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Perceptions of teachers at select middle schools on the role of teachers in shared decision making and its relationship to customer focused education

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PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS AT SELECT MIDDLE SCHOOLS ON THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN SHARED DECISION MAKING AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO CUSTOMER FOCUSED EDUCATION

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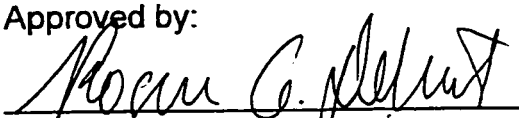

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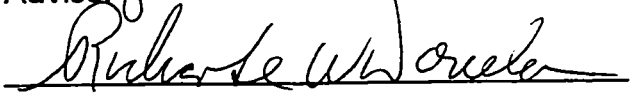

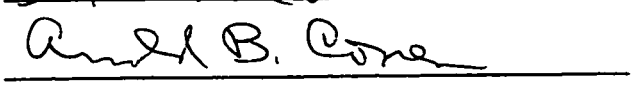

Dedication

To my mother, Oddie,

for the uncommon wisdom, special sacrifices, and

unswerving support, a special thank you.

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to many people in helping make this dissertation a success. I would like to thank my doctoral committee for providing the guidance and support for this undertaking. I give a very special acknowledgment to Dr. Roger DeMont, my committee chairperson and major professor, who provided much of the insight and advice in this research study. I would also like to thank Dr. Arnold Coven and Dr. Richarde Donelan for their support and assistance in helping me complete this educational goal.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Chion-Kenney and Hymes (1994) have defined shared decision-making in schools in terms of several characteristics. According to the authors, shared decision making involves: (a) a new mindset about authority and responsibility in schools in which the powers to make decisions about the school are no longer relegated simply to the top management, but shared with faculty and sometimes even staff; (b) the negotiation of certain trends and issues as they apply to specific school settings and situations; and (c) the variety in approach with no one model being the best.

The authors also pointed out that there were several important criteria for determining when a school was ready for shared decision making. These criteria for shared decision-making within a school include: commitment, attitude, purpose, action, leadership, readiness, character, and steadfastness. When the school leadership and staff exhibit these characteristics, shared decision making should be occurring within the school.

Shared decision making is an important element of total quality management as described by Deming (1986). Today's climate of organizational management emphasizes a philosophy that incorporates shared decision making as an integral component. A climate where administrators and teachers work cooperatively within the school tempers the inherent adversarial relationship that often occurs between administrators and teachers.

According to Gorton (1980), leadership is concerned with initiating changes in established structures, procedures, or goals that can continuously

improve the process of education. Deming's teachings focus on schools dedicated to continuous improvement for all customers, both internal and external.

In schools with this focus, administrators are generally conscientious about the process of continuously improving customer service. Juran (1989) and Nykiel (1992) defined a customer as an individual who receives or is affected by the product or process of an organization. According to Juran(1989), internal customers, staff members, are working for the school and are affected by the product and the process. External customers; students, parents, and local community; are affected by the product, but are not members of the school that produces the product or service of shared decision making.

The importance of teacher involvement in shared decision-making cannot be overestimated. Jones (1995) noted that existing occupational research has shown that employees who participate in decisions exhibited higher job morale; moreover, such participation tends to make an organization more effective.

In his study, Jones (1995) examined shared decision-making relative to job morale and student achievement by a correlational research design. Three instruments were used in this study: the Teacher Decision-Making Instrument was used to measure actual and desired participation methods, the Purdue Teacher Opinionaire was used to gauge moral, and demographic data were also gathered using a researcher-designed instrument. The author's findings provided support for a positive relationship between teacher morale and participation in shared decision making.

Jones asked 1,176 teachers to participate in the sample, with 405

returning usable questionnaires (a relative small return rate of 34.44%). Teachers reported that because of shared decision-making in place at their schools, they were more involved in curriculum/instruction and pupil affairs' decisions. However, they wanted more involvement in every area, with involvement differing by the grade levels of the teachers. Upper grade teachers wanted to be more involved in shared decision making than primary grade teachers. Teachers in grades three through six exhibited larger gaps between actual and desired involvement levels than lower grade instructors. Significant positive correlations were found between actual reported participation in shared decision making and morale.

Teachers exhibiting the highest levels of morale had 20 years or more experience, were 50 years old or older, worked in medium and large schools, and taught a primary grade. When individual schools were used as the unit of analysis, no established links were found between actual participation in decision-making and student achievement.

The findings of this study suggested that shared decision-making was not fully helping teachers in terms of elevating their perceptions of being as involved in school-wide decision-making at the level as they would like. The question that administrators could ask was: "What are the factors that might be holding teachers back from greater involvement in shared decision-making?"

According to Jones (1995), this problem was most likely occurring because teachers were not being sufficiently encouraged by administrators to become involved in decision-making or establish an atmosphere of free discussion. Because administrators lacked strongly positive perceptions of

teachers' desire for involvement, they were not encouraging teachers to become involved in the shared decision-making process.

Support for the notion that administrators did not have strongly positive perceptions of teachers' desire for involvement in shared decision-making can be found in an extensive review of the literature conducted by Armstrong (1993). He noted that teachers' and principals' perceptions of educational reform such as site-based management and shared decision-making were different.

Many administrators were worried that teachers who were strongly involved in decision-making could generate conflict with other teachers and administrators. Other administrators were reluctant to let go of a sufficient amount of power to allow teachers an influencing voice in the process. In other cases, administrators felt that teachers should have a say in some areas (e.g., curriculum decisions) but not in others (e.g., policy making). Finally, some administrators may have been poor communicators and unable to motivate teachers to become involved in the process of shared decision making.

Besides administrator reluctance to share decision making with teachers, some studies have found that teachers did not want to become strongly involved in shared decision-making because they have relatively poor perceptions of their involvement in this process. For example, some teachers did not want to get strongly involved in shared decision-making because they did not perceive that they had the right to express their views and concerns (Smith, 1993).

Another finding by Smith's (1993) was that teacher involvement increased when administrators clearly communicated that shared decision-making was expected to alter traditional governance. Smith suggested that teachers'

involvement in shared decision making would relate to their expectations of having and using this power.

In another study of teacher perceptions, Mayo (1995) sought statistical data concerning:

1. The impact shared decision-making had on teachers' perception of themselves as effective educators,
2. The nature and frequency of teacher participation in decision making, and
3. Teachers' perceptions about affecting students achievement.

Methods used in Mayo's (1995) study involved asking teachers in public school districts in three southern California counties to participate in the research project. The findings of this study revealed the following:

1. Teachers perceived themselves as more effective when participating in shared decision-making as evidenced by a significant relationship between teachers' perceived effectiveness and their involvement in shared decision-making.
2. Teachers' age influenced their desire to be involved in shared decision-making. Teachers less than 30 years of age or more than 41 tended to be more involved in the decision making process than teachers of other ages.
3. Teacher gender did not influence their desire to be involved in shared decision-making.

Based on the findings, Mayo (1995) developed several conclusions:

- Teachers tended to be more effective when participating in shared decision-making;
- Teachers tended to want more involvement in shared decision-making.

Mayo (1995) interpreted these findings to imply that administrators were not sufficiently motivating teachers to become involved in the decision making process. Recommendations were made that school administrators should more

fully encourage teachers to participate in shared decision-making. Mayo (1995) indicated that one of the best ways for administrators to provide this motivation was by viewing teachers as knowledgeable professionals who were well able to decide on how they could provide educational services.

Besides certain perceptions serving as obstacles to shared decision-making, specific personal characteristics of teachers and/or administrators could also obstruct the process. Fossey (1992), for example, found that some programs of site-based management and shared decision-making failed simply because principals and/or teachers failed to collaborate effectively, as this personality trait was not well developed in some people.

Researchers have suggested a need exist to fully understand teachers' and administrators' perceptions of their roles in the process if shared decision-making is going to be effective. Jones' (1995) study found one factor, amount of professional experience, that may have been important in terms of understanding involvement (and its correlates such as job morale). Further, Fossey's (1992) study suggested other factors that may have been important in motivating teachers to participate in shared decision making. These factors included personality traits or characteristics of teachers' and/or administrators.

