relevant context is job design. This refers to the way jobs are defined and the motivational potential attached

to the task. The contention here is the more enriched the job the more motivational potential the job has. This would suggest that motivation of job and the encouragement for increased motivation would engender an innovative attitude, whereas jobs associated with low motivational potential would require structure, thus engendering the institutional socialization structure. However, Ashforth et. al. (1998) believe this may not be the case. They believe quite possibly the organizations would foster an attitude of structure as motivation for advancement. Accordingly, Ashforth et. al. (1998, p. 901) present Hypothesis 3: "The greater the motivating potential of a newcomer's job, the greater the use of institutionalized socialization (or, alternatively, the less the motivating potential, the greater the use of individual socialization)."

The findings bear out the hypothesis. The data supported all three hypotheses. Ashforth et. al. (1998) found that the mechanistic system was a moderate predictor of socialization tactics, while job design and socialization were strongly and invariably related to newcomer adjustment. While their hypothesis for organizational size was supported in the findings, they did not find a strong correlation between size and socialization tactics. In conclusion to their findings, they contend that institutional socialization was more likely to be a function of the mechanistic and larger organizations since they had a tendency to require the maintenance of the status quo and control over the newcomers' attitudes and roles. It is also more likely when the organization seeks to maintain conformity and protect the potential for high motivation in jobs of risk-taking and high investment.

Louis (1996), Riehl (1998), Cawyer and Friedrich (1998), and Hogan (1996) all discuss newcomers' roles and socialization into new organization while Ashforth et. al. (1998) reported on integration within specific contexts of specific organizations. Their

findings add to the findings of the others I reviewed. Riehl's (1998) focus was more specified to one situation facilitating the integration of faculty, but postulates that communication and reaffirmation of traditions, values, and culture through faculty meetings was one key aspect to successful socialization within an organization. Cawyer and Friedrich (1998), Larson (1996), and Louis (1996) contend much the same thing, focusing on the expectation of the newcomers and the need to communicate those expectations in relationship to the reality of the organization and their role in it.

Grid and Group Typology

Grid and Group typology is a framework developed by social anthropologist Mary Douglas. This framework addresses the social context of an organization in relationship to the leader and the people that make up the group. The framework allows for examination of organizations' cultural functioning based on the level of group involvement and leadership controls. It presents a framework that helps to identify social constraints on individual behavior. Douglas (1992) defines culture in four different quadrants. Each quadrant consists of specific characteristics that make up one model of a culture within an organization or community of people. She suggests the following four types of cultures: the bureaucratic system, corporate system, collectivist system, and individualist system. Each system adopts a "distinctive morality" or "code of policy" within its unique group. This "code" will determine the actions and strategies on which a group will depend to make decisions. The qualities of a culture are very unique. Douglas (1982) describes the different criteria for each culture based on structure and group loyalties. She developed a typology to show strong and weak relationships within the cultures and illustrated this in a high and low grid and group dimensions.

Grid Dimensions

Grid dimension applies to the degree of limitation of choices by an individual based on the social constraints of the organization's imposed rules, role expectation, management and procedures (Harris, 1994). Harris (1994) goes on to suggest that in school organizations, bureaucratic restraints may be imposed on members on issues of curriculum, discipline, teaching strategies, hiring, grading, etc. The grid dimensions are illustrated on a continuum from high to low. Caulkins (1999) suggests that grid was initially the result of external social constraints, but further explanations opened up the idea that individuals create institutions to constrain their behavior and those of others.

High Grid.

High grid promotes specifically defined expectations, role distinction, and maintains a hierarchical environment. An insulation against group influences exists and the organization reflects a distinct pattern of authority. High grid represents itself in the bureaucratic system and the corporate system of Douglas's (1982) typology. These organizations would foster the high grid continuum and promote role distinction based on explicit social classification. Classifications are applied to high grid in situations such as race, sex, position in power structure, status in bureaucratic office, lineage or descent in a senior clan or point of progression through an age-grade system (Gross and Rayner, 1985). Consequently, suggesting that roles and rules dictate social interactions, individuals are secure in their social stratum because high grid systems provide structured networks that preserve them (Harris, 1994).

Low Grid.

Moving toward the other end of the continuum, low grid is contingent on a social environment that promotes personal abilities to compete or bargain for them. Harris (1994) describes how low grid individual roles are better achieved based on their behavior and character rather than ascribed or dictated by a bureaucratic power of rules. The individual has more autonomy and high degrees of personal freedom. With low grid, few role or social distinctions exist. The power brokers are the individuals and present and negotiate their abilities for roles and status within the system.

Group Dimensions

Group dimensions represents the horizontal axis of Douglas's (1982) typology. Group refers to the degree to which individuals pursue relationships and represents a commitment to a social unit larger than the individual (Harris, 1994). Group provides this framework with a spectrum of interactions by the individuals of systems to expose the extent to which they are willing to devote effort and energy to creating or maintaining a group synergy. In essence, the more the group bands together for social and work interests and the more time they spend doing things together, the higher the group strength becomes (Gross & Rayner, 1985). Group can then be measured by the requirements on the individual to comply and to conform to group expectations (Spickard, 1989).

The group dimension spans the continuum beginning at a zero base, that of an individual being aware of the existing members but holds no accountability to them and where there are no boundaries to his/her role as a group member. It then moves to a more constrained system of a group that is bounded and dictates who is and who is not a valued

member (Douglas, 1982). “The strongest effects of group are to be found where it incorporates a person with the rest by implicating them together in common residence, shared work, shared resources, and recreation, and by exerting control over marriage and kinship”(Douglas, 1982, p. 202).

High Group.

High group represents a social environment that promotes insiders and outsiders. The group holds specific guidelines for membership and works against the outsiders’ intrusion. High group requires intensive commitment by the members to uphold the entity of the group. The time requirement for the members is high. The members are not allowed to act for individual purpose, but for the benefit of the whole, and the group body is expected to act in the interests of its members (Gross & Rayner, 1985). Often rural schools incorporate high group due to high loyalty to educational institutions that have been passed from generation to generation. The community maintains an ideology of the way things are and have been, and are unwilling to compromise the known. Thus, organizations must adhere to the ideology or be “outsiders.” Often, the school is the center of the group’s focus, and is expected to promote and uphold that culture (Harris, 1994).

Low Group.

Low group consideration promotes a system that focuses on individual needs. Group activities are weak, and collective work is limited. Relationships are not tended to create a cohesive, group oriented social system. Any allegiances to the larger group are limited and fluctuate (Harris, 1994). Group strength is low as individuals abandon group ideals and negotiate based on their own behalf for personal rewards and outcomes (Gross &

Rayner, 1985). The individual will not rely upon or be constrained by a single group. The low group functions independently and interact with other individuals so that it will not compromise the individual's goals. The individual bears no responsibilities to a corporate set of rules, and is not accountable to duties of the group. Low group, however, does not provide a support system for the individual to fall back on. While autonomy is very high, the individual functioning alone may find a time when freedom from constraints is a disadvantage and needed group support is not there.

Grid and Group Quadrants

Grid and Group typology is a melding of the two continuums. Douglas (1982) pairs them together to create a framework that combines high-grid/low-group (Bureaucratic system), high-grid/high-group (Corporate system), low-grid/high-group (Collectivist system), and low-grid/low-group (Individualists system). She divides these into four quadrants to help explain the social context of the group and the grid controls inherent to organizations to present a culture within which they function.

High-grid/low-group represents a system she calls the Bureaucratic system. This system promotes an intensive power structure, and rules are high. There is little value on group goals. It is hierarchical in nature, and little room for autonomy exists. The members are constrained by status, and behaviors are dictated at levels in the organization. Relationships are built outside of the organization, and individual behaviors are fully defined without question. Most individuals in this system are outside of the decision-making hierarchy. In this system, the higher one's status or classification, the more protection one maintains from misfortunes of the organization (Gross & Rayner, 1985).

High-grid/high-group is called the Corporate system. This system maintains hierarchical roles, but power is more relevant at the top and limited to a few individuals with expertise. Social relationships are group driven, and experiences are influenced by the group. Individual goals are derived from group considerations and goals. There are many role distinctions at the middle and lower levels of the organization. Survival of group goals is most important. This may represent a tradition-bound institution such as schools. "Extensive security is obtained at the expense of most possibilities for overt competition and social mobility" (Gross & Rayner, 1985, p. 9). Both security and affluence are collective, group concerns.

Low-grid/high-group is known as the Collectivist system. Douglas (1982) frames this as the system with little corporate goals and high group survival. There are few social distinctions, and the group acts together for the good of the whole. The group would typically be dominant in this organization. Leadership tends to be lacking a sense of clear rules for continuation (Gross & Rayner, 1985). There is an insulation by the group against outsiders and suspicions of transgression or betrayal is high. Due to high group strength and low grid strength, this system is more likely to operate on the group ideals and goals rather than leader or administrator. He/she is not likely to begin enforcing new rules and regulations that go against the group, and tends to rely on the group for carrying out and maintaining rules and regulations for the whole.

Low-grid/low-group is the last quadrant in the framework, and is called the Individualist system. In this quadrant, you would find a system that works toward the individual's goals and objectives and has little interference from the group or the administration. Individuals will adhere to self-defined rules, and are not constrained by

enforced rules. Individual autonomy is high. Role status is competitive and based on individual negotiations and merits. The general attitude would be self-gratifying, a “what’s in it for me” mentality. Little effort and time is spent on maintaining relationships, and in this system there are no insiders or members. Most members act as an outsider to everyone else.

Douglas’s (1982) framework enables the researcher to identify a system in one of the cultural quadrants and analyze specific characteristics which are, or may be, influenced by group and grid considerations depending on the cultural system identified with the organization. This framework provides a cultural basis to help explain the social interactions within the system’s groups and administration.

Summary

Reviewed literature cited in this study has revealed that teacher voice in decision making is important in establishing positive outcomes in teacher and student performance. However, newcomers’ integration into the decision making process may not always be encouraged or welcomed at all levels of decision making.

Douglas’s (1982) grid and group typology is used in this study as the theoretical framework. Using this framework will provide a conceptual analysis of newcomers’ voice and integration into the decision-making process in elementary schools.

Chapter III

Methodology and Procedures

This chapter will define and discuss the methodology and data collection procedures used to obtain information necessary to this study. The methodology and procedures were selected based on the type of study pursued. The data collection adheres to the guidelines and presents a rationale for the methodology and procedures chosen for this study.

Methodology

Research can take on many different forms. When deciding how best to approach the intended study, the researcher must take into consideration the research design that will best articulate the findings of the study. My study includes close interactions with human subjects and their perceptions of specific situations, processes, and occurrences. Because of the specificity of the subjects and the behavior, I chose to use qualitative inquiry research, used the case study through participant observations, collecting fieldnotes, and short interviews.

Qualitative research isolates and defines categories to form themes. It is intended to reveal schemes of interrelationships between many categories (McCracken, 1988). Qualitative research allows for categories and themes to develop and emerge throughout the study. Observations, document collection, and short interviews allow the researcher to watch and participate in the interactions and question the interviewees which creates a picture of their experiences and perceptions. These experiences and perceptions can then be analyzed to form generalizations for later possible situational applications.

Qualitative research is designed to elicit lengthy data and information that opens up avenues for implications in the social sciences. This design gave me the best opportunity to gather data in a non-threatening, yet substantive manner.

Stake (1998) defines three types of case studies: 1) the intrinsic case study, 2) the instrumental case study, and 3) the collective case study. The intrinsic case study is a study done to gain better understanding of one particular case. The instrumental case study is a particular case studied to gain more or better insight or clarification into a specific issue. The case in this situation is supportive and not of primary importance. It is secondary to the main interest or focus issue. The collective case study is not interested in one case, but more than one case to gain information on a particular population, occurrence, or circumstance. For my research, a collective case study seemed most appropriate due to the fact that I will study more than one school for similar and differing information based on their quadrant's significance.

Using a case study as a participant observation coupled with interviews allows for the researcher to be actively involved in the case and provides rich thick description that is a bounded system within a specified context that tells a story the reader can understand and apply purposeful meaning. Atkinson and Hammersley (1998) argue that in the social sciences, all researchers are participant observers, "...because how can we observe the social world without being a part of it" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1998, p.111). Merriam (1988) continues to support the argument for case study by stating that case study research design exposes certain notions then defines how a researcher "...selects a sample, collects data, analyzes them, and approaches issues of validity, reliability, and ethics" (Merriam, 1988, p. 119).

Merriam (1988) states that observation is best to use in a situation, organization, or event when one is wanting meaningful, relevant information, when a “fresh perspective” is wanted, or the researcher is unable to obtain interviews from participants. Observation allows for methodical planning and “...serves a formulated research purpose” (Merriam, 1988). According to Adler and Adler (1998), observation has been one of the surest forms of knowledge acquisition. They go on to explain that observation is neither intrusive or interventional. Observers neither manipulate or stimulate their subjects. They do not pose tasks, interview, or direct the interaction (Adler & Adler, 1998). Everyone observes, but observation can take on different forms. Adler and Adler (1998) state that what differentiates everyday observations from social sciences observations is the application and purpose of the observations and the theoretical question the observation is addressing.

Being a participant observer, if one is an outsider to the organization or event, has the tendency to allow for concise and pertinent observations. The outside participant may observe and notice things not otherwise noticed by insider participants. The participant observation allows the researcher to gain firsthand information and not depend on secondhand interviews by other researchers. It puts the researcher in the “action” of the event. One caution to this form of research is the researcher’s biases. The researcher should remain as objective as possible so that observed behaviors can be reported with accuracy to support validity and reliability within the findings of the research. One way to accomplish this is through fieldnotes taken at the time of the observations.

Fieldnotes are taken by the observer during observations of the specific event being studied. Fieldnotes provide the researcher the opportunity to take notes relating a story or

information that can later be transferred by the observer into field text (Denzin, 1994).

“The researcher then recreates the research text as a working interpretive document (Denzin, 1994, p. 501). This, then, becomes the writer’s initial attempt at making sense and interpreting events. The researcher translates his/her interpretations into documents that describe the events and experiences in context with his/her understanding of them. Interpretation of fieldnotes sets the groundwork for storytelling. Thus, recreating the observations is a way to put readers in the center of the observations, as if they were there themselves gathering data. The challenge here, according to Denzin (1994), is recreating the events based on what rules the researcher chooses to follow. This will depend on the researcher’s biases and beliefs. The completed document will then be evaluated by the reader depending on the reader’s biases and beliefs.

Qualitative case study/participant observer design allows for varied modes of information acquisition. It opens up the field of social sciences to the opportunity to observe and study situations and events as a participant without having to directly interact with the observed behaviors. Merriam (1988) contends that case studies are more concrete, more contextual, and more developed by the interpretations of the reader. She goes on to explain that a case study is more apt to explain reasons for a problem and give better understanding of bounded situations. It can give summary, evaluations, applications, and alternatives for specific behaviors and events observed. One aspect of qualitative research that all researchers must address is issues of biases and subjective generalizations for reader implications. However, the reader must also be accountable for biases and subjectivity depending on the personal paradigm of the reader and researcher. By using this design, the researcher can be more inquisitive and gather more data from

varied sources than in most quantitative designs of research with more firsthand interactions in the study.