Purpose of the Study

Given the need for teacher involvement in the shared decision-making process and the fact that existing literature suggested that administrators' and teachers' perceptions of involvement, personal characteristics, and their amount of professional experience may be variables associated with involvement levels,

students and the school climate could change to reflect a more customer-focused orientation a need exists to examine the perceptions of building administrators and teachers regarding their role in shared decision-making. While state legislatures have mandated such involvement, the methods for implementation and extent of teacher involvement have been left to administrators at the local school district and building levels. Building administrators and teachers, who were accustomed to top-down management, were now actively involved as participants in carrying out suitable models of shared decision-making. With this new direction, educational stakeholders were convinced that the level of achievement of

Teachers working at the middle school level represent a special population. These teachers are responsible for transforming students from elementary students whose educational experiences have been nurturing and supportive to high school students who are expected to be independent learners to learn to function in the adult world. This transformation is taking place when the students are experiencing physical, emotional, and psychological changes at a faster rate than at any other time in their lives. Teachers must realize that students in their schools are valued customers and must learn to treat them in this manner.

Teachers who treat their students as valued customers realize the importance of having input into decision making at the building level. They may not be interested or concerned about participating in all decision making in their schools. Nevertheless, they should want to be involved in those decisions that would directly affect what is being taught, classroom management, and

instructional processes such as use of materials and supplies and reporting student outcomes.

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between middle school teachers' perceptions of customer-focused education and shared decision making, both as they perceive it to be now and how they perceive it should be in their schools.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be addressed in this study:

1. To what extent do middle school teachers agree with the concepts of customer focused education?
2. To what extent do middle school teachers agree with involvement in shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be?"
3. Is there a difference in middle school teachers' perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be" in their schools?
4. Is there a relationship between middle school teachers' perceptions of their involvement in shared decision making process "as it is now" with customer focused education?
5. Is there a relationship between middle school teachers' perceptions of their involvement in shared decision making process "as it should be" with customer focused education?
6. Can middle school teachers' perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be" predicted from their professional demographics including: educational level, length of time in the district, length of time in present school, number of students in their classes, and participation in shared decision making?
7. Is there a difference in perceptions of customer focused education between middle school teachers who indicated more involvement in shared decision making during the past year and middle school teachers who were not involved in this process?
8. Is there a difference in perceptions of shared decision making "as it is

now" and "as it should be" between middle school teachers who indicated more involvement in shared decision making during the past year and middle school teachers who were not involved in this process?

Need for The Study

Michigan's 1990 Public Act 25 mandated shared decision-making and empowerment at the building level as part of its school improvement plan. In reality, school improvement through such reforms as shared decision making has become a central issue for many state legislatures. Consequently, this study's investigation and description of factors associated with teacher involvement in shared decision-making will not only be of interest to the educators in the state of Michigan and specifically the school district of Detroit but also those from other states that are currently or soon expect to be implementing shared decision-making.

In addition, the study provided Michigan educators with a clearer picture of how building administrators and teachers at the middle school level view the involvement component of the shared decision-making process. Not only could this information help to identify problematic perceptions, educational authorities could also use it to design and implement programs that would help in making these perceptions more positive.

Finally, the information should help both administrators and teachers better understand the involvement process and the contribution they bring to it by means of their attitudes and beliefs. Such insights should help teachers to become more motivated to be involved in the process and help administrators to be willing to let go of some decision-making power that they have delegated to

them from the central level.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were drawn from the research and theory of organizations and will serve as some support for this research:

(1) Teachers wanted to be a part of the decision-making process in their local school settings (Jones, 1995).

(2) Teacher involvement in decision-making at schools has a direct relationship to the extent the building administrator created the atmosphere for the process (Armstrong, 1993).

(3) Teachers felt that they were more effective educators because of their participation in the decision-making process(Smith, 1993).

(4) Administrators tend to have relatively poor opinions of teacher involvement in shared decision-making (Bond, 1995).

(5) Teachers most probably have better perceptions of their shared involvement in shared decision-making than administrators (Cole, 1993).

(6) Administrators' perceptions of teacher involvement in shared decision-making will grow more positive with greater amounts of professional experience(Duttweiler & Mutchler, 1990).

The above assumptions generalized to the findings of recent research in the area and to the findings of this study.

Limitations of The Study

- The study was limited to middle school building administrators and teachers. The findings of this study may not be generalizable to building administrators and teachers at the elementary and senior high school level.

- The study was limited to Detroit Public Schools. Because of the administrative structure and the size of the school district, the results may not be generalizable to other school districts in the State of

Michigan.

Definition of Terms

The following operational definitions of terms are provided:

Building Administrator	Building principal and assistant principal
Public Act 25 of 1990 (P.A. 25)	The Michigan State Legislated mandate [section 15.41277(1)] for a local school shared decision-making process in local school improvement plans.
School Improvement	A research-based collaborative process for identifying the need to change to increase student achievement. The process entails commitment, inclusion of all, leadership, a vision, mission, a plan, and courage.
Shared decision-making	"...a new mind set about authority and responsibility in schools in which the powers to make decisions about the school are no longer relegated simply to the top management but shared with faculty and sometimes even staff"(Chion-Kenney & Hymes, 1994, p. 380).

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

Senge (1990) suggested in his writings that a learning organization based on shared decision making must be built to transform education from what is known today. Not only is the learning organization based on shared decision making a new source of competitive advantage, but it offers an empowering approach to work. This review of literature provides support for teachers' and building administrators' involvement in shared decision making at the middle school level, and the extent to which this participation varies as a function of differences in satisfying a customer focus in education, in professional experience and personality. To place this study in context, this chapter presents a review of the pertinent literature.

Customer Focus in Education

Definition of a Customer

Before discussing customer focus in education, the definition of a customer based in literature must be presented. Juran (1989) and Nykiel (1992) described a customer as an individual who has received or was affected by the product or process of an organization. Customers are either external or internal to the organization. The product affects all external customers, but the customers are not members of the company that produced the product or service. Internal customers are employees of the company and are affected by the product and process. School administrators in both cases must actively reach out to identify and understand the needs and desires of customers. This

effort must be a continual process since customer needs and desires change over time.

Customer Focus

The education that students have received, not the students themselves is the product. Tribus (1991), former Secretary of Commerce and Massachusetts Institute of Technology colleague of Deming laid out the initial core philosophy as it applies to education. According to Tribus, students are the customers of the teacher in any classroom. Together they define what makes a quality experience. He adds that the quality of any process is defined by the customers of that process. In shared decision making types of management, the customer is defined as the next person in line. This treatment of the customer leads to the concept of the internal customer. Teachers are the customers of administrators, and administrators are the customers of the school board. He elaborated that:

- The school is not a factory.
- The students are not the product.
- Their education is the product
- There are several customers for the product, including:
    - The students themselves.
    - Their parents
    - Their future employers
    - Society at large.
- Students need to be "co-managers" of their own education.
- There are no opportunities for recalls.

Area F Schools in particular encouraged by the Detroit Public Schools

overall are encouraged to empower themselves through the tenets of Total Quality Management at the building level. Deming (1986) introduced the term Total Quality Management (TQM) in describing his theory of organizational management. Researchers have generally defined this term as involving a change of organizational culture with greater emphasis on collaboration and team work. Schmidt & Finnigan (1992) suggested that the focus of TQM was on discovering root causes and improving the process of creating services or products. Even more David Kearns (1988), former Deputy Secretary of Education suggested that we needed schools that are relevant for the present times:

> The modern school should look less like a factory and more like our best high-tech companies, with lean structures, flat organizations, and decision making pushed to the lowest possible level . . . [with] fewer middle managers, and those that remain acting less like controllers and more like colleagues and collaborators" (in Doyle & Kearns, 1988, p.38)

This educational focus suggested and adapted from the business philosophy of Deming's 14 principles brought about these axioms for educators (Blankstein, 1992). The 14 principles are:

1. Create constancy of purpose for improvement of product and service.
2. Adopt the new (Deming) philosophy.
3. Cease dependence on inspection to achieve quality. Build in quality in the first place.
4. End the practice of awarding business based on price alone.
5. Improve constantly and forever every process.
6. Institute training on the job.
7. Adopt and institute leadership.