Data Collection Procedures

This study is qualitative in nature and demands researcher involvement in the setting and with the subjects to gain insight into the structure and nuances that create the culture of the organization. The researcher used information from document collection, observations, and interviews to gain insight into the perceptions of the integration of newcomers' voice in the decision-making process of organizations in areas such as curriculum, discipline, grading, technology, team planning, and social situations. I chose one particular school district due to possible variances in school sites. The study was presented to the school superintendent and, consequently, the superintendent of elementary schools. That superintendent then presented the proposal to the superintendent's advisory committee for approval. Approval was obtained through a memo on March 23, 2000. The superintendent of elementary schools then sent an e-mail memo to all elementary site principals to inform them of permission given to continue with the study. It was the understanding of each principal and the researcher that the decision to participate in this study was strictly the prerogative of each building principal. Following permission by principals contacted to conduct the study at their sites, distribution of teacher surveys (Appendix A) followed.

Surveys

The procedures for gathering data began with choosing four of the fourteen elementary schools to survey for cultural consideration. After gaining school information from the superintendent of elementary schools, I chose the first four schools surveyed based on

their location in the district and the number new teachers in their buildings. I was looking for elementary sites that had at least three new teachers. I contacted four schools and discussed with each principal the nature of my study and the degree of involvement by the teachers for the survey and beyond. Each school was provided with a research agenda and study needs (Appendix D). All principals agreed to allow the surveys. I sent them a letter explaining the intentions of the study and the need for the survey. Each teacher at each sight filled out the survey and returned it to me at his/her own discretion. Following the collection of the surveys, an analysis of each school was conducted, and each site was placed in one of the grid and group quadrants in accordance with the survey outcomes. Out of the four schools surveyed, I chose two schools for the remainder of my study.

Of the four schools surveyed, all fell in the corporate system of high grid/high group with the exception of one which fell in the collectivist system of low grid/high group. I chose the school in the collectivist quadrant, and chose one of the schools in the corporate system. Had all schools fallen into the same quadrant, I would have continued surveys until two in separate quadrants were identified. I chose the corporate school system on the basis of the strength of the survey outcomes, the number of newcomers in the building, the term of the administration in place, and accessibility of the school. One of the schools surveyed did not return a majority of surveys to have a conclusive outcome. Those were determined inconclusive. Some surveys were sent back to me with a name only. Those were thrown out as well. The surveys provided the vital component to determine the cultural quadrant the elementary sites needed for further study.

Interviews

The interview process was integral to the data collection of this study. Once the surveys were gathered and plotted on the grid/group graph, teachers were contacted to set up interview schedules. Most teachers contacted were very willing to talk with me. I contacted all new teachers at each of the two sites chosen for the study to request interviews. The principals at each site spoke with the teachers about being interviewed prior to my contacts. The interviews took place at the end of the school year because I wanted to gain perceptions after one year in their current school sites. Some teachers had taught previously; others had not. However, all new teachers interviewed were completing their first year in the schools surveyed. In the collectivist site, there were four new teachers interviewed and three veteran teachers that varied in grade level and years at that site. In the corporate site, there were also four new teachers and three veteran teachers interviewed all varying in grade levels.

Each teacher interviewed was given an informed consent form (Appendix E) giving permission to be interviewed. Each teacher interviewed was very cooperative and seemed willing to give honest, informed answers to interview questions (Appendix C). The interview process provided me with the opportunity to discuss perceptions of school procedures, group interactions, the principal's role, and general information about their year(s) at their school sites. In accordance with the study agenda, observations at each site provided valuable data.

Observations.

Observations of teacher interactions and collection of fieldnotes were important. Time spent at each site afforded me the opportunity to study school routines, lunch groups and

discussions, after/before school meetings, and teacher parties, etc. I was able to visit schools at various times, allowing me to discover nuances that I might not have seen and understood had I not been afforded the opportunity to observe. I spent several hours a week for about four weeks in each school. I would drop in for lunch times, breakfast times, assemblies, and teacher meetings. I was also able to see how the students and parents interacted with the teachers and how the administration of each school interacted with teachers, parents, and students. Fieldnotes were taken during each observation and used for analysis with interviews and documents, memos, site improvement plans, student and teacher handbooks, and other materials for analysis.

Data Analysis Procedures

When analyzing data, one has to carefully synthesize the correlation between the framework and the data gathered and presented in previous chapters. McCracken (1988, p. 42) suggests, “The object of analysis is to determine the categories, relationships, and assumptions that inform the respondent’s view of the world in general and the topic in particular.”

The grid and group typology allows for examination of group dynamics (group) coupled with the leadership dynamics (grid) to present a picture of the degree to which leadership impacts group functions. Using two schools in two different cultural quadrants gave me the opportunity to compare the leadership and group dynamics of each school. The cultural differences were determined initially through grid and group surveys. Scoring the surveys allowed me to place each school in specific quadrants. One school scored in the Corporate quadrant the other school chosen scored in the Collectivist quadrant. The surveys give characteristics that provide an inclination of each schools cultural mien. The

cultures were more closely examined through observation, documentation and interviews to determine if they survey findings were accurate. Once data was gathered and sorted it was important to ascertain the relationship of the data to the survey outcomes. This information was used to compare characteristics within each culture for a representation of each schools propensity toward newcomer integration in the decision making process.

The analysis procedures of this study included the acquisition of information in raw form which meant transcribing taped interview in their raw form. At this point, the goal was to get every utterance on paper to be examined later. In addition to transcribed data, observation fieldnotes were organized for later comparison with the additional data. After the interviews had been transcribed and the observations had been organized, I looked for common themes in each one. I started this process by using numerous colored highlighters to isolate information about aspects of decision making and newcomers. I then looked for other common pieces of information and highlighted them accordingly.

Once transcribed materials had been highlighted, I used the same highlighting technique to examine fieldnotes. I color coordinated themes from the transcripts to themes from the fieldnotes for comparison to present and analyze data. I built a note-taking system through the process of organizing and highlighting material. The notes were developed into an outline to further examine regularities within both observations and transcribed materials. The outline served as a guide to find things that happen frequently and sequentially.

The information, once organized, was examined again until pertinent information had been identified and organized by frequency of disclosure and importance to the study.

Cresswell (1994) states, "Analysis requires that the researcher be open to possibilities and

see contrary or alternative explanations for the findings.” The researcher must be prepared to look at data and look again and again for details that might aid in explaining or upholding data.

Summary

Methodology and procedures were implemented to carry out necessary strategies for gathering valuable data to use and gain insight into two different elementary sites with different grid and group typologies. Each of the two cases studied presents a different perspective of Douglas’s (1982) grid and group cultural quadrant considerations.

The purpose of this study was to test Douglas’s (1982) grid and group framework to analyze newcomers’ voice and integration in decision-making in at least two different cultural contexts. In the following chapter, I will present data collected from each site and build a representation of each based on interviews, document collection, observation fieldnotes, and survey outcomes to give the reader a realistic insight to the school sites studied.

Chapter IV

Presentation of Data

This chapter will present data collected throughout this study. I will discuss dynamics of the district and offer a thick description of each school site studied. This data will lay the foundation for analysis of different cultural contexts in relationship to Douglas's typology grid and group.

The School District

Choice Schools is a very large school district hosting 3 high schools, 5 middle schools, and 14 elementary sites with an approximate student population of 16,700. The district is diverse in culture and socio-economic levels. Demographic data indicates the district population is 87% white, 6% black, 2% Hispanic, 2% Asian, and 3% Native American. However, the town is a bedroom community to a large metropolis, and, consequently, demographics can and do change often. The school has a reputation for being a competitive school with high expectations for both its students and teachers. The town has grown phenomenally and continues to force the school to build new schools to support the demands of growing population in the district.

Case One

Oak Elementary School

The Setting

Oak Elementary School houses about 42 certified teachers, one principal and one half-day assistant principal, a counselor, two secretaries, and three custodians. There are two full-time kindergarten teachers, six 1st grades, six 2nd grades, five 3rd grades, five 4th grades, four 5th grades, five special education classes, and nine specials classes such as music, P.E., librarian, gifted/talented, art, and Title I teachers. Student enrollment is 580

kindergarten through fifth-grade students which are 77% white, 16.4% African-American, 2.1% Hispanic, 1.1% Asian, and 3.4% American Indian. Demographic data indicates a rise from 3% African American in 1997 to 10.8% in 1998 and a steady 3-4% increase every year after that. In three years, the school has gone from 3% African American population to 16.4% African American population. The other populations stayed relatively the same while the Caucasian population decreased by 10%. These percentiles represent a significant change in ethnic culture within the school which may influence other changes.

Oak Elementary is located in the middle of a residential area. The bricked school presents a very nice ambiance and is well kept. The school has an open, approachable feeling and upon entering the building one finds a very neat and welcoming atmosphere. The foyer is set with tables decorated with school memorabilia, and the comfortable decor invites one to stay and look around. The halls are more traditional, hosting bulletin boards and posters with student focus. One sign promotes the mission statement which reads "Working Together for the Whole Child." The school is spread out and houses upper grades at one end of the school and the lower grades at the other end. The main office is off the foyer, and down the hall is the media center and computer lab. A multi-purpose room/cafeteria is centrally located and is used for breakfast, lunch, and school assemblies. The playground is in back between the portables and the main building.

The setting for this school is considered standard and resembles the older schools in the district. The classrooms are not overtly unique in any way. They provide plenty of space for student movement and learning. The teachers are very creative in decorating their rooms and halls, promoting learning, and student achievement. There was a lot of

movement in the halls during my visits. It had the feeling of busy people doing busy things.

This faculty and school portrays a relaxed atmosphere, friendly and busy. It was toward the end of the school year so one can imagine the many things happening to end and finish to get ready for the summer. The weather was warmer, but it seemed the dress code was more relaxed and less professional than most schools I have been in. However, all the teachers did comport themselves in a professional manner. The whole experience seemed much more relaxed than other schools I visited during my study. The principal, Mr. Polk, on the other hand, was always dressed in a professional manner and did not reflect a more casual appearance. He was very charismatic and presented a school that was structured and neat.

According to Mrs. Gold, "I believe Oak has a lot of problems to take care of as far as the demographics and student behaviors. The parent support has dropped and parents are aware of a change in the school." She also stated, "Those involved in PTO and the school would try and do what they could to make the school as good as it could be for their children." I personally did not notice a great deal of parents in the building. I did see them at lunch for duty and other times for various occasions. For the most part, the parents I saw were in the office or meeting with a teacher.

There was one day when two PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) members came to the school and had a cookout for the teachers. Most of the teachers participated and did not go out for lunch that day. The members cooked hamburgers and hot dogs for the teachers and served them on the "patio." The teachers were held to their regular lunch times, but they ate and shared lunch together that day and seemingly enjoyed the cookout.

History of the School.

Three veteran teachers were interviewed to gain a historical perspective and to gain insight into past cultural dynamics of Oak Elementary. Mrs. Black has been a special education teacher at Oak Elementary for eight years, teaching the class for the learning disabled. When asked about her perceptions of Oak Elementary, she stated her perceptions had changed over the years. She noted that when she first arrived, there were very “distinct groups” and she was “warned” to stay away from certain people and groups. By associating with them, she would be “labeled” by her relationships and that could be bad for her affiliation with the principal. She said, “It was not too difficult to remain neutral from any distinct group because I was in special education and the other teachers really looked to me for guidance with the L.D. kids.” She explained that she had to have associations with all teachers because she had students from all grade levels. She also explained that teachers were open to ideas on how to handle special needs students, especially L. D. kids. “I think that by doing what I said I would to help the teachers and students, it helped me gain my own reputation and worth in the school,” according to Mrs. Black.

Mrs. Black discussed a division in teaching philosophies which created problems for the whole school. Mrs. Black stated,

The principal at the time was pushing one of the teaching philosophies, so if you were of the other philosophy you were really ostracized from the “in” group. Eventually, that principal was replaced after about ten years as principal, and the strong group was attempting to maintain their hold on control of the group majority. Without the support of the principal, it became more difficult.

The subsequent principal was there for about three or four years, according to Mrs. Black, and had a lot to deal with. Mrs. Black also said,

The teachers were beginning to understand one another and become more cohesive. Philosophies were still an issue, but some of the veterans with influence over the group started to leave, and with new teachers came new hope of teacher integration, and then the principal left. The teachers had began to change. We started to heal from the division of teaching philosophies.

Mrs. Gray, a 20-year veteran, told about the history of the school. She talked about a period of time when the teachers were at odds which she called “infighting.” She stated much of the same story as Mrs. Black. She remembers it was a terrible time for teachers. She stated there were definite sides, and you could have a good experience or bad experience, “...depending on what side you were on. The principal at that time was really influential toward one group and very judgmental of the other side.” She said,

When he left and a new principal came in, I really feel like we started to heal. There are still veteran teachers who remember the infighting years. Anyone involved in that won't forget. I hope and pray anything like that never happens again. Now we have a new problem, but we are dealing with it together.

Mrs. Gold is a veteran teacher of 22 years, 11 years at Oak Elementary. She gave details about the history of Oak much the same as Mrs. Gray and Mrs. Black. She talked about how difficult it was for her when she first started at Oak. “It was very bad; morale was very low. There were factions, like ‘us’ against ‘them.’ I thought I was going to have a nervous breakdown. I just wasn't used to that.” Mrs. Gold explained the problems were due to division in teaching philosophies. She said that in her second year

at Oak, she decided she was going to do it her way, and stated, "I just went in my room, closed my door, and I was with my kids."

Mrs. Gold described the principal, in the beginning, in much the same way as Mrs. Black and Mrs. Gray. She stated, "He had his favorites. He was way over there (on one side) and that faction was 'in'...it was a terrible situation." Mrs. Gold said that when he left and the subsequent principal was hired, things were still tough. I asked if she thought that situation still existed in the whole group. She explained, "I guess a few years after he left, some of those teachers moved on...things were starting to get better. The veterans still remember those years, but there aren't the wars anymore." Mrs. Gold said that things were much better, and there are very nice people there. "I just love them to death!" she stated.

Organizational Decision Making

Curriculum.

Mr. Mann was one of two male teachers at Oak Elementary. This was his first year teaching and his first year at Oak Elementary. When asked if he got help from other teachers, he said, "I did, but I didn't always know what questions to ask, and I felt like I asked too many questions trying to get acclimated to the school and my first year."

During the weekly grade level meetings, everyone had a turn at being in charge. He had done it once or twice. He said, "The agenda for each meeting is usually set prior to the meeting. The principal sits in on them sometimes to hear what is going on, but gives little input."

When I asked Mr. Mann about decision making in the school, he told me that most of the decisions were made by committees of teachers. He explained,

It was very difficult at times to be on those committees and make a decision for the whole group. The teachers are part of curriculum, technology, discipline decisions, and most general decisions that affect them or the students. I feel I have a fair chance at voicing ideas and opinions with the group, more with the upper grades because of my association with those teachers.

When committee agendas were discussed during faculty meetings, veteran and newcomers were involved. All the teachers asked and answered questions concerning their respective committees. One newcomer, Mrs. Redd, was very vocal in the technology committee. I noticed that she had a degree of expertise in this area. She answered a lot of the questions directed toward technology.

Mrs. Redd talked about primary decisions and secondary decisions in relationship to committees. The primary decisions, she explained, were those that involved committees that were more important such as technology, discipline, and reading/Title I committees. Secondary committees were more like social committee, leadership committee, etc. She thought the committees helped include her in gaining information. She stated that the committees were a very important part of the school, and said,

Everyone is on at least one committee. I am on the technology committee. I brought a lot of knowledge to the school in that area. I've been assigned to a lot of other committees. Your ideas and opinions are really heard. If an important decision has to be made, the teachers would go back to their grade level and get opinions or vote on choices. Mr. Polk is pretty receptive to the committees ideas, but if something came up from higher in the district, he might direct us. Then he might come to us and say, "What do you think about this or that?" We usually come up with a solution as a group.

She felt that committees play a huge role in the decision-making process in the school.

Mrs. Green, also a new teacher to Oak, explained,

I was kind of surprised at how quickly you are put in a leadership role. I started out on one committee when I came. I'm probably on about seven or eight now. The committees are primarily how decisions are made in the school. They choose a teacher from each grade level to be on each committee, including specials teachers and special ed. teachers. Committees have the authority to make decisions based on what our objectives are. If it is a crucial decision, like the Title I committee, then the committee members usually go back to the grade levels for a vote, and it is whatever the majority wants. The administrator doesn't gear you toward a decision. He usually allows the committees to come up with the final decision. Mr. Polk would usually sit in on the committees and take a leadership role when needed.

When I asked Mrs. White about her voice in the whole group decision-making process, she stated,

All teachers are expected to be on committees--at least one. I am on three. The committees meet at least once a month, and some are on more important committees than others. Most of the decisions of the school are made at committee meetings by the committee members.

She told me that if the committee was one that held a lot of importance for the whole school, such as the discipline and reading committees, the members would discuss them with their grade-level teachers for a consensus and then make a decision to present to Mr. Polk. She believed that any decision made by committees were usually adopted by Mr. Polk. I asked for examples of important committees. She believed that this year the most important were the discipline, technology, and Title I or reading committees. I asked her if any newcomers were on those committees. She couldn't remember exactly, but knew of two newcomers on two of those committees.

I asked if there would be a time for me to sit in on one of the committee meetings. Mrs. White was hesitant about answering, then stated, “The committees are pretty tight. They have a lot of responsibility, and I’m not sure how that would work.” I did not intrude in the committee meetings held during my visits.

Mrs. Gold described her grade level much like the other. They meet once a week to discuss and plan their curriculum for the week. She thought that everyone had an equal voice and ownership in the decisions saying, “We discuss things. We are very honest about how we feel. We make decisions in our little meeting about anything.” She did say that they had one person that acted as a liaison to the principal and other areas of the school and in certain committees. She said that everyone was on a committee, and each person on the committees acted as a voice for their grade level. When asked if that person made decisions for the group, she told me the team representative would get ideas and opinions from their grade level and take them back to the committees for decisions.

Mrs. Gold felt that the primary decisions and secondary decisions were made by the committees. If it was a primary decision, the committees would poll the teachers and take the higher percentage of votes on a particular decision. She thought teachers made the majority of the decisions, newcomers as well as veterans, through committees. She didn’t feel Mr. Polk made a lot of decisions. He let the committees tell him what the teachers wanted and he usually went with that.

Discipline.

The veteran teachers discussed the changes affecting the school currently. Mrs. Black explained the culture of the school changed drastically about the time the current principal started. According to Mrs. Black,

There was an influx of African American students with new attitudes from students and parents, and this was difficult for the teachers. The teachers were used to teaching a white, middle-class population rather than a more diverse group of students, and with that came problems which the veteran teachers had not encountered.

Mrs. Black stated that she felt the teachers began to come together out of misery. Mrs. Black said,

No one was spared. All the teachers began having a difficult time of handling class discipline problems, and they felt they were getting no support from the new principal. They began commiserating and collaborating on ways of handling the problems the school was facing.

Mrs. Gray was very adamant about the significant problems of discipline. She stated that last year she had considered quitting in the middle of the year due to severe behavior problems saying, "It was really taking a toll on my health. I was not enjoying being a teacher. I felt all I did was put out behavioral fires." Mrs. Gray was very descriptive about the behavior and discipline problems. She felt like several of the teachers, mostly veterans, were ready to transfer or take a leave of absence because of the discipline problems. She explained,

The veteran teachers are in culture shock about the change in demographics. I know of a couple of teachers that want out because of lack of support from the administrator. The reason they really want to leave (veteran teachers), it's not the colleagues. The comments are like, "I can't teach and handle the serious behavior problems without the principal's support."

She talked about the group as a whole and described it as the teachers having something in common. "(It's) something that they can work toward together, something that they know that everyone is dealing with but not sure how to handle," according to Mrs. Gray.

Mrs. Gold discussed the changing culture of students and parents. Mrs. Gold clarified,

We have a whole new clientele. We have some apartments that are in another district, but they go to school in our district. We have a whole new group coming in that we haven't dealt with. We used to have one or two black kids in each class. Now a majority, from the apartments, are African American. There are a lot of very violent, unhappy children. They come to school and bring that anger with them. Everything is completely different. Again, I'll emphasize angry, angry, angry children that can't control themselves. It's a whole new ball game for us.

She told me that historically they were a white, middle-class neighborhood, and the majority of students were Caucasian. This caused frustration with the teachers. The problem, according to Mrs. Gold, is dealing with discipline for the new students.

Mrs. Gold felt as far as the group teachers and her grade level was concerned, things were just great.

Newcomer Integration.

Mrs. White is also a newcomer to Oak Elem. and teaches 2nd grade. She had taught previously in another state for two years. She felt her first year was good and presented no significant surprises or problems. She was one of the teachers in a portable, and stated,

At times I do feel left out of things, and I don't always know what's going on because I'm out there, but my grade-level teachers fill me in most of the time. Mr. Polk feels portables are too confining for the kids and wants them taught in the building. Due to overcrowding in the building this year, Mr. Polk was forced to put classes in the portables. It was a little harder to mingle with the teachers because I was new and because I was in a portable. Overall, I really like being at Oak Elementary and have had positive experiences.

Mrs. Green and Mrs. Redd are both newcomers to Oak Elementary. They both were positive about their experiences in their first year at Oak. They, like others interviewed, also commented on the diversity in cultures and how that affects classroom instruction.

Mrs. Green came from another state and felt a lot less pressure here. She said,

It is very supportive, very laid back. The teachers really support each other; the faculty really supports each other. The teachers are very friendly and not “cliquey.” Teachers are very willing to share ideas or help. They have a lot of great resources, but you have to go and find them. You have freedom to teach what you feel like as long as you are following the curriculum. The teachers work together as a group and are friendly, socially. When the parents are needed, they come. It’s really hard for some parents to see (handle) the change in student demographics. A lot of parents have requested student transfers because of the behavior and discipline problems.

Mrs. Redd had taught several years previously at another school. She was equally complementary about the staff and the reception she received upon starting at Oak. Her perceptions were very positive. Mrs. Redd stated,

I felt very comfortable. Mr. Polk introduced me to another 3rd grade teacher. The 3rd grade teachers involved me in meetings and activities they did as a group even before school started. The teachers are all very welcoming, and I really like the group and school setting. I really do love it at Oak aside from the discipline and behavior problems. The teachers are all very helpful and sharing across all grade levels as well as 3rd grade.

I asked Mrs. Redd about her voice and ownership in decision making and she thought it was really fair. She explained,

I think it’s probably pretty equal. Being a new teacher, you don’t always know the ins and outs. You have to ask, but everyone is really receptive to my ideas. Most of the

teachers in my grade level are young, about my age, and we all get along really well. We meet formally every Wednesday for grade-level meetings to talk about planning, ideas, etc. We also eat lunch everyday together in the teachers' lounge. We are a real cohesive group. I have a voice, very much so. There are no specific leaders in the group, and we are all working toward the same goal of educating students. Everyone across the grade levels has been very welcoming. They have been willing to share information, very sharing. I feel like my voice is definitely heard in the building as well as my grade level.

Teachers collaborating, mingling, and grouping together during several different situations was not an uncommon sight. I visited the school during several different events to observe the interaction between the teachers. For example, I visited during a faculty meeting in which the teachers were all present. The atmosphere was collaborative, and teachers visited freely. During lunch times, the teachers frequently discussed difficulties in class and frustrations with problems. Often, the teachers left for lunch. I visited during teacher meetings, lunches, after school parties, and student assemblies.

During lunch, it was difficult to observe the teachers in a whole group setting. Their lunch times varied depending on their grade levels. Lunch started at 11:00 a.m. and continued in waves of about 45-minute intervals until 1:00. Each grade level had designated lunch times. Most of the teachers went out for lunch or ate in their rooms so interaction of group dynamics was difficult to determine. Most of them that stayed ate with their grade level. The grade levels grouped together and mingled as a new grade level came in. They had some luncheons, I was told, throughout the year, but I did not get a chance to observe one. They all seemed genuinely cohesive and conversation flowed evenly and generally.

What I found during after-school social functions was less structured. I was able to attend two showers for two of the teachers. Most of the teachers were relaxed and conversation flowed evenly among all that were present. What I did notice was that the teachers tended to group together by grade levels or departments. Some veteran teachers did group together. I did not notice anyone being left out of conversations or activities. They all seemed to be part of the social group and interacted as freely as the rest.

When asked about the integration and voice of newcomers in the school, veteran teacher Mrs. Black commented that newcomers were more likely to have problems within the grade-level groups. She stated,

Newcomers are welcomed into the whole group decision-making process. They are given the opportunity and expected to participate and be members of committees that affect the whole school. The decisions they have a part in are more school influencing depending on the committee(s) they're on. Some committees are more influencing and integral to the school than others. In the lower grades there may be more of a problem with including newcomers with different ideas and ways of doing things. I think the newcomers would be expected to follow the ways of doing already in place in their grade levels.

Mrs. Green, a 2nd grade newcomer did not reiterate the same feelings. She said,

At the 2nd grade level, prior to this year, teachers had not met for level meetings. They started it this year, and I think it has been a good thing. Not all teachers come to the meetings. They kind of do their own thing, and that's okay with the rest.

She said she does feel she has input and a voice in the meetings and has ownership in what goes on in the school and in her class and grade level.

Mrs. White, another 2nd grade newcomer, voiced much the same opinion as Mrs. Green, saying,

I am very satisfied with my ability to make decisions within the school. The second-grade teachers all meet once a week to discuss issues and planning much like the other grade levels. A lot of the teachers already have “their way” of doing things, but they don’t negate any of my ideas or votes during the meetings.

Mrs. White did not feel like there was any time when she felt left out of the group decisions or that she was not welcomed by the staff.

First-year teacher Mr. Mann stated,

There have been times that I felt that I had to make the move to be involved. They would be open to my ideas and allow me to make decisions. It’s just that they were all familiar with one another. They forgot to invite me into activities.

He said a lot of the teachers came to him for advice on students or they sent a student to his class for the day to work because he can handle them better. He told me they didn’t send kids to the office, stating, “It worked better to send them to me. The students usually ended up back in the classroom in a few minutes if we send them to the office.” He thought they sent them to him because he was male and had the background to deal with them better. He told me he overheard a conversation in the lounge where teachers were deciding which students to give to the male teachers for the next year.

Mrs. Gray, like others, felt the newcomers were an asset in many ways and believed they had ownership and a voice in decisions in the school, saying,

I think they (newcomers) are incorporated really well. I think it has been inclusive. We have added some teachers that are real knowledgeable in some areas and that has helped a lot. We have one new teacher that knows a lot about technology. I’m the novice in technology. That’s the committee I am on. I hope to continue with it and maybe learn more. I am not the committee type. I don’t want to be on any more than I have to. As far as the newcomers in my grade level, we meet every Tuesday. We had not done that

before this year. I think it has been helpful. Some teachers do their own thing but they know they can always participate. The newcomers have added a lot to our grade level and the school. In my opinion, I think they have a voice, and their ideas and opinions are heard. I think new teachers are included, respected, as well as veteran teachers.

When asked about newcomer voice and inclusion in the group and situations in the school, Mrs. Gold talked about the newcomer they had in their group and said she was handling everything fine. Mrs. Gold stated,

The new teacher came from a large district which had a lot of behavior problems, and it wasn't new to her. I think some of these newcomers aren't having problems. For our new teacher, I think it is a walk in the park. She didn't have the historical and demographic experiences some of the veteran teachers have had. They (the veterans) have never been anywhere else so it is a nightmare for them. We really look to Jane (the newcomer). She's really tough. She means business. The newcomer probably has the advantage in this situation.

She talked about how the newcomers were received by the staff and felt they were really welcomed and encouraged to participate in committees and social functions. She stated, "The newcomers have as much decision making power as any teacher. I think they're included and invited into the group."

Leadership

Oak Elementary appeared to have a lot of new and innovative things going on. Mr. Polk was very positive about his teachers and some of the things happening there. He seemed proud of the school and accomplishments made and yet to come. He was very cooperative and seemed to conduct meetings and handle parents and teachers comfortably. Mr. Polk was eager to share documents and his school with me. The use of computers during faculty meetings was notable. He presented the meetings via an overhead Power

Point session which was well organized and quite easy to follow. He encouraged a positive attitude and motivation for teachers concerning test scores, student behaviors, and end-of-school activities. He conducted school assemblies in a positive manner and promoted students and teachers in a cheerful demeanor.

Mrs. Black felt that things had gotten better this year with Mr. Polk, but they were just beginning to make progress. When I asked her to discuss Mr. Polk's involvement in the school, she said,

He really is doing much better. He is beginning to see some of the problems here. This is the strongest I have seen him as a decision maker. Sometimes he just says this is the way it is going to be. At the same time, he has empowered the faculty and asked for input on things. A lot of committees have been created this year.

The committees were brought up several times throughout my interview. They had a lot of impact on the school and decisions in the school.