8. Drive out fear.
9. Break down barriers between staff areas.
10. Eliminate slogans, exhortations, and targets for the staff.
11. Eliminate numerical quotas for the staff and goals for management.
12. Remove barriers that rob people of pride of workmanship.
13. Institute a vigorous program of education and self-improvement for everyone
14. Put everybody in the organization to work to accomplish the transformation.

Blankstein (1992) pointed out that a few terms needed to be translated to see how Deming's principles, originally developed for business, might apply to education. Principals and superintendents were considered leadership; teachers were considered employees and leaders and managers of students; students were considered employees and the knowledge they gain and later contributed to society was the product. Parents and society are the customers.

The schools of choice precepts of the Detroit Public Schools and Area F have administrators and teachers focused on the practices of a customer focused education by treating the students and parents of their schools as valued customers. In all instances of the process of shared decision making in the schools, the leadership of the building administrator was highly a task and relationship oriented strategy and the acceptance of the process of shared decision making was the responsibility of the principal. This responsibility includes building relationships of trust from the principal down with empowering and enabling teachers to improve by removing the impediments to the natural joys and pride of educating valued customers continuously.

Moen (1991) emphasized that there is a need for teachers and administrators to exercise leadership to harness the energy of oneself and others to accomplish fundamental change in the structure of the educational system. Overall management style for administrators has changed from results-oriented to process-oriented. A distinction that helps people rather than attempts to control people. Characteristics of a teacher or administrator practicing this new leadership style included:

- Understands how the work of his/her group supports the mission.
- Provides constancy of purpose, persistence in accord with the mission.
- Focuses on the customer, internal and external.
- Legislation as coach and counsel, not judge (Forgives a mistake).
- Listens skillfully (Continues to learn)
- Appreciates variation in people and systems.
- Works to improve the system.
- Creates an atmosphere of trust and support.
- Remove obstacles to pride and joy in work and learning.
- Recognizes the needs of the student.

The instructional outcomes or knowledge, a product, of school-based shared decision making was reported in research done in a study conducted in a Midwestern metropolitan K-8 school district of approximately 3,300 students. In their research, Smylie, Lazarus, & Brownlee-Conyers (1996) found that teachers' perceptions of accountability increased as their participation in shared decision making increased resulting in higher achievement for the student, a primary customer. Their study also revealed a large statistically significant decline in

teachers' perception of individual autonomy. The research concluded that the greater the participative nature of shared decision making, the greater the increase in perceived accountability, the more organizational learning opportunities for teachers, and the greater the decline in perceived individual autonomy.

Shared Decision Making

A brief discussion of shared decision making and its place in the educational reform process is presented in this section. An in-depth look at Pubic Act 25 and its relationship to shared decision making in Michigan schools is also included in this review. An examination of literature then follows this first section of the review related to: a) the role of the building administrator in the shared decision making process, and b) the role of the teacher in the shared decision making process.

Shared Decision Making and Educational Reform

Over the last several years, the American system of public education has been confronted with staggering problems and challenges including those of school violence, increasing numbers of undereducated and impoverished students, and steady declines of student scores on national achievement tests (Papalia & Olds, 1992). According to Ornstein and Hunkins (1993), empirical findings showed that not only must reform be undertaken to meet these challenges and deal with these problems, but also that much of what needs to be done to reform schools must essentially be done at the local level; that is where the problems must be resolved, although the problems are large and

multidimensional.

Ornstein and Hunkins (1993) noted that in the last six years, several local level reforms have been started to meet problems and challenges facing American public schools. These reforms include five perspectives:

- adaptive problem solving,
- adaptation of a school-level focus,
- focusing on the ability to implement changes,
- innovations in principal leadership and staff development, and
- development of programs based on school-business cooperation.

Shared decision making is one of many reforms efforts that have been successful in dealing with problems and challenges facing schools. In this regard, essentially shared decision making has two forms:

1. The site-based management/shared decision making approach that is a method of school restructuring that shifts authority from a central location to the school and endeavors to redistribute authority within the school by establishing a shared decision making councils (Sidener, 1994).

2. Shared decision making, may use a council or another form of collaborative body; however, usually these efforts are a collaborative approach to school governance by teachers and principals with programs having the objectives of not only improving the quality of education but doing so by giving teachers opportunities for school leadership and an active voice in decisions that effect the school's mission and operation (Sidener, 1994).

Researchers have often asked if the shared decision making approach to reform has been effective. The results of some studies have provided support for the effectiveness of the shared decision making process. For example, McMurray (1993) examined four factors contributing to shared decision making effectiveness in four urban public schools. His study selected schools based on

a ranking system in which the 12 high schools in the school district were ranked and placed into quadrants based on perceived effectiveness of their shared decision making model — an instructional cabinet. One school was then randomly selected from each quadrant to give the included schools a wide range of effectiveness levels.

Completed decisions were solicited from facilitators at each school, classified as either decisions of regulation or decisions of modification, and placed in a matrix design to denote decision type, level of participation, and cabinet involvement. Questionnaires were then mailed to a random sample of 50% of the staff, including the principal and facilitators, at each of the four schools. They received responses from 57% of the participants (N=104).

Analysis of the data showed that decision quality improved as levels of participation in the decision making process increased (McMurray, 1993). No significant differences were found for decision types at any of the levels of participation. It was observed that principals perceived a greater degree of participation by subordinates personnel than do the other role groups. Thus, McMurray (1993) concluded that when staff and principals effectively carry out shared decision making, positive results in relation to decision quality are evident for both decisions of regulation and decisions of modification. McMurray (1993) concluded that the real effect of shared decision making was dependent upon what schools did with the process.

Few schools are using the shared decision making approach as effectively as possible. A study conducted by Weiss (1993) investigated the shared decision making process in schools by focusing attention on important

issues, (e.g., the curriculum and students), and seeking to determine if decisions developed using the shared decision making processes were innovative and progressive. Participants in Weiss (1993) study consisted of 193 administrators, teachers, and other professional ancillary school staff including: guidance counselors and librarians. All participants in 12 high schools were interviewed over a 2.5 year period. Each interview consisted of a structured set of open-ended questions asking study participants about leadership in the school. Interview questions in the study centered on one decision in which the participant had been involved and the way the decision played out from start to finished. Based on her findings, Weiss concluded that shared decision making did not focus sufficient attention on the curriculum and students, and had not led to innovations and creative change. Because of the findings of this study, some schools have attempted to focus on activities involved in the shared decision making process to achieve more of the desired outcomes of school reform.

Thiagarajan (1991) inferred that inservice training in shared decision making has often been the method used to focus on educational outcomes. An example of his training involved forming small groups of teachers and having them play a "frame-game" termed Elephant Grope. The purpose of the game was to enhance small group activities as preparation for shared decision making and other collaborative processes. The basic idea behind Elephant Grope was that responsible empowerment required mutual tradeoffs among different stakeholder groups (e.g., departments, teachers, teams, divisions, or business units), with outcomes of this activity including: a set of consensus decisions and a better understanding of responsible empowerment in shared decision making.

According to Thiagarajan (1991), schools using this game as a part of their shared decision making inservice training have found it to be associated with a maximum acceptance of the shared decision making model.

Providing insight into shared decision making for educational reform was the focus of a study conducted by Teschke (1994). The primary purpose of this study was to examine critical components of shared decision making, as identified by key individuals, who had been involved in shared decision making in a small suburban district in Southern California. A secondary purpose of the study was to determine if these critical components were present or absent in the shared decision making process in this school district.

Methods in the study by Teschke (1994) involved a Delphi process to arrive at a consensus regarding what critical components were included in the shared decision making process. The lists of critical components identified in the Delphi process were then submitted to key individuals in the school district who discussed the presence or absence of the components' in the district. The results of the study were that critical components of shared decision making most often listed were:

- The district must support the process; there must be support for the principal
- The individual district must define shared decision making through its educational vision.
- There must be staff development related to shared decision making and shared decision making process issues.
- There is a need for a suitable school culture and climate in which shared decision making can flourish.

Teschke (1994) drew many conclusions from the study. First, he noted

that districts should define shared decision making based on their specific culture and climate. Second, it was concluded that the role of principals was critical to the shared decision making implementation process, and that since collaboration with the principal in the process is central, principals must attempt to be respected and trusted by all constituents.

Teschke (1994) reached the conclusion that there was a need for an aggressive staff development program on shared decision making that focused on providing both information and knowledge about shared decision making specifically, as well as the shared decision making process. He also determined that teachers and parents need to be involved in the process continuously. Finally, he concluded that concrete plans should be developed for implementing shared decision making and communicating among the various constituencies. Individual schools should create their own plans for the implementation of shared decision making based on district guidelines.

Teschke's (1994) review provided a brief definition of shared decision making in schools, noting that it was essentially a collaborative effort in which several groups within an educational arena worked together to develop decisions based on the premise of satisfying the customer. The approach of shared decision making is an outgrowth of the larger effort to affect school reform to meet the many challenges and problems facing public school systems.

Effectiveness of the shared decision making approach points to positive outcomes although shared decision making is dependent on:

- involving teachers and principals collaboratively,
- obtaining district support for shared decision making efforts,

- creating a definition of the approach by identifying it with its overall vison for education,
- developing related staff development programs, and
- creating a school climate and culture that fosters the process.

Public Act 25

School districts across the State of Michigan have been working to realize school improvement mandated by Public Act 25 to achieve effective schools. All school improvement plans must include the following six major components:

- Mission Statement
- Goals based on student outcomes
- Curriculum process
- Staff development
- Evaluation
- Building level shared decision making process

The Michigan Department of Education (1991) reported that they directly related equal access to quality education for all children to school improvement through the enactment of Public Act 25 in 1990. This legislation allowed diverse groups of educators, policy makers, parents, students, communities and business groups to create a shared vision of the educational system within their school districts. The legislation also offered school districts an opportunity to work together for timely implementation and use of core reform measures. These measures included: core academic curriculum, site-based decision making, fair opportunity to learn, disaggregation of data by gender, use of student portfolios,

as well as other educational opportunities.

Public Act 25 mandated the use of shared decision making and a comprehensive core curriculum, while PA 335 provided the funding for these activities. The Michigan Department of Education (1991) noted that decision sharing should be used at the building level, with all school employees and parents involved in making decisions. They also recommended the following parameters regarding school districts implementation of the shared decision making process:

- Make the school the primary unit of improvement. Schools should work with districts to plan, design, and implement school improvement programs.
- Decentralize authority, autonomy, and accountability.
- Attempt to involve as wide an array of people as possible in all decisions (e.g., teachers, parents, school board members, students, community).
- Refrain from involving collective bargaining or employee issues, such as grievances, in decision making.
- Do not use shared decision making on budget issues.
- Use a school improvement team or district council for representation.

The Michigan Department of Education (1991) also addressed reasons why this legislation was important for improving school effectiveness. Among reasons supporting this importance was that all members of an increasingly diverse teaching force and community would gain the knowledge needed in shared decision making by helping them to become active participants in creating a learning environment. This legislation would also:

- Ensure incorporation of a greater cultural sensitivity in a school curriculum;

- Allow schools to meet the needs of at-risk students best (e.g., the disabled, the disadvantaged);
- Help schools resolve difficult budget problems and avoid future school closings using a shared decision making approach; and
- Assist schools in planning for change.

Legislative observers have asked how Michigan schools are responding to the call for educational reform overall, and to shared decision making in particular. Research has attempted to answer this question because a realistic notion of the efficacy of PA 25 for Michigan schools was needed to evaluate the school improvement process.

Hackmann and Schmitt (1995) conducted an evaluative study called the Collaborative School Improvement Program (C-SIP) which was part of the objectives set by PA 25. This program consisted of school-university partnerships that focused upon collaborative relationship between Eastern Michigan University, Wayne State University, Monroe Intermediate School District, Washtenaw Intermediate School District, Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency, and constituent school districts to promote school improvement activities through building-level shared decision making. Hackmann and Schmitt (1995) indicated that the C-SIP model offered a clearly delineated problem-solving approach that effectively combined theory, research, and practice. Individual schools, local school districts, intermediate school districts, and universities assumed important roles in ensuring successful implementation of local projects. Other program features involved recognizing instructional and noninstructional staff as customers and equal shareholders in the change

process. Administrative support was considered as a prerequisite to a school's acceptance into the program as a project school. The two universities, Eastern Michigan and Wayne State, provided financial and technical assistance to each project site, and assigned a university faculty member as facilitator in helping with change efforts. Evaluative data on collaborative efforts consistently provided evidence of good success for the program.

Burt (1990) who also studied Michigan's Collaborative School Improvement Process (C-SIP) described it as a six-step process based on participative decision making and staff development. The six-steps were:

1. Awareness, readiness, commitment
2. Need assessment
3. Development and approval of plans
4. Implementation and monitoring
5. Evaluation
6. Reassessment of a 3 to 5 year plan

Several beliefs and principles about change and school improvement supported the six-step C-SIP model

- Meaningful change occurs as a process, not as an event
- Individuals behave the way they do because it makes sense to them. Every person is logical in his/her own context.
- Individuals affected by decisions must be involved in making them.
- Shared decision making builds personal ownership and collective commitment for those involved.
- The most critical variable in effective teaching/leading is the extent to which one can interact with and release the potential of others.

- Effective change is a human process, involving the individual's thoughts, feelings and actions that can cause disequilibrium, thus requiring various support systems.
- Top administrators alone cannot create effective change, but they can and must be an integral part as they facilitate change.
- Leadership skills cannot be presumed; any change model must provide for leadership development.
- For significant change to occur in behavior, formal outside intervention is necessary, with continuous communication essential to initiate behavioral change.
- Participants should incorporate current literature, research, and practices in their deliberations.
- Although external consultant help is necessary and important, direction for change must come from local, internal sources.
- An organization's fundamental beliefs should be the driving forces and the ultimate "why's" behind every action.

The purpose of the study on the C-SIP program was to identify participants' perceptions of the program and determine reasons for program variations. Methods involved mailing a survey instrument to teachers and administrators in 29 participating schools, with findings revealing that most participants perceived the C-SIP process as effective. The reasons for program effectiveness included:

- Shared decision making and goal consensus
- Active involvement that meets basic human needs
- Well-organized planning
- Adequate funding
- Use of a process facilitator.

Burt noted that focusing more efforts on time management, staff commitment,

and evaluation; could improve the overall program.

Roles of Building Administrators in Shared Decision Making

Miller (1995) discussed site-based management in a study of schools and found that democracy in governance helps teachers "buy in" to reform, although real change was dependent on the principal's vision and leadership. Shared decision making required principals and other school administrators to assume several new roles, and either modifying or changing other roles that they were expected to complete before implementing shared decision making activities.

Sisemore (1994) attempted to delineate the role of the administrator in shared decision making by interviewing principals of schools participating in shared decision making programs. Nine high schools were selected from nominations of school districts that were notably successful in setting up shared decision making.

Inductive analysis of taped interviews revealed that administrators characterized the shared decision making process as having specific basic levels, each of which, was said to be related to one or more administrative tasks. Two components of organizational functioning, infrastructure and decision processes were essential to shared decision making. Included in the infrastructure were eight components that needed to be present for successful shared decision making:

1. administrator involvement in the roles related to the district mission statement,
2. local school vision statements,

3. values clarification,
4. definition of shared decision making,
5. governing board policy,
6. administrative procedures,
7. purposes of planning team, and
8. role clarification.