I had the opportunity to observe the teachers during teachers' meetings where a lot of committee decisions were discussed and formulated. The meetings were conducted in the same structured manner each time. There was usually one formal meeting each month. Other short meetings were held, but only when information needed to be disseminated sooner than the next formal meeting. I did not attend any of the informal meetings. Each formal meeting was conducted by a Power Point presentation. The information discussed stemmed from follow-ups to previous meetings, news gathered during district administrators' meetings, new information such as results of test scores, end-of-school responsibilities, in-services available, and other things that might come up for discussion. During most of the meetings, teachers quietly gathered information. Mr. Polk ended each

meeting with committee updates. There were several committees formed, and one member from each committee brought up concerns or decisions made. Mr. Polk opened the floor for discussion and facilitated, but did not attempt to sway or change content of committee disclosures. Mr. Mann said, "Mr. Polk made very few decisions that were given over to committees, and he doesn't tend to lead the committees in one direction or the other." When asked what kinds of decisions he felt were made by the administrator, he said, "If a decision needs to be made and the principal doesn't feel he should be handling it himself and we don't have a committee, then he puts one together so he just delegates it out to us." Following information given by Mr. Polk, he would go through the list of committees and ask for any new information or updates from committee members needing to be discussed. I counted thirteen committees to be addressed. Newcomers were involved in those committees as well as veterans. I did not notice any slight to newcomers in committee assignments during those meetings.

Mrs. White discussed Mr. Polk in much the same manner as others. She stated, "Mr. Polk gives us a lot of autonomy, and decisions he makes are mainly based on suggestions from the committees." She felt he involved himself in aspects of committee discussions, but did not overly influence the outcomes. Mrs. White discussed her interview for her position with me. She said that other teachers were in on the interview process, and felt a collective effort had been made to choose teachers in the building. She thought it was a good way to hire teachers since the staff ultimately had to work with the teachers hired. She felt comfortable talking with Mr. Polk, but mainly went to her grade-level teachers for questions or help.

Mrs. Gray commented that Mr. Polk really did some things for the school that she thought were positive, saying,

He really tries to include the teachers in on lots of things. We have a lot of freedom in our rooms. I know I sat in on some new teacher interviews, and I think that was very helpful. He asked teachers' opinions of them. I feel he based his final decision on those opinions.

Mrs. Gray talked about Mr. Polk giving support for teachers' plans and ideas on the discipline committee. She felt that if the teachers came up with a plan they believed in and could implement, he would support them on it. Mrs. Redd stated, "He helps us with the students some, but he really wants us to come up with the solutions to problems." Overall, Mrs. Redd felt good about the role of the administrator. She felt he was part of the committees, but let the committee members handle them without a lot of influence in the decisions and outcomes.

Mrs. Gold discussed the difficulties with the lack of support the teachers felt with the administrator. She felt Mr. Polk had done his best, stating,

He has tried a lot, but he does hand it back to us. Sometimes you do get frustrated. We need to have the guidance there, and we don't. I don't want to put him down because he has done a good job. With our last administrator, you knew where you stood. It was like the buck stops here. This is the decision, and this is the way it is going to go. I like that. He doesn't want the brunt of the decisions so he throws it back on us. We need help!

When asked how the group felt, she stated emphatically they did not like it, and said,

There are times when we feel like we are drowning. It was much worse last year. It has gotten a little better. We don't know how to deal with them (discipline problems). That puts everybody on edge and stressed looking for answers, looking for guidance. Then

you have your test scores. That is a big thing. Prior to the change in students, we had decent test scores. Then, all of a sudden, we were at the bottom of the district on test scores. We are the low men on the totem pole. You get called in. I know Mr. Polk got called in because of our test scores. We were not used to having problems with test scores...not only those problems but having to deal with curriculum and discipline problems. It is frustrating, and the teachers don't feel like they are getting any support from Mr. Polk.

Mrs. Gold explained, "Mr. Polk decided to create a committee of teachers, one from each grade level, to come up with solutions on discipline and behavior problems. I think we're pretty much expected to solve the problems through committees." During faculty meetings, discussions were committee driven, and persons on the committee would give information while others asked questions. There was little input by Mr. Polk. He took a leadership role and allowed discussions to flow.

I saw Mr. Polk often during my visits. I frequently saw him in the office and in the front hall as I entered the school. He was present during most School Rock sessions in which the whole school would gather in the multi-purpose room to sing songs and to recognize monthly student and teacher birthdays and reading achievements. It lasted about 30 minutes every Tuesday. This was basically a time for the whole school to congregate to promote oneness and cohesiveness. There were other times I noticed the absence of Mr. Polk. One teacher stated, "He needs to be more accessible to the teachers and students. The kids really need to see him more in the rooms, halls, on the playground...where the kids are."

Mrs. Gray talked about Mr. Polk and felt like he gave a lot of responsibilities to the teachers, especially about the behavior and discipline problems. Mrs. Gray commented, "I

think there really is an attitude of us against the administrator. You don't know if anyone really cares." She did feel like the time he spent in teachers' rooms was not enough, saying, "We haven't seen much of him in our rooms except to evaluate. Some classes are so bad we need to see him more than that. The kids need to see him in the rooms... everywhere," according to Mrs. Gray.

During recess and during the loading and unloading buses, the students seemed to segregate themselves. In other words, the African-American students would be in one area waiting for a bus or playing while the other students were in other bus lines or areas. I discovered that the parents of all concerned demanded that a separate bus be provided for a group of African-American students that lived in an apartment complex that had been newly established about three years ago. This is the second year for this busing segregation and was wanted and needed by the parents and teachers to prevent serious conflicts on the bus. The students were very difficult to manage at times while waiting for the bus or for parents to pick them up. Teachers were constantly on guard for any problems, and several did occur. I did not see Mr. Polk at breakfast or loading buses after school. I saw significant discipline problems at these times. I did not see the principal during the dismissal of students in the multi-purpose room. I did see him in the hallway or in the office, but most of the altercations were handled by teachers on duty. It was the same during recesses. From my observations, the principal did not venture to the playground, and students were sent to the office for occurring problems.

Mrs. Black felt Mr. Polk "dropped the ball" on some issues and should have been more adamant about certain issues such as discipline. Mrs. Black believed,

The principal should be giving more assistance to teachers with students with difficult behaviors. Mr. Polk let the teachers down and did not give them the support they needed. He really needs to work harder at the discipline problems in the classrooms and cafeteria.

Mrs. Green felt Mr. Polk gave a lot of autonomy to the teachers. Mrs. Green was frustrated with the difficulty of getting support for the discipline problems, stating, "He should take more of a leadership role in handling student discipline." She said when students are sent to the office, they usually come back quickly. "There just isn't enough room for them, and the secretaries have to handle them," she stated. "There is no place to send them (discipline problems). The principal created a discipline committee to let the teachers decide on how to start solving the problem." Mrs. Green thought he could do more to help with difficult parents and the discipline problems.

Case Two **Pine Elementary School**

The Setting

Pine Elementary School demographics present more students and, consequently, more regular class teachers totaling 33 kindergarten through 5th grades. They have three special education teachers and eight specials teachers comprising of PE, music, media specialist, computer lab, gifted and talented, and art. They have one principal, one full-time assistant principal, a counselor, and three secretaries. There were six newcomers in the building. Of those, four were interviewed.

The population for Pine Elementary is a total of 713 students. Of those students, there are 4% African American, 1.4% American Indian, 1.4% Hispanic, 3.5% Asian, and 90% Caucasian. There have been no significant increases in the current population in the past

three years. This school has a relatively small minority base. I was told this school had more parents with middle to upper incomes than most schools in the district.

Pine Elementary is centered in the middle of an older section of town. The school building itself is very nice and well kept, and portables line the west side of the building. The portables, I discovered, were used by the art teacher, one music teacher, and the gifted teacher. No regular or special ed. classes were held out there. The facade is welcoming and promotes education and students even before entering the school.

Upon entering the school, one finds a large lobby with a waiting area for students and teachers. The media center is just to the left after entering, and the multi-purpose room/cafeteria is to the right of the entrance. The offices of the principal and secretaries are centered between the multi-purpose room and the media center. The third-grade hall houses about six classrooms. There are tables exhibiting student projects and work. The rest of the building spreads out quite a bit. Behind the building from west to east is a very large playground with a walking trail, and several different areas with playground equipment.

The hallways have a bulletin board for each classroom that the teachers decorate. They are all very colorful, and, again, all promote student learning and projects. The classrooms are large and roomy. The overall atmosphere of the school is very calm, quiet, and structured. Students moving through the halls are very well-behaved and quiet.

Pine Elementary is like most in the district. It is an older, one level building with what appears to be many additions added over the years. The school is brick and has several portables along the west side of the building, all well maintained. Mrs. Fern discussed the growth in the school since she has been there. She told me it started off a very small

building, housing one class each of kindergarten through 6th grades. She explained that at that time, the principal was also a teacher and that the school has grown considerably to about four to seven classes per grade. She stated, “The student base has stayed the same over the years. Not much has changed historically.”

Other events in the school I witnessed was the loading and unloading of buses. It was very routine. This school does not have a breakfast program so all the students go to the playground in the morning and sit outside in bus lines or parent pick-up lines after school. If it is raining, they go to the multi-purpose room and sit in designated bus lines. The teachers at Pine, like all teachers in the district, are paid for duty. Most of the morning and after school duties were done by teachers. Lunch and noon recess duties were primarily done by parents. I was told veteran teachers had priority at choosing to do duties or not to do them. There was a seniority order to getting duties. Most of the teachers wanted to fill the a.m. and p.m. duties for the extra pay.

Although I was welcomed into Pine Elementary, I definitely felt like an outsider. However, the teachers were all very nice and welcoming. Eventually, I became familiar with schedules and teachers. This school had the feeling of welcome for adults and students, but also expressed a seriousness about the business of educating students.

History of the School.

Mrs. Sunny, a veteran of 18 years, described historical aspects of Pine. She said it started out very small with one or two classes for grades one through six. She said, “Pine has gone through dynamic growth, all positive, in my opinion as a parent and a teacher here.” She said that from the beginning of her years at Pine, there has been very little teacher turnover. Most of the turnover has been in retirees or people forced to move out

of state for one reason or another. She went on to say that teachers very seldom left due to dissatisfaction with the school, parents, students, or administration. She stated, “The school has been pretty much the same, except for the growth. We did go through an administration change about 12 years ago. There was no significant problems then or now.”

Mrs. Lilac explained that in the ten years she had been at Pine not a lot has changed. “The building has gone through some cosmetic changes,” she said. “There has been a lot of growth here. The faculty is pretty much the same.” She explained there were changes that progress has brought about such as technology. She thought these had been positive changes. She said, “The students here have just about anything they need or want. They are not underprivileged in any way.”

Mrs. Sunny also expressed Pine’s history briefly. She explained, “It was a very small school. I have seen dynamic growth, and in my opinion it has all been positive.”

Organizational Decision Making

Curriculum.

Mrs. Lilac expressed a satisfaction about the way things are accomplished at Pine, but thought curriculum could be coordinated a little better between 4th and 5th grades for transition purposes. When asked about who coordinates the curriculum she explained,

Each grade level (coordinates the curriculum) for the most part, but the district does put limits on some of the curriculum, and the principal has a lot of say in grade-level curriculum. For instance, this year a spelling series was adopted that not everyone likes.

Documents gathered from Pine Elementary showed several committees, but curriculum was not one of them.

When asked about the newcomers' integration and decision making among the whole school, Mrs. Lilac and Mrs. Daisy both explained that all teachers were on school committees. Both told me that only a couple of committees met consistently. I asked which ones, and they told me the technology and social committees met at least once a month. Mrs. Lilac also stated that she got the impression that newcomers were put on less important committees this year, saying, "I think maybe it was because the principal felt we needed good teams and we (veterans) were put in the key committees to give the newcomers time to learn the ropes." Mrs. Daisy told me she was on one committee and as of May, had not met at all. I asked how decisions were made for that committee, and she said, "Things pretty well come from the administrator in the building. You are told what is going on."

Mrs. Fern and Mrs. Sunny spoke about committees, stating everyone was on a committee, and they did feel like the ones that met were more important. Teachers were allowed to voice opinions in the committee meetings. Mrs. Sunny went on to say, "If you want to be involved, you can be. You take out of it what you put into it." Mrs. Fern reiterated similar feelings about committees and involvement, saying, "You get to choose committees to be on. I think you pick three, and you're usually put on one of them. We don't really meet a lot, but I think we're pretty well informed of things happening in the school."

Mrs. Mum talked about committees much the same as others interviewed. She was on the reading committee, but stated that it rarely met. She felt like she had a lot of autonomy as far as her curriculum was concerned. She did think a lot of that had to do with her teaching special education. "The group here at Pine is just wonderful," she said.

“They really welcomed me. Of course, being new it did take a while to understand group situations like lunch, social gatherings...things like that.” She was very positive about the whole group, and thought maybe more of the difficulty of fitting in may be at the grade or team level. Mrs. Mum talked about decisions for the whole school. She believed that the teachers did not make a lot of the decisions, saying, “I think our principal and assistant principal make most of the decisions.” Mrs. Mum felt a teacher with more expertise may have more say in things such as the technology committee.

Mrs. Iris discussed committees a bit differently than the rest. She said,

I think the administration is part of every committee. It is not to preside over them. It is more to inform of things that we may not consider. Some committees are more important than others like the outdoor classroom committee and the technology. The technology committee is not as important this year as last year when it was all getting set up, but the committees that are new or not mature enough tend to meet more than others.

Mrs. Iris went on to say,

I feel like everyone has an equal voice in the committees. I think everyone is heard if they want to be, but the decisions are not always made by the committee. Members will get ideas from the grade-level teams and present them to the administration. They usually present their final decisions to the whole group at faculty meeting.

Technology.

Mrs. Iris also felt newcomers as well as veterans were heard and may have a bigger role in school-wide decision making if they had expertise in an area. Mrs. Iris is on the technology committee, and she stated that she was pretty much in charge of the technology for the school. She said, “I have done a number of in-services for the teachers

because I have more knowledge about computers than maybe some veteran teachers.”

She felt most decisions were made by the administration but with a lot of input from the teachers and parents. Mrs. Iris expressed, “Decision making for newcomers and veterans were more likely at the grade level than at the school level.” Mrs. Iris stated, “I think teachers are as involved as they want to be. The teachers’ priorities play a big part in how involved they are in what is going on in the school.” She said,

I am pretty dedicated, and that may be why I feel I have more voice in certain areas like technology. I usually stay here until 5:00 (p.m.) or later. Other teachers leave as soon as they can. I think you get out of it what you put into it.

When asked about specific committees, Mrs. Mum stated,

Technology committee is pretty important. There is always something new with the computer lab. We have a lot of in-services on new programs or equipment in the area of technology. Each class is getting or has a computer work station. One new teacher pretty much handles scheduling the set of those. The teachers are glad to get them, but there is so much to learn about the computers. I think Mrs. Rose lets Mrs. Iris take control because she knows a lot, and Mrs. Rose is learning like the rest of us.

Mrs. Lilac discussed the importance of the technology in the school. She said,

There is so much coming out for us to use in our classrooms from the web. We are all hooked up in our classes, well those with the work stations, and we have to learn how to use them. A lot of money was spent on computers by the PTO and school district. The PTO, I think, has a lot of say in how the computers are used and distributed. They buy programs and help with the up keep of them, buying ink and printers, things like that. They expect us to not only use them for teaching, but to teach the students how to use them. Technology is big. It’s not going away.

When asked about the decision for the computers, Mrs. Fern stated,

I think the technology committee pretty much makes the decisions for the computer lab and work stations. It's such a new thing in our school, and there is so much to learn.

We have had a lot of useful in-services on programs and the web and just how to log on to the computers. It has been an important tool in our classrooms. We are expected to teach from them. We better know how to use them. Some of the kids can use them better than the teachers. I think that's why we need to learn how to use them. The kids can almost teach us more than we can teach them.

Mrs. Sunny and Mrs. Daisy spoke briefly about the technology in the school. They felt it was one of the more important committees, and decisions were made by the committee.

Mrs. Sunny stated,

I think it is an unfamiliar territory for the administration. They need to go to those who know about computers. Mrs. Iris and some of the other teachers are really knowledgeable about computers and programs. They really have a lot of say in that area. The PTO provided some of the computers. I think they do a lot to help get technology into the school. They need to know where we are with it so they know how to help.

Mrs. Daisy stated similar thoughts. She explained, "We have a scheduled computer lab time every week. Mrs. Rose and the district added that to our curriculum. It's really become important to know about technology."

Newcomer Integration.

I saw a very cohesive group of teachers. During assemblies, the classes are grouped by grade levels, and the teachers either stood beside or behind their groups. The teachers participated in the songs and events and were careful to set an example of attention and participation. I saw very little segregation by the teachers or the students.

I visited events in this school much like the other school. I sat in on faculty meetings, school assemblies, lunches, and after-school social events. Lunches were done in grade-level shifts and overlapped by 15 to 20 minutes. The teachers' lounge was large which made it easy for more teachers to go there for lunch. Teachers did not typically leave for lunch. Teachers either brought their lunch or ate the school lunch.

On two different occasions a group held grade-level meetings during lunch times. They seemed to be very engrossed in planning, expressing ideas, and creating. Each group seemed to have a leader of sorts, a person who set the pace and tone of the meetings. These were veteran teachers, I discovered. In the fourth-grade group, it was very obvious. One member was the leader. A leader in the fifth-grade group was also evident during luncheons. This group did not always eat together. I noticed one veteran frequently absent from the group during lunch. I was told later that she preferred to eat alone. Mrs. Lilac stated, "During social situations, even lunch, the newcomers are more likely to participate while the veterans, one in particular, tend to stay in their rooms and not participate. I think this is to avoid situations with newcomers." There was one newcomer in the fourth-grade group and two in the fifth-grade group. It seemed to me they were as involved with the planning and discussion as the rest. I did not detect any exclusion during the meetings I witnessed.

Pine Elementary has similar group activities much like other schools in the district. I was able to observe teacher interactions at this time as well. One such event is the weekly assemblies for the school. Pine Elementary does its birthday assemblies on two different days to accommodate the number of students. I was able to attend both sessions. They are pretty much alike. They both recognize birthdays, mathematics milestones, sing songs,

and present general information, etc. Group interactions by the teachers were limited during this time. The teachers were very involved with participation and student observations. The grade levels grouped together. Therefore, the teachers tended to stay in their grade-level groups as well.

Mrs. Mum, Mrs. Petal, Mrs. Iris, and Mrs. Daisy are all newcomers to Pine Elementary. They all talked about their perception of Pine in positive terms. They have been very pleased with their acceptance by the whole group of teachers. They each talk about the positive attitude the school emits. Mrs. Mum stated, "It is a fairly open school. Everyone seems pretty happy. The kids do really well, (and we have) lots of parent involvement." Mrs. Daisy stated, "I have had a really good first year at this school. I have felt really accepted by the rest of the team."

Mrs. Mum said as far as being accepted and integrated into the whole school, "Being integrated into the whole school--that was great. Into a certain area of special education--that was harder." She went on to explain that of the three special ed. teachers in the building, she and the other teacher for the Mentally Retarded (MR) were new. She stated, "Two new ones (teachers) with new ideas, new ways of doing things--that kind of clashed with the speech teacher's old way of doing things."

Mrs. Mum thought the speech teacher really tried to run how she and the other MR teacher did things. She went on to say,

The speech teacher really tried to control the special education department. She was causing problems with how we did paperwork, how we scheduled our students--lots of things. She had become the queen bee of the special education. We just went ahead and did what we thought we should do and didn't do things her way. She had a hard time with that. It was a personality clash partly.

I asked her if she thought it was because she was the newcomer and the speech teacher the veteran. She replied,

Yes, I think that is true. She thought the new people would come in and she could tell us exactly how she wanted it to be. She took offense that we had different ideas on how things should be done. She didn't get her little power trip from us.

Mrs. Mum thought the administration allowed the speech teachers to make decision for the special education team, stating, "The administration decided it was her personality, and they just let her run things. It was easier for them not to have conflict, not have problems, even though they have gone through several MR teachers over the last seven years." She said both MR teachers went to the principal about this, saying, "I think it was mentioned to her to lay off and that we (MR teachers) had the respect of the teachers and that we were doing our jobs. I don't think it was strong enough. The problem is still there."

Mrs. Petal also expressed much the same attitude. She was a parent in the school and still is. She stated that she has always been pleased with the school, and was really glad to get on as a teacher. Mrs. Petal was very pleased with her first year. She felt that maybe she had gotten some more difficult students because of parent requests, and said, "I probably got the students that didn't have teacher requests. The other second-grade teachers have been really helpful and tried to include me." Like the other teachers, Mrs. Petal was on a committee and had not met this year. Mrs. Petal said,

Most decisions are probably made at the administrative level, but I feel like I am well informed. She (Mrs. Rose) has been very patient and helpful with me this year. I really enjoy it here. The teachers are all so nice, and I think they really care about the school and children.

Mrs. Petal stated that if she needed help or had questions about materials or whatever, she could ask one of the other teachers for help. "I think grade-level decisions are pretty well shared. The teachers really have their ways of doing things. They have been here long enough to have established a routine, but I am always included and feel my input is heard." She was very positive and did not appear to be displeased with any aspect of her first year at Pine Elementary.

Mrs. Iris talked about how much she really liked it at Pine, stating, "There are a lot of great things going on here. The teachers work well together to accomplish all that is expected for the children." Mrs. Iris also stated, "Grade-level teams are really important. Some of them work really well together." Teachers expressed how well the school functioned and how teachers take their responsibilities for students' learning very serious.

Mrs. Iris spoke about newcomers' voice in decision making stating,

I think when I was on committees, sometimes a lot of the team members were overbearing, and I did not feel like I was comfortable to speak. Although, on the things that I did speak on, I think they were valued, and I think they were important. I don't necessarily think it was a comfortable situation. I think they (newcomers) are valued, though.

When asked about grade-level decision making, Mrs. Iris explained,

We all meet once a week and discuss planning and curriculum. Some teachers go to get the information and leave. Others really want discussions and input. I think my ideas are heard and discussed equally.

However, Mrs. Iris told me she was moving to a different grade the next school year, and she was glad. I asked why, and she explained,

There is a lot of friction at times over ways of doing things. There are a lot of strong personalities in this group. A couple of the veteran teachers are friends and team up on issues, and some newcomers, really the younger ones, do their own thing. I guess they kind of want to have say in things going on in fourth grade. Friends get together on projects and things without the rest of the group. I don't think everyone has to be doing the same things all the time. It's just the veteran teachers, in my opinion, don't like the other teachers doing their own thing.

She continued to explain her ownership in the school. Mrs. Iris felt that she had ownership on the things that she had developed. She explained,

I think people place ownership. You can't walk into a job and get your own presence. One you walk into a job, you have to be responsible to keep that job. That was one of my goals: to find the things that I could do to help in this school and really take ownership of it. I took ownership of technology and the wetlands area. I took so much ownership that they couldn't get rid of me. I made sure they knew how much knowledge I had and how important I was to the school.

She believes that the newcomer is heard if they want to be and if they make the effort to be important in the school.

Mrs. Daisy discussed integration in her grade level and talked about a veteran in her group, and explained, "She (a veteran teacher) just doesn't want to participate, but sometimes she tries to control grade-level meetings to get her way on things." They both felt the newcomer had a personality that just wouldn't allow someone else telling them what to do. The newcomer wanted to voice ideas and opinions and it was very difficult for them in grade-level groups. She went on to say,

We have team meetings every Monday to discuss any business that we need to talk about. There is one that doesn't always want to go along with what the others want to

do—a veteran teacher. A couple of teachers will stand up to her. There are problems there. The newcomer doesn't like being told what to do by the veteran. There has been quite a bit of friction there. I think their personalities are very strong-willed types. I just let it go in one ear and out the other. I don't like conflict, so I guess I'm pretty laid back. Actually, I think I am being quiet my first year to see how things go. I can see myself having more to say next year about ideas and things.

She felt that newcomers have had to give in to the veteran teachers because of administrative support to the veteran teachers, stating, "I think they (newcomers) have done more of the backing down and just let it go. I really just feel like most of the decisions were made, and we just have been told." She explained that most of the decisions she and her grade level made were not at the building level but more at the grade level. When asked if she felt like she had ownership in the decisions made at the building level, she stated, "I haven't been involved in any decisions that are being made, so no, not really. I don't feel like I have a lot of ownership."

Mrs. Lilac discussed in detail the decision making and integration of newcomers, more specifically in her grade level. She explained, "This year has been very difficult in my grade in the aspect of group unity and dissension." She discussed the friction between one of the newcomers this year and a couple from last year having difficulty with being able to voice their ideas and opinions without conflict. When I asked why, she explained the situation with the new teachers and a veteran teacher. It became uncomfortable and difficult for all her grade-level teachers to deal with. She felt like it was more with the new teacher than the veteran, and went on to say,

We have had some new people come and there have been difficult times where some of the people that have been here longer resented some of the new things and changes.

The new people were trying to help us make ideas that they had tried at other schools. We had some tense moments trying to work things out so that we could work as a team. There was some resentment. I think there were words exchanged. I don't know that it has been settled at this point. Some of the newcomers resent the veterans. It's like we have this view and you have that view and there is no in between. I think the newcomers have been frustrated to the point of backing down. I think the veteran has more of the administrative support on decisions in conflict. Mrs. Rose definitely became involved, but I don't know to what degree. Mrs. Rose handled it one on one rather than as a grade-level problem.

When asked why she thought there was a such a problem with the newcomers and the veterans, Mrs. Lilac thought some of it had to do with age differences. She said, "The younger teachers, the newcomers, have been brought up to question and challenge things. The veteran teachers are more willing to just accept what they (the administration) tell us to do and just do our job."

Mrs. Fern said, "The newer teachers in our group are wonderful. They have as many ideas and suggestions as the rest. We all collaborate together well. The teachers here are just great. I think we do a real good job of including newcomers. They really add a lot to our school."

Mrs. Fern explained that there were no newcomers in her grade level, but thought the decisions were made at the grade level, saying,

We're a pretty strong group. We always eat lunch together and plan curriculum together. We have a lot of autonomy in our classrooms. However, Mrs. Rose always knows what is going on in our classes. As far as decisions go, we make a lot of decisions within our group. The whole school has input on decisions, but for the most

part, final decisions come from the administration. I think they really make an effort to make the best decisions for all concerned.

Mrs. Fern said, "Anytime we have a new teacher I feel she gets welcomed, and I know in my grade we really work well together. Ideas are shared equally, and no one really gets left out."

Mrs. Sunny said in her grade-level group it was harder to meet as a team. She said, "Not everyone always wanted to do the same things, but was always welcomed to participate or do their own thing. We did have a problem with one new teacher in particular several years ago. No one got along with her. I don't even think her husband could get along with her. Sometimes there are just people that can't work with other people no matter how hard they try."

There were no newcomers in her grade this year. She felt the newcomers in the school as a whole were well received and encouraged to participate. According to Mrs. Sunny,

"We have a lot of good teachers. The new ones this year really bring a lot of knowledge and experiences to the school. I think we do a good job of supporting them and welcoming them into the group."

Parent Involvement.

There were parents in many different aspects of this school system. There is a parent at the front door to greet anyone and to have anyone sign in and out when entering or leaving the building. I found out this was for courtesy as well as safety purposes. This allowed someone to know who was in the building and for what purpose. I saw at least two parent volunteers in the library at most times. There were parents in the teachers' workroom every time I visited the school. These were parents that copied papers and generally did anything the teachers needed help with. There were parents in the cafeteria

for lunch with their children, and parents doing various duties. At every assembly I attended, there were parents either observing or participating. The parent involvement was phenomenal, and it was obvious they were a significant aspect of the school. I was amazed at the participation by many, many parents. One note I would like to make here is that it was not just moms volunteering for things at Pine, but many dads were very involved.

Mrs. Sunny expressed her thoughts about the parents' support and involvement, stating, "They have an awful lot of input. Parents have a lot of input, but it is usually positive." When asked about the degree of influence the parents had she expressed, "They have a lot of say in things around here. I know they have a lot of input. They really do a lot to make this school successful."

Mrs. Lilac spoke about the population of Pine Elementary and explained that parents were very involved in a majority of school aspects, saying, "The parents provide a lot for the school. They are the vocal ones. They are pushy about what they want. The parents have a lot to do with the success of Pine Elementary." When asked about their influence over the administrator, she stated, "Mrs. Rose definitely listens to them and considers them in her decision for the school."

Mrs. Lilac went on to say,

I think the parent group here is very involved with the decisions that are made. That is great because we are here for their kids--to do what we are suppose to do with all of the objectives and things like that. They go out of their way to help in anyway they can to meet these goals and expectations. You always risk having too much parent involvement if you open it up, but it has worked so far. We have had to change things

like our discipline because of parental complaints. There are some instances where I think we have catered too much to certain parents.

Mrs. Fern described the parents as those that would do anything for the school. She stated, "The parents have always been a big part of Pine. They are responsible for a lot of activities and money-raising projects. Documents indicate the PTO at Pine Elementary raised a total of \$64,000, and 1,206 volunteers worked over 11,686 hours for the school. When asked about their influence in decisions, she explained,

I believe they are heard. I think Mrs. Rose listens to them and takes parents into consideration when making a decision that would impact them or their children. It's not easy to dismiss parents and what they want here.

Each newcomer, like the veteran teachers, were very resolute about the parent involvement at Pine. Mrs. Mum stated,

The PTO is big here. I think they have a lot of input in what they like and what they don't. They have a lot of financial input. Money talks the best. There are volunteers that are here...are everywhere in the school.