Elements of the decision process that were characterized as those administrative activities and tasks that involved:

1. Delivering information to stakeholders.
2. Identifying and understanding political realities.
3. Creating a vision versus problem solving.
4. Assuring that decisions are made through a consensus.
5. Using brainstorming to solicit and develop new ideas.
6. Assuring an effective communications pyramid.
7. Using process observers.
8. Providing for staff development.
9. Conducting organized and timely meetings.
10. Values team building.

Administrator characteristics; such as gender, experience, school enrollment, student ethnicity; were perceived to influence three elements of infrastructure and six elements of the decision process. The three elements of an infrastructure influenced by administrator characteristics included: district mission statement, definition of shared decision making, and administrative procedures. The six elements of the decision process that were influenced by administrator

characteristics included: identifying and understanding political realities, assuring that decisions were made through a consensus, assuring an effective communication pyramid, using process observers, providing for staff development, and conducting organized and timely meetings.

Dougherty (1995) examined principals' perceptions of their roles in shared decision making using qualitative methods. All principals participating in the study were administrators of schools that were members of the University of Georgia's League of Professional Schools. Each principal had experienced at least two years of shared governance leadership. Their schools ranged in size from 165 to 1800 students and included elementary, middle school, and high schools. Principals were interviewed twice using structured interview guides. The primary roles identified were as: a) facilitators, b) school curriculum leaders, c) members of shared governance leadership groups, and d) occasionally acting as a colleague. Principals described how they switched hats, or shifted roles, as required by the circumstances. Statements by some principals indicated that, occasionally, they blocked or overruled democratic decisions which raised questions about whether principals could truly be in collegial relationships with teachers. Concluding, Dougherty (1995) suggested that principals perceived that they had gained some insights from their experiences that could be useful to other practitioners, as well as those who prepared future principals. He pointed out that no single formula was available for shared governance that could be used to fit all schools. The process of discussing and negotiating with teachers and other staff members in determining how to structure and operate as a participatory organization was important for success in initiating shared decision

making.

Lawson (1994) attempted to identify the knowledge and skills that elementary principals use to initiate site-based shared decision making and to learn how these principals perceived the importance of this knowledge and skills. Methods involved the use of an ex post facto descriptive approach to conduct a case study with eight principals identified as successful in implementing shared decision making in their schools. Qualitative analysis and an expert panel were used to find patterns and themes that emerged from the interview data. These principals identified the following knowledge and skill areas as important:

- Knowledge about the change process,
- Group formation and group dynamics,
- Skills in asking questions, and
- Paraphrasing and helping small group processes.

Based on these findings, Lawson (1994) concluded that being able to help small group processes was critical to the principal's success in initiating site-based shared decision making effectively. Working toward shared decisions has shifted the principal's role from manager toward group facilitator. Finally, as principals began to move their school staffs toward site-based shared decision making, they had to expand their knowledge of several theoretical areas and use a variety of interpersonal skills to effect the change. He continued that knowledge and skill areas identified by principals were those associated with experience rather than training or education. He recommended that principals new to site-based shared decision making should seek opportunities to be mentored by principals who have found and successfully displayed knowledge and skills

demanded by this change.

Mizelle (1995) examined the role of the assistant principal in urban public high schools in Virginia that were restructuring to shared decision making. Specific research objectives included: determining the role of the assistant principal, identifying how this role had changed as a result of restructuring, identifying concerns and issues considered for redefining the role, and recognizing modifications to enhance the role.

Mizelle (1995) found that the role of the assistant principal had been ignored in general and specifically in schools that were restructuring. She inferred that a more in-depth look at the following themes was needed: a) role definition, b) ambiguity and conflict, c) changing relationships, d) decision making, e) shared leadership, f) job satisfaction, and g) career goals. In her study, a qualitative research design was used to study four schools that served students in grades 9 through 12. The primary method of data collection were interviews with 34 participants: including 4 principals, 12 assistant principals, and 18 teachers. Data were also collected through site visits and document analysis.

Mizelle (1995) found that the primary duties and responsibilities of assistant principals in the restructured school were curriculum/instruction, pupil personnel, and school management, with varying levels of involvement in other areas of school operation. Comparing her findings with existing research on the role of the assistant principalship, Mizelle (1995) observed that administrators identified instruction as the primary duty in contrast to the literature. Curriculums/instruction were first in importance followed by pupil personnel that she found in reverse rank in previous literature. In addition, the study suggested

that a good deal of diversity was included in the restructured role along with increased workloads, and more collegial relationships, both of which were attributed to the flattened hierarchy associated with shared decision making.

Teacher interview data revealed that assistant principals' roles strongly affected teachers' participation in shared decision making. Assistant principals' attitudes toward risk-taking were important, with the assistant principal often becoming a leader of leaders. As assistant principals began to become more oriented toward collaboration, shared decision making, shared vision, and student learning; concerns about role ambiguity and conflict were minimized. Restructuring did not lead to greater dissatisfactions, perhaps because of the reorientation toward a shared vision. Assistant principals believed their role in achieving the goals of restructuring were related to supervising and monitoring instruction, having high expectations, being team players, creating an environment conducive to teaching and learning, and building trust.

Based on her findings, Mizelle (1995) made many recommendations for the role of the assistant principal in schools whose restructuring efforts included shared decision making. These recommendations included noting that early, ongoing training was essential for all participants. Principals should also consider the effort to identify experiences that tap their potential in establishing a teaming spirit that is vital to school restructuring.

Sims (1993) investigated the changing role of principals in school restructuring efforts, recognizing that motivation for the present school restructuring movement grew out of concern that American education, designed to meet the needs of an industrial society, was not preparing students for the

competitiveness of the emerging information-based global economy. Principals and teachers, in schools contemplating restructuring, drive efforts in exploring what information should guide schools' restructuring efforts, and how subsequent changes could affect their roles. In this context, the role of principals involved in the restructuring process was analyzed.

Sims (1993) explored the changing role of four elementary principals whose schools were involved in various stages of the restructuring process. Specifically, the research examined principals' behaviors, actions, attitudes, beliefs, and values, and also perceptions and reflections of teachers, on the role of the principal in restructuring schools. Methods involved data collection using a purposive sample of four San Francisco Bay Area schools representing different stages of the restructuring process. These schools represented diverse student populations and teaching staffs in large urban and suburban school districts. Participants from each school included the principal and four randomly selected teachers representing primary and intermediate grades. Sample participants responded to both a demographic survey and face-to-face individual and group interviews. Interview questions were designed to elicit information on the school's culture, basic assumptions about education, values and beliefs, behaviors and practices, and interactions and relationships. Each case summary provided information from which generalized themes and implications were formulated into a profile of the school. Separate school profiles were then analyzed for common themes. Finally, the data showed that significant school reform occurs when principals, through an understanding of the school culture, redefine their role. Results further showed that by implementing shared decision making practices

and behaviors that reshape their schools, principals and teachers were indeed fundamentally improving their schools.

Nichols (1993) examined principals' perceptions of shared decision making in middle schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The study investigated differences in perceptions of shared decision making as a function of variability in principals' tenure and principals' role in the development of the program. The review of literature on shared decision making was used to categorize four central shared decision making issues. The issues were:

- Level of teacher participation
- Structure of existing programs
- Affect of shared decision making on principals' deliberation
- Costs and benefits of the program

A survey was designed to measure these issues in relation to principals' perception of shared decision making. The sample consisted of principals working at 50 middle schools in Virginia, all of whom had shared decision making programs in their schools. Subjects' responses to survey instruments were analyzed using the analysis of variances.

The results of the analysis showed that neither tenure nor the degree to which principals were involved in the role of program development accounted for difference in perception of the shared decision making process. Responses were said to reflect a high degree of similarity among all participants. This similarity was attributed to the training and background of respondents and the effect of a state directive regarding implementation of shared decision making programs.

Although shared decision making is itself a school reform, it is in addition

a method of beginning other reforms in a given school. Slatin (1995) asserted that the most critical role played by the principal and other administrators for making reforms regarding shared decision making is strong leadership. He cited an example of this point in a case study involving the transformation of one South Bronx elementary school from a skills-based orientation to a talent-based educational enrichment construct. Slatin (1995) specifically investigated the emerging role of the principal in supporting and affecting the school's restructuring initiative. A qualitative design was selected to obtain data, which included analysis of documents, interviews, inventories, and observations.

The findings of the study were said to highlight the importance of strong, dynamic leadership. The principal articulated and developed a meaningful and humanistic school mission. The vision had a moral imperative, and sought to promote equity of opportunity for inner-city children. Gifted educational strategies were developed for students in a heterogeneously grouped school and ignored the process of labeling and sorting children. All children received an enriched educational curriculum that nurtured talents in domains such as mathematics, science, computer literacy, art, and music. The principal had certain leadership characteristics that were key to strong leadership, notably, commitment and a belief in students and the shared decision making process.

In addition, the principal emphasized teaching, learning, and continually employed strategies that promoted professionalism and collegiality. Teachers served on ongoing committees and focus groups to explore and develop new instructional strategies. A constant infusion of outside consultants, conferences, courses, and site visitations were used in these schools. Teacher strengths were

rewarded which fostered teacher leadership. The principal promoted participatory democracy and encouraged the staff to participate in the shared decision making process. This process supported dynamic leadership without undermining the shared decision making process. The principal's performance evolved into an energetic, driven, and optimistic set of leadership qualities.

In an examination of the principal's role in shared decision making, Skaruppa (1993) described, examined, and analyzed experiences and viewpoints of three role groups (principal, cadre, and other staff members) in an exemplary middle school regarding the shared decision making process and related issues. Accomplishments and obstacles from the time of planning, implementation, and continuation of shared decision making were identified. The findings suggested that the school should develop a formal structure consisting of a cadre and quality circles to facilitate shared decision making. The school's administration empowered the cadre to make decisions on a variety of topics. The faculty, administration, and other staff members viewed the ability to decide for their school as positive. Flexibility for decision making was viewed less positively as it related to the autonomy and support given to the school from the central administration.

The cadre used accountability measures to monitor the shared decision making process. No evidence was available that shared decision making had a positive influence on improved teaching and learning. The three role groups, however, believed that their productivity improved because of increased faculty participation in decision making, increased professionalism, and a better school climate. No major differences in student achievement, attendance, or suspension

rates resulted from the implementation of shared decision making. However, all three groups believed these changes in student outcomes were positive. This perception was strongest for principals. Nevertheless, in spite of obstacles that they faced, all groups stated strongly that they would not want to revert to a centralized model of school management.

Connelly (1990) analyzed perceptions of middle school principals regarding their role in the shared decision making process as practiced in the Los Angeles Unified School District. In Los Angeles, shared decision making was introduced in 1989 as a legislative mandate. The rationale for this mandate was to create a leadership council composed of teachers, community members, a student, and principal at each school site, who were invested by the school district with some decision making authority. The research studied the perceptions of middle school principals in six distinct areas, including:

- Implementation at the site
- Teacher participation and the role of the leadership council
- Visions of the changes shared decision making can bring
- Accountability and the role of the principal
- The role of the central council
- Staff development

In the research, data were analyzed from a developed survey distributed to middle school principals in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Principals' responses were clustered according to years of experience, type of school calendar (traditional/year-round), and location of school (urban/suburban). The findings showed commonalities in certain areas. While the leadership council

was accountable for the council's decisions, findings showed that the principal carried the burden of accountability. Impediments to the process included: lack of linkage of the council to departments and teachers, bureaucratic constraints, and lack of administrative and decision making ability by the leadership council. Finally, it was concluded that despite the collaborative effort implicit in shared decision making, principals tended to believe that the most effective way shared decision making could be implemented was through their leadership abilities. School districts that were considering implementing shared decision making involved principals and other school administrators in the planning phases. Whenever possible, principals should participate in district level shared decision making policy revisions. Staff development programs to sharpen teachers' leadership, decision making, administrative, and conflict resolution skills were found to be necessary requirements if shared decision making was to be used effectively by any school.

Several current studies have attempted to fully describe the role of the principal and other administrators in the shared decision making process. Weiss (1993) reviewed these studies noting that the research had shown that for maximal school reform the administrative role required:

- Focusing on decisions related to hiring and budget management
- Developing strong leadership roles, defined as taking responsibility for arranging training focused on interpersonal, conceptual, and technical skills and recognizing, rewarding and supporting the new leaders' efforts
- Enhancing teachers' commitment to implementing school decisions
- Guiding collaborative teams to a greater focus on the curriculum

- Developing new conceptions of power, skills fostering systematic agreement, and willingness to take risks
- Promoting active and consistent teacher involvement
- Believing in the concept that all students can learn and actively promulgate this philosophy
- Focusing on supervising instruction through classroom observations
- Understanding and applying conferencing and coaching techniques to instructional improvement
- Encouraging decisions that fostering greater alignment among curricula, learning materials, teacher actions, and testing
- Creating a vision of what the school could be like when shared decision making was maximally carried out.

The principal's role in shared decision making was diverse, including many components. For example, principals, who supported shared decision making, had roles to play with respect to the district mission statement, local school vision statement, values clarification, definition of shared decision making, governing board policy, administrative procedures, planning teams, clarification of roles, delivery of information to stakeholders, identifying and understanding political realities, assuring that decisions were made through a consensus, using brainstorming to solicit and develop new ideals, assuring an effective communication pyramid, using process observers, and conducting organized and timely meetings. Other roles that principals who supported shared decision making were expected to play included: being facilitators as well as regular participants in the shared decision making process, expanding their knowledge of several theory areas, and using different kinds of interpersonal skills to effect required shared decision making changes. In addition, principals also must play

a role in regards to curriculum and instruction, and in creating an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning, as well as building trust between teachers and administrators. Principals were expected to:

- understand their school culture;
- redefine their new shared decision making roles about this culture;
- play a strong role in budgetary and financial issues;
- be involved in arranging training focused on interpersonal, conceptual, and technical skills;
- recognize, reward and support other leaders' efforts;
- enhance teachers commitment to carrying out shared decision making; and
- develop new conceptions of power.

Although shared decision making involved joint decision making, principals were expected to be strong leaders exhibiting the following characteristics:

- directing and providing meaning to the school mission,
- engendering a vision of shared decision making in all staff and employees,
- being strongly committed to shared decision making, promoting professionalism and collegiality,
- using outside consultants, conferences, courses, and site visits, honoring teacher strengths, and
- evidencing dynamic, energetic and optimistic guidance.

At the same time, principals must be sufficiently flexible in the role of principal and ready to change to fit the needs of shared decision making and take risks necessary to decide to make shared decision making a success.

Roles of Teachers in Shared Decision Making

In determining the roles of teacher in shared decision making, different researchers have divergent approaches. In their research, Hoy and Miskel (1991) established nine generalizations to reflect teacher participation in shared decision making. The generalizations included:

- Opportunity to share and reflect on the morale and enthusiasm of the teacher for the organization.
- Satisfaction with the profession of teaching.
- Preferred principals to involve teachers in shared decision making.
- Expectation by teachers not to be too involved in every decision.
- Situational participation.
- Depending on the problem, the role of both principals and teachers varied.
- Internal and external factors affected how much participation
- Administrators were ineffective because of deficiencies of acceptance by subordinates and limitations on the quality of the decision.
- Administrators needed to answer correctly: the conditions to involve teachers; the extent and how teachers would be involved; how the group would be constituted, and how effective the role of the principal.

Miller (1995) observed that assumptions about effects of shared decision making include these:

- producing better decisions on curricular and pedagogical matters, because teachers are less interested in purely bureaucratic controls and know students better than administrators do;
- promoting reform and innovation by unleashing teachers' creativity, because it fills a need for teachers to have some control over their work lives.