When asked about the influence of parents in the school, Mrs. Iris explained,

A ton of decisions are made based on their influence. There are tons of parents here. Parents definitely have input. They are an important part of the school. They do a lot to get the school what it needs. Sometimes I think they have a say in what money is spent, (money) that they raise. Like technology, they bought a lot of computers for the school.

Mrs. Petal is still a parent at Pine as well as a teacher. She stated that she was formerly very active in the school as a parent. She discussed how important the parents are to the school. She feels, "The parents are always there. They are always trying to find ways to make the school better."

Leadership

Mrs. Rose, the principal at Pine Elementary, was spoken of highly by interviewees. Teachers felt she listened to ideas and promoted student learning and support for the teachers. Mrs. Lilac felt things went pretty well with Mrs. Rose, saying, "I think Mrs. Rose takes ideas from all different sources and makes the best decisions for the school, students, parents, etc." She explained that in grade-level meetings which her grade holds every Monday during lunch, Mrs. Rose is very aware of what is going on, stating,

Usually we are able to come to a conclusion about decisions in our grade level. We present it to Mrs. Rose, and she has been pretty fair about looking over ideas we have presented, giving us pros and cons for doing things. We meet as a team and brainstorm ideas on problems and frustrations. A team member writes up a plan and presents it to Mrs. Rose, and she comes back with suggestions and changes. On some things, we wish we could go one step farther, but Mrs. Rose lets us know how far to go.

She did feel like Mrs. Rose was influenced by parents in the school and made decisions based on their opinions. For the most part, Mrs. Lilac believed that Mrs. Rose was making decisions based on a lot of different aspects of the school that she felt was best for the school.

Faculty meetings were not a regularly scheduled event. I did not always know when one would be held. I found that the principal would call meetings, usually before school, when she had information to disseminate or updates. The meetings I attended did not include a structured format. A meeting agenda was always passed out to the teachers and discussion moved fairly quickly. Most meetings lasted an average of 15-20 minutes. Information gained by the principal from administrator meetings was only given to the teachers if it directly involved the teachers participation. The principal was always

encouraging and positive to the teachers but at the same time presented a serious approach to information given and purposes to the meetings.

I saw Mrs. Rose everywhere in the building. The students were never hesitant to approach her with a hug, a story, or to share a success they had made. She was very open and welcoming to the students, and it was very obvious her mission was student success and self-esteem.

Mrs. Fern and Mrs. Sunny, like Mrs. Lilac, expressed the same feelings about the administration. They felt Mrs. Rose was very involved in all aspects of the school. Mrs. Sunny stated, "I think the principal takes the choices of the group and then makes the decision." She also felt that Mrs. Rose might listen more to the veteran teachers unless there was an issue of expertise, saying, "If it is your expertise in your area, like technology, I really feel like you would be listened to and what you say would carry weight (as a newcomer)." When asked about the influence of the parents over the teachers, Mrs. Sunny said, "I really think they (the administration) hears all sides. I don't think she would stand behind a teacher or parent that was totally out of place and make the wrong decision. I think they consider each person, their point of view, then make the best decision for all."

Mrs. Fern felt Mrs. Rose was definitely involved in all aspects of the school and did listen to all sides, stating, "She (Mrs. Rose) may listen a little more to the parents. I would say she makes the primary decisions and leads the group in secondary decisions." When asked about the meaning of primary and secondary decisions, she stated that primary decisions were decisions about hiring, expenditures, budgeting, curriculum, etc., and secondary decisions were more in the realm of technology, social committee, and

professional development issues. Mrs. Fern said, “Mrs. Rose has a lot of say in most decisions in the school.”

Mrs. Iris, a newcomer, discussed the influence the veteran teachers of her group had on the administration, saying, “The veteran teachers are really close to the administrator. My ideas or the ideas of the younger generation don’t hold much weight.” She went on to say,

If our grade-level group is having difficulty coming up with solutions to problems, one veteran will go to the administrator. One particular veteran talks to the administrator all the time then tells us, “Mrs. Rose strongly suggests that we all stick together and do this as a team.” We want to do what the administrator wants us to do. It kind of makes me upset that that person has gone and ratted and told the team is not pulling together.

Sometimes that is the only way to get the team to pull together.

Mrs. Mum discussed Mrs. Rose briefly. Mrs. Mum commented,

Mrs. Rose gives me a lot of autonomy. The parents influence a lot in the school. Mrs. Rose definitely takes a leadership role in the school. Anything happening, like our wetlands, Mrs. Rose is always there to direct, help. She puts a lot of time in up here. This school is very important to her. It’s her baby.

She went on to say Mrs. Rose is fair about how she handles things, saying, “I don’t think a lot of decisions are made that aren’t made by her. She takes a lot of ideas and opinions into consideration when making the decisions.”

Summary

The data gathered throughout this study was organized to present a portrait of two schools. In the following chapters, I will compare and present analysis of the two schools studied based on the information gathered through observations, surveys, interviews, and

document acquisition. The analysis will be in reference to the literature reviewed and the Douglas (1982) grid and group typology presented for this study.

Chapter V

Research Analysis

This study focused on two different cultures to compare the degree to which newcomers were socialized into the decision-making process. Each school studied presented two very different types of cultures. Each culture is represented on Douglas's four quadrant framework. Surveys, interviews, observations, and document review from each school give a picture of its culture and how it impacts the newcomers' role in decision making.

Survey Outcomes

Surveys were used in this study as part of the Douglas (1982) model to determine the grid and group typology of each site studied. This provided a basis for studying the decision-making process of the groups at each site and the degree to which newcomers had input into those decisions.

Oak Elementary.

Of the surveys I received back, 52% were usable and filled out correctly. Others incorrectly filled out were thrown out and not counted in this percentage. The principals and secretaries were not given the surveys to complete. I thought it would be better to focus on the teachers and not the staff since they were the primary stake holders in the school. The principal chose not to complete the survey.

The results of the survey indicated Oak Elementary had a collectivist organizational culture. The surveys found the ratio in the grid category to be 49/35 in favor of low grid. The largest responses for the negative grid were the following perceptions. 1) Teachers were motivated by self-interests. 2) Hiring and placement decisions were decentralized

and controlled by teachers and/or other employees. 3) Labor objectives were self-motivated. Regarding the positive grid, the largest respondents perceived the following. 1) Teaching assignments and other responsibilities were assigned by administration. 2) Labor is scheduled by institutional standards and routines. I think these two considerations were more of a result of district influences rather than individual site influences. Interestingly, on the high grid consideration, the teachers surveyed felt that they were not motivated by institutional rewards, but rather self-defined interests.

When scoring the group considerations, the ratio was notably more significant than in the grid considerations in favor of positive group considerations. The ratio was 61/18 on the positive side of the group considerations. Obviously, the feelings were high in almost all categories on the positive side due to the high ratio on that side. The most significant negative choice by the group was the feeling that work was not organized for individual goals and interests which implies that work is organized more for the group goals and interests.

Looking at the two considerations of grid and group for Oak Elementary, one would expect to find a high degree of group cohesiveness, goals, social interactions, and group reward and a low degree of administrative influence in areas of goal setting, labor interests, and low individual teacher motivation. These data were needed for the basis of the remainder of the data collection. This information provides the cultural foundation to further examine and study the social constructs in the integration of newcomers in the decision-making process. The outcome of low grid/high group for Oak Elementary puts them in the Collectivist category of the Douglas (1982) grid and group framework shown in **Table II**.

Table II

**Oak Elementary
Grid and Group Typology**

High-Grid		
Low-Grid		C. Collectivist System
	Low-Group	High-Group

C. Collectivist (Low grid/High group):

1. There are few social distinctions.
2. Role status is competitive, but due to group influence, rules are stable.
3. Group survival is very important.
4. Corporate goals are valued.

The Collectivist quadrant suggests a group that is cohesive and works to maintain values and standards in the existing group. The goals of the school district would also be valued among the group. However, this quadrant suggests the administration has a low degree of influence on the group's goals and values. Restraints on group actions by the principal is limited. The group would not allow competition of role status because the main focus of the group is maintenance of group actions and standards.

Pine Elementary.

The surveys were distributed to the teachers at Pine with an explanation attached. Of the 43 teachers given the surveys, 22 were returned to me. This is approximately the same percentage returned from Oak Elementary--about 51%. The results of the surveys administered at Pine were conclusive from the ones gathered. Little differentiation existed

among the surveys. The majority of the ones returned were scored in exactly the same manner. Of the surveys returned, none were thrown out. All were completed and correctly filled out. Each teacher correctly answered the survey according to the directions given.

The surveys indicated that the teachers at Pine Elementary feel their school is high grid and high group, putting them in the Corporate system quadrant of the grid/group typology. The ratio for the grid consideration was significantly in favor of the positive side at 76 to 29. All the consideration on the positive side were high with the exception of teachers' feeling that they were not motivated by institutional rewards. They believed that teachers were more motivated by self-defined interests. This group indicated that the administration controlled the hiring and placement decisions, and they had little or no say in who was hired. This is the converse for Oak Elementary. The teachers there felt they were allowed to participate in hiring decisions and that their opinions mattered as to who got hired. Overall, the Pine Elementary teacher surveys indicated their school had high grid considerations, and the administration controlled a great deal within the school.

Group results indicated significant findings as well. The scores were conclusive on the positive group side with a ratio of 65 to 28. Teachers here felt that the school functioned as a group and that work, social activities, and rewards were group goal oriented and that productivity was a group pay-off. The teachers who filled out this survey ranged from first grade to fifth grade and several specials teachers. There was enough variance in the group of teachers returning the surveys to gain a good sample of the ideas and feelings about the grid and group components of the school.

Pine Elementary scored significantly in the high-grid/high-group quadrant (Table 3) of the Douglas (1982) framework. The other schools surveyed also fell in this category. However, there was a low percentage of returns on the other schools surveyed to gain a good sampling. I chose this school on the basis of their strong ratios gathered from the grid and group considerations and the administration which has been in place for more than ten years.

Table III

**Pine Elementary
Grid and Group Typology**

High Grid		B. Corporate System
Low Grid		
	Low Group	High Group

B. Corporate (High grid/High group):

1. Social relationships and experiences are influenced by group standards.
2. Individual goals are derived from group goals.
3. Roles are hierarchical (at the top the roles have unique power, limited to a small number of experts).
4. There are many role distinctions at the middle and lower levels.
5. Survival of the group goals are most important.

The corporate quadrant implies a group that functions for the good of the whole.

There are strict insider/outsider roles. The administration is consciously involved in maintaining group goals through the hierarchical roles that exist. The individual goals are superseded by the group goals. Social relationships within the group are shaped by the goals and standards of the group. The desire to sustain the culture is high in this quadrant. The administrator will take an active role in securing the goals of the group as her own.

Grid Analysis

Grid considerations for this study determine the degree of limitations by the administration on individuals. This study addresses the degree to which individual restraints are administered in the decision-making process for new teachers. Each school studied presented different degrees of administrative restraints as identified by data collected. Oak Elementary presented a low-grid typology while Pine presented a high-grid typology. Unique social actions existed that influenced the decision-making process at each site.

Oak Elementary.

Leadership at Oak Elementary was a significant issue. Since Oak Elementary fell in the collectivist quadrant of grid and group, the cultural expectations would predict the school to have low-grid and high-group orientations. Restraints on social actions would be low, and group beliefs and actions would not be challenged by the school principal. Low-grid considerations of the Douglas (1982) model suggest then that the teachers, rather than the administrator, are the power brokers, implying that the teachers at Oak Elementary wield the decision-making power while the principal hesitates to challenge decisions made by them.

Teachers were expected to maintain decisions within the school. This is evident in the many committees that were formed and meetings held by committees to solve problems within the school. When the problem of discipline arose within the system, the principal created a discipline committee to solve the problem. A reading committee was created to address issues of low test scores. Mr. Polk did not take responsibility of the decisions made in the school except as a facilitator of the initiation or outcome of the committees

held. Often, teachers talked about the responsibility they had in solving many of the issues in the school. They reiterated the fact that any decision made by the committees or grade-level teams were most often adopted by the administration. Very little was done by the administration to effect problem-solving decisions.

Restraints were not put on the teachers for an expected outcome to the decisions made. In fact, the teachers expressed dismay in the lack of support and input by Mr. Polk in situations within the school. The group desired input from Mr. Polk in areas that directly affected classroom functions such as curriculum, discipline, technology, or areas that impacted group survival or district goals such as outcomes of test scores.

Mr. Polk is very charismatic and presents a school that is well defined and resplendent in stature. The teachers spoke highly of the efforts of Mr. Polk, but were somewhat frustrated by the group autonomy that was expected of them. They became more group cohesive and demanded more involvement from the administration in an effort to maintain group and district goals. Low-grid considerations for Oak Elementary are maintained and characterize the notion that restraints are low on individual and group goals. Group beliefs and actions are not perpetuated by the principal's values and social constraints. It would then suggest that newcomers were part of the group and also not subjected to administrative restraints.

Pine Elementary.

Pine Elementary functioned on a different scale than Oak Elementary. While Oak presents a school with low-grid considerations, Pine supports the high-grid notions. Pine represents a school with role distinctions and clearly defined expectations. This is evident in the closely guarded control over decisions within the school. While committees were

formed, little was done to see that committees were the primary source of decision making in the system. Committees meetings, when held, were primarily for idea sharing and brainstorming. Most decisions were made at the administrative level after given input and shared ideas by several different sources such as district expectations, specified system rules, parents, and teachers.

Parents held a significant influence over decisions in the school, especially if they were instrumental in financing or promoting programs. This suggests, then, that roles and rules often dictate social actions. Teachers often commented on the involvement of parents and their importance in the school. Each teacher, when asked, felt parents were a vocal and distinct aspect of the school that could not be ignored. Teachers felt that Mrs. Rose definitely considered the parents' influences in decisions making, especially on issues of curriculum and technology.

Teachers often commented that they were satisfied with the way decisions were made at Pine, suggesting they were not often involved in the final decisions made, but were aware of the outcome of the decision-making process and accepted the decisions and process. Decision making at Pine was primarily in keeping with district goals and rules. This would suggest that social actions are restrained by administrative beliefs and actions. Pine also reflects a school that is hierarchical in nature in that decisions are made at the top with few decisions being made by lower individuals such as teachers or parents.

Group Analysis

Group considerations for the Douglas (1982) model also functions on a high-grid and low-grid continuum. The group dimensions refers to the degree to which individuals pursue the social interactions of a group larger than the individual. The low group

suggests a high degree of individual autonomy and pursuit of goals for the good of the individual rather than the whole group. The individual would hold no accountability to the group and competition for status and roles is high.

The high-group dimension, then, would focus on maintaining group goals and standards. Expectations are high for conformity to social actions of the group. The individual would be stable in the group and work to uphold the goals of the group. This dimension promotes insiders and outsiders. Those new to the group may not be allowed in if they do not conform to the group. The group guards the insiders from outsider influences. The members are not allowed to act for the good of the individual.

Oak Elementary.

Oak Elementary represents a school with high-group orientations. While the teachers were frustrated over the lack of administrative support, they worked toward the common good of the whole. Data suggests that group goals are maintained and focus was on creating new goals to strengthen the group. This was done through the many committees that were formed. Oak had historical situations that made the group an interesting study. In the past, the group was very divided, and administration fostered the division through manipulations of his/her values and beliefs. The teachers at Oak have only recently begun to function as a cohesive group. Few social distinctions existed at Oak. New teachers as well as veteran teachers were expected to participate in goal setting and maintaining group standards.

The teachers at Oak spoke about two sets of groups. One was the grade-level group, and the other was the whole-school group. Each grade-level group sustained goals and standards that were consequently for the good of the whole group. This is primarily due

to the difficulties in discipline problems the school was newly facing in addition to the “apartment kids” and the change in demographics which created problems for the teachers. This manifested itself in the form of low test scores. Group goals and standards became difficult to maintain.

The two groups began working toward the same goals. Values once lacking within the whole group historically, became prevalent and entrenched in the whole group. Teachers were binding together more stringently because of the comparable difficulties they were having in class. Committees became a source of goal setting and maintenance while social settings became a place for group discussion, commiseration, and group planning.

In this cultural system, corporate goals are valued. This was evident in the concern over test scores and their comparison to other schools in the district. The teachers at Oak felt a responsibility to uphold district standards. They were frustrated over the unmet expectations of the district’s social values. They strongly believed that difficulties in demographic changes, handling discipline issues, and lack of administrative support were the primary reasons for failing to uphold district expectations. However, they worked toward strengthening group goals for group survival and, consequently, district expectations.

The group exhibits a desire to cushion themselves against outsiders. The outsiders in this case are the new student demographics. Teachers are not accustomed to dealing with a different class of students, and, subsequently, group standards are being threatened. Teachers are struggling to maintain a student base that is concordant with the group expectations. They are not attempting to refuse the students attendance, but rather working toward generating the student base in which the teachers can sustain group goals

and values. The frustration of the teachers is primarily the fear of losing the group standards.

Newcomers were welcomed into the group. In fact, they were entrenched quickly and put in key positions because of the expertise they brought to the group. One newcomer was key to the technology committee. One veteran teacher spoke about the difficulties she had in that area and was glad to have the newcomer's input and expertise. Schein's (1996) notion that newcomers must initially find their place in the new setting to establish their information and influence networks holds true at Oak. The newcomers at Oak used their knowledge to fit into the group and become valued members of the group. Once they have been established, the newcomers can then transition previous experiences into the group. Newcomers expressed satisfaction with the acceptance by the group and stated in most cases that they "loved it" at Oak.

Newcomers at Oak were not seen as threats to the group goals. They, in fact, were securely established within the group with the hope of upholding and fostering group goals. By being put in key positions and on key committees, they were trusted to aid in the decision-making process that would maintain the groups' ideals.

Teachers at Oak indicated a desire for more leadership. The decisions included issues from curriculum to discipline to technology. Teachers were primary decision makers. Group expectations were high, and teachers were fighting for group survival. They upheld each other to promote group unity.

Pine Elementary.

Like Oak, Pine also presented the high-group dimension. However, they differ in their group dynamics and decision-making process. Oak also has two different groups: the

whole group and the grade-level group. The grade-level groups at Pine maintain a distinct separation from the whole group. The whole group maintains group standards and goals that are unique. Status is not an issue for the group at the lower levels but is maintained at the administrative level. The group is cohesive and accepts the understood values and actions of the school. The school is the group's primary focus. Parents are historically part of those beliefs and values and remain integral to the group. They are not considered outsiders because they are essentially part of the group.

This school works to uphold the cultural mores of its members. Decisions are primarily made at the upper level, but to this group, it is part of the values and beliefs that make up the culture of the group. The way things are done at Pine reflect the social influence of the group standards. Teachers do not question or vie for status because they know that the culture will be constant at all costs. They work hard at Pine to keep out negative influencers, or outsiders. One way they do this is to not question the final decisions made. If decision making were an area of contention, the teachers would push to hold committee meetings more often. The committee meetings are not necessary to this group because they are certain the decisions made will maintain the group's beliefs.

Newcomers are expected to adapt and adopt the beliefs of the group. They are welcomed and essentially given no chance to question group goals and values.

Newcomers were not easily identifiable from the veterans because when they were hired, they were expected to accept the norms of the group and behave accordingly.

Newcomers had more difficulties in their specific grade levels or teaching areas.

Grade-level groups were less adapting to newcomers. They had latitude to propose, plan, and discuss grade-level issues. However, their ideas, solutions, and decisions still

had to be agreed to by Mrs. Rose. This is another way to assure the whole group goals and values are secure. Interestingly, however, is the role distinction between newcomers and veterans within the grade-level groups. Of the teachers interviewed, three of the four levels represented by newcomers revealed problems with veteran and newcomer ideology. Conflicts arose within three groups that resulted in frustration and power struggles for beliefs and values.

Veteran teachers were threatened by newcomers' voice. Mrs. Mum, Mrs. Lilac, and Mrs. Daisy all relayed experiences in their first year at Pine. They explained the newcomers' voice in grade-level decision making was often not welcomed and was challenged by the veterans. Newcomers challenged the status quo and jeopardized the groups' hold on values. This did not go over well with the veterans who had invested their time creating the groups' values and beliefs within their grade levels. Newcomers were not prepared to accept the values that were in place. Mrs. Lilac, a veteran teacher, stated, "Younger teachers are taught to challenge...I think the older teachers just accept what we're told to do." The veterans had no problem with the newcomers participating in the decision-making process as long as they focused on embracing the groups' values and goals. In this case, the newcomers were the outsiders to the grade-level groups.

Summary of Grid and Group Analysis

In summary, these two schools are diverse in many ways. While both are from the same district with the same district values and goals, each school presents very different groups. The schools studied offer two different cultural representations of the Douglas (1982) grid and group model. General comparisons can be viewed to explain the decision-making process within each site.

One can assume, because of the different grid dimensions, these schools would establish very different decision-making processes. Oak has a very low-grid application to decisions while Pine supports a high-grid application to decision making. The administrator at Oak has a very loose approach to his role in decisions within his school. He removes himself and allows the teachers to make the bulk of the decisions within the school. The group, then, becomes responsible for upholding their own values and beliefs. Pine administrators at the high-grid end, take responsibility for the decision-making process in an effort to uphold the groups' goals and values. Mrs. Rose gathers information from several sources and then makes a decision for the good of the whole.

Each school supported high-group dimensions, but were different in their dynamics. Oak presented a group that is struggling to maintain group values in the face of change. Pine is maintaining group values and standards by placing restraints on the degree of group involvement in the decision-making process.

Douglas's (1982) grid and group model offers a lens for research of social situations within organizations. Two of the model's quadrants were represented--the collectivist (Oak) and the corporate (Pine). Social relationships of the corporate group were stable, and administrative restraints on decision making was Pine's method of securing the culture of the school. Grade-level groups were one more dimension of the grid and group model to help preserve the schools' culture. While social relationships at Pine were essentially preserved through administrative influence, social relationships of the collectivist quadrant were being threatened. Oak teachers expressed frustration over the responsibility to sustain the group culture without support from the administration. Changes threatened

the group values and beliefs. The changes were seen as outside influences that endangered the group expectations and standards.

The constructs of grid and group allowed for examination into each school to determine the degree to which newcomers were included into the decision making process. This model proved to be a convincing tool for examining newcomers' voice in the decision-making process of each selected site. The grid and group typology is comprehensive enough to explore influential social interactions. Many facets of each school were discovered.

Chapter VI **Interpretations, Conclusions, Implications**

Interpretations

Summary

Data Needs

This study used a case-study research design in a qualitative format. Data needs included information gathered that examined newcomers' voice and integration in the decision-making process of two elementary schools using Douglas's (1982) grid and group framework.

Data Sources

This study required a minimum of two selected elementary schools falling into two different quadrants of Douglas's (1982) grid and group typology. Data sources included observations of faculty meetings, before and after school events, lunch breaks, and general school observations. Sources also included veteran and newcomer interviews, document collections such as site improvement plans, weekly agendas, and district site information.

Preliminary actions of the researcher included permission for the study by district and site administration. Following permission to access schools, I used Douglas's (1982) grid and group survey (Appendix A) to determine each school's cultural typology. Each school and all teachers interviewed were given pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality.

Data Collections

The research in the study consisted of three primary data sources: teacher interviews, observations, and review of school documents. The interviews were conducted using open-ended questions with floating prompts (Appendix C). This allowed for latitude in

guiding questions and exploration into the social construct of each organization. Follow up questioning was needed for clarification of interview material and questionable observations. The opportunity to observe the same situations several times was limited. Data collected provided a picture to help explain the impact of culture on the inclusion of newcomers into the decision-making process.

Data Analyses

This study was done in a qualitative research design using fieldnotes, observations, and short interviews. I chose two schools for a case study comparison. By using the case-study design, I was allowed to be involved in activities in each school that provided a clearer picture of group dynamics and school functions. Data was examined and organized to determine commonalties and relationships between each school site and its correlation to Douglas's (1982) grid and group framework.

Analysis of the case studies was accomplished by highlighting key points and situations discussed by the teachers at each site. The observations were paired with common themes from the interviews, and documentation was used to uphold statistical and demographic data. Key decision-making aspects were isolated and examined. Leadership considerations were examined from each site. Essential information was identified and data was reported. The information was compiled and organized to present data that the readers could understand and use in a comparative manner.

Limitations

There were limitations to this study. There were activities in each school that I was either not allowed to visit or could not visit that might have given me more insight into each school. If all the surveys had been returned, it is possible that cultural outcomes may

have been different. One aspect of the interview process that I encountered was teachers providing information in conversation that was not provided in the taped interviews.

Findings

The findings of this researcher indicate that Oak Elementary falls in the collectivist cultural quadrant and Pine supports the corporate quadrant. Each school functioned according to the Douglas (1982) social matrix. The grid and group typology was comprehensive enough to establish each school in a specific culture and effectively explain the specific social interactions and relationships within each school. The Douglas (1982) grid and group typology functionally illustrates the degree to which newcomers are included in the decision-making process of two schools with contrasting cultural designs.

Conclusions

Summary

How do the dimensions of grid and group explain the socialization of newcomers into the decision-making process of selected elementary schools? Based on the findings, research indicates two schools functioning in different cultural quadrants. Oak Elementary falls in the collectivist system and Pine in the corporate system of the social matrix. Each school has a high-group dimension, but Oak has low-grid dimensions while Pine functions with a high-grid dimension which presents systems with different social constructs, thus, contrasting decision-making processes. Although the group dimensions are the same and each school did have strong group ties, values, and standards, the differences in the grid dimension of each impacted the groups in different ways which consequently affected the decision-making process of each school.

The administration at Oak did not put restraints on the teachers. In fact, the expectations for the teachers to make decisions was frustrating and made it difficult for the teachers to uphold group goals and values. Newcomers at Oak were quickly involved in group dynamics. Not only was their voice heard in the group, but it often was the lead voice. Newcomers definitely had influence in the decision-making process at Oak. They were seen as resources to aid in maintaining group goals and standards. The group at Oak was fastidiously attempting to hold on to the group standards against outsiders. Outsiders in this instance were not the newcomers in the building but the new students and demographic changes in the school. The group felt under attack at Oak felt their values and ways of doing were being threatened. The newcomers were quickly recruited as reinforcements to aid in sustaining the group against external pressures. In this culture the newcomers were socialized into the decision making process, in fact they were seen as essential to aid in group maintenance.

The Pine administration was on the high-grid side and, consequently, made the final decisions on most issues. This did not seem to negatively impact the group functions at Pine in the decision-making process. In fact, decision making by the administration appeared to be part of the values inherent in the Pine group. It seemed to be part of the school beliefs and values that Mrs. Rose would make the decisions so that the group could function as it always had. Newcomers in this group did not have much voice in decision making, but neither did the veteran teachers. Decisions in which the group was involved at the school level was through committees and often in areas that were secondary decisions such as in the social committee or in areas that the administration needed additional expertise.

In the grade-level groups, the newcomers were less likely to have a voice in group decisions. Veterans often felt threatened and challenged by the newcomers' assertion of ideas and opinions. This often led to conflicts and, consequently, the administration's involvement in solving the conflict. Newcomers expressed satisfaction in the decision-making process as a whole group but felt frustration in their voice in decisions in the grade-level groups. However, there was a need for newcomers to conform to the culture in this school. Because the grade levels are part of the whole it was necessary for the newcomer to conform to sub groups to be part of the whole group. If the newcomer did not conform they became a threat to group maintenance. There was more constraint at Pine with newcomer assertion in the decision making process, specifically in the grade level groups. If newcomers were a threat to the sub groups then they were seen as a threat to the whole group. In Pine's culture newcomers were more likely to be socialized out of Pine if they became a risk to the values and standards of the whole and sub groups.

Comparison of Oak and Pine indicate that cultures do impact newcomer socialization. Oak's culture, Collectivist, was conducive to newcomer integration because they were seen as allies and reinforcement to group goals and standards. Pine's culture, Corporate, was restrictive to newcomer integration. There were limits put on the newcomer in the decision making process and a call to conform to group goals or be seen as outsiders.

Implications

Theory

The Douglas (1982) framework offers a theory to study social behaviors of individuals in organizations. Her social matrix opens the research to multifaceted nuances of social systems. This theory offers a large continuum of social behaviors to be studied. Grid and

group research provides advantages to analysis of numerous social situations within public schools. This theory provided me the opportunity to examine the administrative influence on group decision-making practices as well as the role of newcomers in the group process. It not only looked at group activities in a social context, but administrative impact on the group goals and actions.

The Douglas (1982) model applies a practical application of cultural contexts to educational settings that provides a tool for self examination with respect to administrative practices. Social interactions between the group and administration of educational settings can be better understood through careful examination using the Douglas (1982) model.

Research

The Douglas (1982) model of grid and group sufficiently establishes a framework that effectively examines administrative practices in educational settings. It is a valuable tool to explore the social interactions of individuals within organizations. The framework opens possibilities for increased administrative research by revealing unexplored domains in the cultural context of the school such as social integration, leadership, curriculum, gender, and communications (Harris, 1995).

Mary Douglas's (1982) grid and group framework allows for examination of social cultures to help explain specific behaviors by the organization. It helps explain how behaviors are used as a tool to guide or mold beliefs or actions within the organization.

By examining the social constructs of schools, one could better understand individual and group relationships. Revealing and examining social structures within school settings allows for identifying relationships that interpret influences of culture on individual and group learning.