Because of these and other advantages, student achievement could be

improved. Conducting research is one way to determine what teachers and building administrators perceived the teacher's role to be in shared decision making. Pikos (1993) conducted such a study to learn if differences existed in perceptions of building administrators and teachers regarding the role of teachers in the shared decision making process. His results provided evidence that teachers wanted their roles to include participation in the decision making process at the building level. However, it was noted that communication and trust factors must be in place for this process to be successful. In the views of some teachers, participation in shared decision making included participation in the role of building level decision making.

Smith (1993) examined changes in teacher roles as perceived by teachers resulting from their becoming engaged in the implementation of shared decision making through an evaluation of the progress of shared decision making in one school over a two-year period. Specifically, Smith investigated teachers' perceptions of changes in their roles, differences in their experiences of shared decision making and role change, and factors that facilitated or constrained role change. Data included 100 interviews conducted with faculty, administrators, and staff in a large public school. Of the 100 teachers who were interviewed, 26 were identified as shared decision making performers, audience, and outsiders. Shared decision making performers were said to be teachers who were actively involved. Shared decision making audiences were defined as teachers who were concerned and supportive but not as involved as the performers. Shared decision making outsiders consisted of teachers who were completely uninvolved in the shared decision making process. Although analysis

of data drew upon all interview data, 26 interviews with teachers designated as performers, audience, and outsiders were said to help clarify differences in teachers' experience of shared decision making.

Analysis focused on teachers' perceptions of their responsibilities and rights, personal changes, and relationships with other role partners. Performers reported a variety of new responsibilities and shared decision making gave them the right to express their views candidly. They believed they gained an understanding about school change and improved their leadership skills. Some performers said they increased their confidence and sense of efficacy. They also reported changed relationships with colleagues and the principal.

Audiences and outsiders perceived fewer and less substantive changes. In addition, teachers revealed few changes in their relationships with students, parents, and noninstructional staff. Yet, teachers' relationships with district administrators remained intact. According to Smith (1993), failed communication made it difficult for audiences and outsiders to experience role changes that performers carried out. Shared decision making created communication demands that could not be met by the school's communication system.

Ford (1990) summarized that:

> Educational reforms of the past decade have generated initiatives that suggest a redefinition of existing teacher roles. Most of these initiatives have called for teacher participation in the governance process and, thus, require a rethinking of their role in the process. Site-based management/shared decision making, in particular, has provided a structure for the involvement of teachers in the leadership process and has asked to school governance. (p. 2819)

The purpose of Ford's (1993) study was to describe the teacher leaders' work role transition as they began the implementation of the shared decision making

process. The study was based on the conceptual premise that organizations could provide the social structure (e.g., shared decision making) within which teacher leaders interact to define their work role. Accordingly, he showed that the bureaucratic structure responsible for monitoring and implementing teachers' roles in shared decision making defined the role of teacher-leaders within the school improvement plan. He described each teacher-leader as having a strong work ethic and was perceived to be leaders by their peers. Teachers relied on the principal as a source of information which prepared them for their role through self-directed, principal-directed, and the district-directed modes of learning.

The bureaucratic nature of the district established teacher-leaders emerging work role as a new layer in the hierarchy somewhere between the principal and the teacher. The shared awareness of structure, timeliness, school pride, and feeling positive about organizational decisions emerged within the context of the school setting. This awareness served to establish a normative element for the social setting during the early implementation stage of the shared decision making committee. The result was a new layer in the organizational hierarchy that reflected the bureaucratic structure of the district that included teacher leaders and their new role as emerging bureaucrats.

Gibbs (1995) investigated teachers' perceptions of their experiences resulting from their participation in the shared decision making process in their school and influences their participation may have had on the school's culture. The location of the study was at a New York City junior high school that used school-based management represented by a shared decision making team. The

research questions addressed in the study were as follows:

- How did teachers in the target school perceive their roles in decision making?
- What underlying assumptions about decision making gave direction to those perceptions?
- How did the perceptions and assumptions of teachers affect decision making?
- In what ways did perceptions of teachers change over time through participation in the school-based management or shared decision making process?

Data collection included in-depth interviews of 23 teachers, an assistant principal, and the principal, plus overall observations and artifact collections. Verification of the data was made through a triangulation and responses from the principal and the shared decision making team members.

Findings revealed that teachers were most actively involved in decisions on school policies. These policies included changes in school structure and issues concerning with student-teacher interactions. Teachers did not participate in decisions on budget and personnel. While their degree of participation in shared decision making appeared to be limited, Gibbs (1995) reported that teachers did not want to give up their right to participate in shared decision making. The study also found that change was occurring slowly in the culture of the school. The most positive change occurred when teachers, administrators, and parents worked together as collaborators in making policy decisions for the school.

The above studies suggested that strong roles in shared decision making were available for teachers. Although, if teachers were not willing to take on their

required responsibilities in the process, any attempts to carry out shared decision making process were going to be ineffective.

McGuirk observed this aspect (1993) when he investigated teachers' willingness to participate in their shared decision making roles. Participants in the study were drawn from all elementary and high school teachers in a 13-county region of New York State. School district socioeconomic status was used to stratify sample districts based on full value property wealth per pupil. Districts were then randomly selected from the high and low wealth groups, and within districts, schools and teachers. Surveys were then mailed to participants at each school with completed surveys received from 63% of the participating schools.

Conclusions of the study revealed that teachers were willing to participate in shared decision making provided their roles included:

- having a decisive role on the committee,
- training was provided as needed in the content of decision areas or in group process skills,
- including time to meet on the master schedule, and
- providing resources to carry out decisions that were made by the shared decision making committee.

Teachers' reluctance to participate was related to the absence of these conditions. Consequently, McGuirk (1993) considered those factors as important in specifying a threshold level of willingness. If these conditions were met, teachers' reluctance to participate in shared decision making was reduced.

Willingness to participate in shared decision making was a factor in the research conducted by Casey (1994). He attempted to identify variables associated with teachers' acceptance of shared decision making in the Aldine

Independent School District (AISD) of Texas. He assumed that teacher's degree of willingness and active involvement in the shared decision making process were directly related to the degree to which they accepted the philosophy of shared decision making. The dependent variable in this study included the level at which teachers accepted the shared decision making philosophy. This variable was measured using a researcher-designed survey entitled the "Teacher Acceptance Index" (TAI). A total of 252 teachers in the district completed and returned the survey for a response rate that exceeded 78%.

The survey had two sections. The first section obtained data from respondents with respect to age, gender, highest degree attained, experience at current school, grade level assignment, and whether respondents had administrative aspirations. These variables were used as independent variables, with scores on the TAI used as the dependent variable in factorial analysis of variance procedures. Accordingly, Casey (1994) found statistically significant group mean differences in TAI scores for highest degree attained and administrative aspirations. The degree to which teachers accepted the shared decision making philosophy differed depending upon the highest degree they had attained and their administrative aspirations.

In the second section of the survey instrument, teachers' perceptions were solicited regarding support provided for the shared decision making process by district administration, the local school, teachers, parents, and the community. Also, the adequacy of time provided by local school administrations to support the shared decision making process was important. These variables were analyzed using the Pearson product-moment correlations and stepwise

multiple regression analysis procedures. The correlation analysis suggested statistically significant relationships between teacher acceptance and support given by the various groups. Teacher acceptance ratings were also associated with the adequacy of time provided by local school administration to support the shared decision making process. A stepwise multiple regression analysis of the dependent variable, scores on the TIA, revealed that knowledge of teachers' perceptions of support for shared decision making by school administrations and by teachers was predictive of the degree to which teachers accepted the shared decision making philosophy. No additional variables were found to be significant predictors of scores on the TAI.

Casey (1994) concluded that district teachers had generally high levels of acceptance of the shared decision making philosophy, but these acceptance levels could be strongly influenced by the amount of support teachers received from various groups, highest degree teachers had attained, personal administrative aspirations, and perceived adequacy of time provided by the school administration to support the shared decision making process.