The Douglas (1982) model also allows for cross-cultural research by using comparison studies to gain insight into the functional aspects of schools. It allows researchers to observe specific behaviors that characterize values, actions, and beliefs within organizations in an associative manner. Understanding the social constructs within schools provides a lens into which educational leaders can gain a better insight into individual and group structures to aid in educational reform and change.

Practice

The implications for practice are multifaceted. The grid and group model provides administrators and other educators with a research tool to examine their domains of culture. It opens the possibilities for organizations to change and understand the social value systems that inherently exist in schools. Schools are social entities with cultural biases and beliefs entrenched in the organizational dynamics. Often, administrators are unaware of how entrenched the culture has become. By using the grid/group model, leaders can view the degree to which their organizations function as a social structure.

Leadership at Oak and Pine are uniquely different. The Oak administration takes a very relaxed approach to decision making, allowing the teachers the latitude to create their own environment through their decision outcomes, thus, self-perpetuating the culture. The Pine administration takes a more proactive approach and limits the degree of group involvement in decision making primarily to uphold the social and cultural constructs in place at Pine.

These leaders offer a context which presents two different administrative roles, thus, providing implications for the degree to which principals have control over the culture in their schools. Do principals and administrations influence cultures? The cultures require

influence from many sources within organizations to effect and affect their perpetuation. The grid and group model provides the lens needed to determine the degree of impact leaders have on the organizational culture.

Commentary

Cultures in organizations are essentially axiomatic depending on the social interactions of the individuals of the organization. They are difficult to change and reform. Most groups will attempt to protect social structures that sustain their values and actions. Often, attempts at change within school organizations fail without first determining the degree to which the culture is guarded. Administrators must consider the culture in which they are attempting to change or perpetuate.

Douglas's (1982) model was effective in explaining decision-making processes in two schools and the impact of the administration on the group cultures. The grid and group model is an effective method of examining the degree of social interactions in school settings and their impact on the organization. It provides insight into various aspects of schools to explain cultural and social connections.

References

- Adler, P. & Adler, P. (1998). Observational techniques. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln, Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials, 79-109, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ashforth, B., Lee, R. & Saks, A. (1998). Socialization and newcomer adjustment: The role of organizational context. Human relations, 51 (7), 897-921. New York: Plenum.
- Atkinson, P. & Hammersley, M. (1998). Ethnography and participant observation. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln, Strategies of qualitative inquiry, 110-136. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Bacharach, S. B., Bamberger, P., Bauer, S. & Conley, S. C. (1990, May). The Dimensionality of Decision Participation in Educational Organizations: The Value of a Multi-Domain Evaluative Approach. Educational Administration Quarterly, 26, (2), 126-167.
- Brown, W., McIntire, W. G., & Perry, C. M. (1994). Teachers Respond to the Shared Decision-Making Opportunity. Education, 114, (4), 605-608.
- Cawyer, C. & Friedrich, G. (1998). Organizational socialization: Processes for new communication faculty. Communication Educator, 47 (3), (pp. 234-245). Annandale, CA: Speech Communication Association.
- Cambone, J., Weiss, C. H., & Wyeth, A. (1992, August). Trouble in Paradise: Teacher Conflicts in Shared Decision Making. Educational Administrator Quarterly, 28, (3), 350-367.
- Caulkins, D. (1999). Is mary douglas's grid/group analysis useful for cross-cultural research?. Cross- Cultural Research, 33,(1), 108-128.
- Cresswell, J. (1994). Research design: Qualitative and quantitative approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (1994). Handbook of qualitative research. Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Douglas, M. (1982). Cultural bias. In The Active Voice. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Duke, D. L., & Imber, M. (1984, Winter). Teacher Participation in School Decision-Making: A Framework for Research. The Journal of Educational Administration, XXII, (1), 24-34.

Gross, J. L., & Rayner, S. (1985). Measuring Culture. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Harris, E.L. (1995). "Toward grid and group interpretation of school culture." Journal of School Leadership, 5,(6), 617-645.

Heck, R. H. & Wolcott, L. P. (1997). Beginning teachers: A statewide study of factors explaining successful completion of the probationary period. Education Policy, 11,(1), 111-133.

Hoy, W.K. & Tarter J.C. (1993). A Normative Theory of Participative Decision Making in Schools. Journal of Educational Administration, 31, (3) 4-19.

Imber, M., Neidt, W. A. & Reyes, P. (1990, Summer). Factors Contributing to Teacher Satisfaction with Participative Decision Making. Journal of Research and Development in Education, 23,(4), 216-225.

Jones, R. E. (1997). Teacher participation in decision making - - relationship to staff morale and student achievement. Education, 118,(1), 76-83.

Kirby, P. & Colbert, R. (1994). Principals who empower teachers. Journal of School Leadership, 4, 39-49.

Lampe, S. (1997). Shared decision making in schools: Effects on teacher efficacy. Education, 118,(1), 150-156.

Larson, M. (1996). Patterns in transition: A writing teacher's survey of organizational socialization. Journal of Business and technical communication, 10 (3), 352-367. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Lewis, J. Jr. (1989). Implementing school-based management by empowering teachers. Westbury, NY: Wilkerson.

Louis, M. (1996), Surprise and sense making: What newcomers experience in entering unfamiliar organizational settings. In J. Ott & J. Shafritz, Classics of organizational theory (4th ed.). 442-456, New York: Harcourt Brace.

Merriam, S. (1988). Case study research in education: qualitative approach. San Francisco, CA: Josey-Bass.

McCracken, G. (1988). The Long Interview: Qualitative research methods series: volume 13. Newberry Park, CA: Sage.

Riehl, C. (1998). We gather together: Work, discourse, and constitutive social action in elementary school faculty meetings. Educational administration quarterly, 34 (1), 91-125. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Riley, D. (1984, Winter). Teacher Utilization of Avenues for Participatory Decision-Making. The Journal of Educational Administration, XXII,(1), 35-45.

Sarason, S. (1996). Revisiting "the culture of the school and the problem of change". New York: Teacher's College Press.

Shein, E. (1996) From M. Louis, Surprise and sense-making: What newcomers experience in entering unfamiliar organizational settings. In J. Ott & J. Shafritz, Classics of organizational theory (4th ed.). 442-456. New York: Harcourt Brace.

Spikard, J.V. (1989). A guide to Mary Douglas's three versions of grid/group theory. Sociological Analysis, 50,(2), 151-170.

Van Maanen, J. (1996). From M. Louis, Surprise and sense-making: What newcomers experience in entering unfamiliar organizational settings. In J. Ott & J. Shafritz, Classics of organizational theory (4th ed.). 442-456. New York: Harcourt Brace.

White, P.A. (1989). An overview of school-based management: what does the research say? NASSP Bulletin, 73,(518), 1-8.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

SURVEY

Labor Interest and Cultural Bias

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

Organization Under Consideration: _____

Your Position: _____

Date: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Below are ten pairs of statements. For each pair of statements circle the statement that best represents your opinion of the organization in which you work.

Grid Considerations

- | | |
|---|---|
| +1 Teaching assignments and other labor responsibilities are assigned by management/administration. | -1 Teaching assignments and other labor responsibilities are achieved or negotiated by individuals. |
| +1 Labor is scheduled by institutional standards and routines. | -1 Labor is scheduled by individual goal consideration. |
| +1 Teachers are motivated by institutional rewards. | -1 Teachers are motivated by self-defined interests. |
| +1 Hiring and placement decisions are centralized; controlled by administration. | -1 Hiring and placement decisions are decentralized; controlled by teachers and/or other employees. |
| +1 Labor interests are authority-directed. | -1 Labor objectives are self-directed. |

Group Considerations

- | | |
|--|---|
| +1 Work activities are initiated/planned by group (school, department, or college) | -1 Work activities are initiated/planned by individuals acting alone. |
| +1 Social interactions and work are commingled. | -1 Social activities and work are kept separate activities. |
| +1 Rewards are a group-focused payoff | -1 Rewards are an individual pay-off |
| +1 Work is organized for group goals and interests. | -1 Work is organized for individual goals and interests. |
| +1 Productivity is evaluated according to group priorities. | -1 Productivity is evaluated according to individual priorities. |

APPENDIX B
PARTICIPANT LETTER

Teachers and Staff,

I want to thank you for your valuable time and for allowing me the opportunity to conduct research in your school. I assure you, your participation in this study will be confidential and I will do everything in my power to uphold the anonymity of you and your school.

Your part in my research involves completing this survey (Appendix A). It will determine a specific culture of your group of teachers and staff with which you work. When completing this survey remember you are addressing these in terms of how they apply to the group and your role in the group. **Grid** refers to the rules and regulations that govern the group and to what degree. **Group** refers to the degree to which you feel your organization functions as a group.

Thank you so much for taking your time to complete this survey for me. Filling out this survey is your choice. Please feel free to leave off any information at the top you feel is inappropriate to answer. If you have any questions regarding my study or this survey please contact me at (405) 348-4055.

Thank you,

Beth Kanaly

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

PARTICIPANT RESEARCH QUESTIONS

A. Introductory Questions (for all participants):

1. What is your role in this school?
2. How long have you been at this school?
3. What are your perceptions of this system?
4. How would you describe the inclusion of newcomers?

B. General Questions (primarily for newcomers):

1. What are your perceptions of your first year in this school?
2. How would you describe your inclusion into this system?
3. How would you describe the decision making process on issues in this system?
4. Do you feel you have ownership in decision making?

C. Examples of Floating Prompts (for all):

1. Could you elaborate on that?
2. Give me an example?
3. What do you mean...?
4. Like...?

D. Examples of Secondary Questions (for all):

1. What are some types of decisions you are asked to make?
2. How are decisions made at grade levels?
3. Do all members have a voice in decisions?

APPENDIX D
RESEARCH AGENDA and STUDY NEEDS

RESEARCH AGENDA and STUDY NEEDS:

- A. Approach principals for a meeting to discuss study:
 - 1. Provide a copy of agenda
 - 2. Provide a copy of proposal to principals.
 - 3. Provide a copy of surveys and questions to be used.
 - 4. Provide a copy of consent form.
 - 5. Present verbally the outline and purpose of the study.

- B. Discuss teacher participation:
 - 1. Provide letter to teachers.
 - 2. Provide survey for teachers.
 - 3. Discuss needs for interviews with teachers if the school fits the needs of the study.
 - 4. Discuss confidentiality of school and all participants.

- C. Discuss my role in observations.
 - 1. Determine times for school visits.
 - 2. Discuss opportunity to observe faculty meetings, lunch, etc.

- D. Documentation Needs:
 - 1. Describe types of documents required for study.
 - 2. Discuss use and needs for school documents.

- E. Gain permission and begin:
 - 1. Set up time to meet with all staff.
 - 2. Distribute survey to the teachers and discuss their role.
 - 3. Determine school's suitability for continuing the interview phase of the study.
 - 4. If suitable, continue with the consent forms and interviews.

APPENDIX E
CONSENT FORM

CONSENT FORM

Authorization

I, _____, hereby authorize or direct **Beth Kanaly** to perform the following procedures.

Description

Title: A Grid and Group Interpretation of Newcomers' Voice in Decision Making in Selected Elementary Schools

The purpose of this study is to gain insight into the culture of the public school organization and how it impacts Decision Making (DM) and organizational socialization for newcomers. Including the examination of newcomers' inclusion in DM on issues of site based management, such as curriculum, budget and staffing. The basic research question addressed is "How do the dimensions of grid and group explain the socialization of newcomers into DM procedures of the organization?"

You have been asked by Oklahoma State University graduate student Bethany L. Kanaly to be interviewed about your experiences and perceptions of your role and participation in the decision making process in your current organization.

The researcher will use information collected through interview as a data source for preparation of research to be submitted for scholarly publication. The interview will last approximately one hour and will be audio recorded. The questions asked will be developed by the researcher. All interviewed participants will be asked the same general questions. The researcher will type transcripts of all interview for research analysis. These transcripts will be confidential and will be kept under locked confines. The data will be maintained for a period no longer than required for completion of the research project or one year after the defense.

The researcher will assign pseudonyms for each person interviewed, the school involved and the school district. The pseudonyms will be used in all discussions and in all written materials produced by the researcher.

No interviews will be conducted or accepted by the researcher until a consent form has been obtained and signed by the participant and the researcher, with a copy provided for the participant.

Subject Participation

I understand that participation is voluntary and that I will not be penalized if I choose not to participate. I also understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and end my participation in this project at any time without penalty after I notify the project director.

I understand that the interviews will be conducted under commonly accepted research procedures. Information taken from the interview will be recorded in a manner that the participant will not be identified directly or through identifiers.

I understand that the interview will not cover topics that could possibly place the participant in danger or risk.

I may contact Beth Kanaly at telephone number (405)348-4055 in case of problems, questions or concerns about this study. I may also contact Executive Secretary, Sharon Bacher, University Research Services, 203 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078; (405)744-5700.

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Date: _____ Time: _____ (a.m./p.m.)

Signed: _____
Signature of Subject

Person authorized to sign for subject, if required

I certify that I have personally explained all elements of this form to the subject or his/her representative before requesting the subject or his/her representative to sign it.

Signed: _____
Project Director

APPENDIX F

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD PERMISSION FORM

Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires: 5/4/01

Date : Thursday, May 04, 2000

IRB Application No: ED00266

Proposal Title: A GRID AND GROUP INTERPRETATION OF NEWCOMERS'ROLE IN PARTICIPATORY
DECISION MAKING IN SITE BASED MANAGEMENT

Principal
Investigator(s) :


Bethany Kanaly
200 Rockypoint
Edmond, OK 73003

Edward Harris
325 Willard
Stillwater, OK 74078

Reviewed and
Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s) : Approved

Signature:



Carol Olson, Director of University Research Compliance

Thursday, May 04, 2000
Date

Approvals are valid for one calendar year, after which time a request for continuation must be submitted. Any modifications to the research project approved by the IRB must be submitted for approval with the advisor's signature. The IRB office MUST be notified in writing when a project is complete. Approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IR B. Expedited and exempt projects may be reviewed by the full Institutional Review Board.

VITA ²

Bethany Lynnett Kanaly

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

**Thesis: A GRID AND GROUP INTERPRETATION OF NEWCOMERS' VOICE IN
THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS OF SELECTED ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS**

Major Field: Educational Administration

Biographical Information:

Personal Data: Born in Guthrie, Oklahoma, June 13, 1966, the daughter of Larry and Judy Williams.

Education: Graduated from Lahoma High School, Lahoma Oklahoma in May 1984; received Bachelor of Science Degree in Education from the University of Central Oklahoma in May, 1989; received the Masters of Education degree in May, 1992 at the University of Central Oklahoma; received the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University in December, 2000.

Professional Experience: Special Education Teacher, Hayes Elementary, Enid, Oklahoma August, 1989 to May 1990; Special Education Teacher, Luther Elementary, Luther, Oklahoma August 1990 to May 1999; Special Education Teacher, Edmond, Oklahoma August 1999 to present.