Another factor that can affect teacher willingness to participate in shared decision making roles is the extent to which they derive satisfaction from their participation. A limited amount of research has attempted to examine the relationship between shared decision making participation and teachers' job satisfaction. For example, Wermuth (1993) examined the relationship between teacher involvement in shared decision making and job satisfaction, teacher satisfaction with shared decision making, and teacher perception of principals' support of shared decision making. Data were collected using the School

Inventory of Shared Decision Making and adapted parts of the Dade County Public School Survey on job satisfaction and perceptions of the principal.

Wermuth attempted to learn the extent of teacher involvement in nine areas of decision making in relationship to teacher job satisfaction, teacher satisfaction with shared decision making, and teacher perception of principals' support of shared decision making. He compared the independent variable, teacher involvement in shared decision making, to each dependent variable to determine the direction and magnitude of the relationships.

The sample used in the study consisted of 750 secondary school teachers in four junior high schools and four high schools in Yonkers, New York School district. Positive relationships were found between degree of teacher involvement in shared decision making. Wermuth (1993) observed the study's three independent variables (job satisfaction, shared decision making satisfaction, and perception of principal support), and found that shared decision making involvement by teachers, especially if supported by principals, can contribute to increases in teachers' job satisfaction overall and satisfaction with shared decision making, in particular.

Willingness to participate in shared decision making roles has also been investigated in relation to teacher attitudes. One such study conducted by Glazer (1992) analyzed the following questions:

- Which of the four Myers-Briggs Type Indicators (MBTI) subscales (Introversion/extroversion, sensing/intuition, thinking/feeling or judging/perceiving) was the best predictor of acceptance or participation in shared decision making?

- Was age, educational status, teaching experience, ethnicity, job satisfaction, teaching assignment, or perceived administrative style

significant predictors of teachers' attitudes toward shared decision making?

- Was one variable more important than the others in predicting a teacher's attitude toward shared decision making?

Subjects in the study consisted of a volunteer sample of teachers working in the Dade County Public Schools. All teachers completed the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Form G, and the Teachers' Attitudes Toward Shared Decision Making Survey. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) was developed to help identify personality traits. The MBTI is based on the research and theory of Carl Jung, and indicates preferences, not behavior. Demographic data were obtained on part one of the latter survey. Sample subjects were equally divided into teachers who had participated in shared decision making and teachers who had not participated. Multiple regression analysis was used to investigate the relationship between attitudes toward shared decision making and eleven independent variables. Findings revealed that the independent variable, years of teaching experience, was a significant predictor of teachers' attitudes toward shared decision making. More experienced teachers appeared to have more positive attitudes than their less experienced peers.

In summary for the role of the teacher in shared decision making process, research suggested that roles that teachers should assume in shared decision making schools, include: participating in building-level decision making, evidencing leadership, and being willing to increase leadership skills. In addition, being willing to provide frank and candid comments regarding school processes and issues, as well as being willing to redefine relationships with co-workers and the principal are necessary for effective participation in shared decision making.

Further the existing research literature suggested that teachers participating in shared decision making need to clarify their roles as that of representative, communicator, and emerging bureaucrat responsible for the monitoring and implementation of a plan for school improvement. Teachers were needed to provide an active and decisive voice on shared decision making committees. They also needed to be involved in training to learn group processing skills and providing appropriate resources to implement decision making.

Summary

The review of the literature presented here examined four areas of the recent research literature on shared decision making in schools. In this regard, the review first defined the shared decision making process and discussed it given the general school reform and restructuring movement. To add to the understanding of shared decision making and highlight its importance, some studies of the general effectiveness of the approach were delineated and discussed.

Based on the review of these studies, positive outcomes are generally associated with the shared decision making approach, which was dependent of the degree to which those involved in the decision making, especially teachers and principals, effectively carried out the process.

Public Act 25 and 335 mandated shared decision making in all public schools and providing the funding for it in Michigan schools. These acts were considered important as they provided a purpose, objectives, boundaries, and general importance for school improvement for public schools systems in the

State of Michigan.

Research has focused on delineating various roles expected of effective administrators of schools using shared decision making. Many roles were expected of the principal at the shared decision making schools and that at least for some roles, certain personality characteristics (e.g., willingness to take risks, optimism, communicative skills, was vital to successful implementation). The roles expected of teachers in shared decision making schools, when compared with administrators, tended to be much more limited.

Finally, shared decision making is a vital part of the reform movement in contemporary American schools, with existing literature supporting the notion that shared decision making can be effective, provided those involved effectively fulfill the roles assigned to them. In fulfilling these roles, several factors can either energize or debilitate principals and teachers' role fulfillment. By understanding the nature of roles expected of principals and teachers and by being aware of various factors that can affect teachers' and principals' efforts regarding their role tasks, schools can maximize their positive outcomes associated with implementation of shared decision making.

Chapter 3

Methods

This chapter presents the methods used to collect and analyze the data needed to answer the research questions developed for this study. The topics included in this chapter are: research design, setting for the study, participants, instruments, variables in the study, research questions, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

Research Design

A nonexperimental descriptive research design, using two previously developed surveys, Customer Focused Education (Pando, 1993) and Shared Decision Making (Pikos, 1992), was used in this study. In addition, a researcher-designed demographic questionnaire was used to collect information on personal and professional characteristics of the teachers in the study. This type of design allowed the researcher to explore differences and relationships between the dependent and independent variables.

Setting for the Study

The setting for this study was the Detroit Public Schools. This school district is the largest in Michigan and has approximately 170,000 students enrolled in the 261 schools from kindergarten through 12th grade. The socioeconomic status of the district ranges from poverty level to very wealthy. In the Detroit Public Schools there are 26 high schools, 72 middle schools, 163 elementary schools in the school district. These schools include both

neighborhood and schools of choice. In addition, there are 5 center-based schools for severely and multiply mentally impaired and 5 high schools that provide career technical training for students. Within the school district, approximately 76% of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch and 198 schools qualify for Title 1 funding.

Ten middle schools are located in Area F. Area F of the Detroit Public Schools is located on the northeast-side of Detroit. It is a low socioeconomic area that has a high crime rate, with drugs and gang activity causing many problems. A single parent heads many families in this area, who may be on public assistance of some type. Nine of the ten middle schools in this area qualify for school-wide section 31A or Title 1 funding.

These schools enroll approximately 7,000 students in 6th through 8th grade, with a total of 548 employees working in these schools. The racial breakdown of the students is primarily American of African descent, with a small percentage of Caucasian and Hmong students. The racial composition of the staffs at these schools was with approximately 60% of Americans of African descent and 40% Caucasians. Table 1 presents the staff and student populations at each of the 10 middle schools in Area F.

Table 1

Description of Staff and Student Population

School	Principals	Asst. Principals	Unit Heads and Counselors	Number of Teachers	Number of Students
A	1	1	3	26	766
B	1	1	4	41	695
C	1	1	4	28	750
D	1	1	3	15	410
E	1	1	4	30	818
F	1	1	4	40	710
G	1	1	4	45	670
H	1	1	4	45	785
I	1	1	2	17	391
J	1	1	4	34	695
Total	10	10	36	321	6,690

Population

The population defined for this study were teachers in middle schools in the Detroit Public Schools. These teachers represented a diverse and unique group of instructional personnel who were responsible for providing educational services to students in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. They included middle school teachers in both academic and nonacademic classes whom were assigned full-time to their buildings in the population. These teachers should have been more involved with shared decision making at the building level and the use of a customer focus in providing educational services than teachers who were assigned to more than one school during the day. Ancillary support staff; such as paraprofessionals, social workers, school psychologists; who were not assigned to a single school building were not included in the population as they represented a different group within the schools and may not have been as

invested in shared decision making or as aware of a customer focus as school-based teachers.

Participants

Approximately 321 teachers were assigned to middle schools in Area F. Teachers assigned to each of the 10 middle schools in Area F were teaching in both academic and nonacademic classes. The teachers had been assigned to their schools on a full-time basis for a minimum of one school year and provided a background on how shared decision making was being conducted in the school and knowledge of the customer focus that they provided to students and parents.

As the number of teachers was finite, a census of the total population was used in this study. Use of a census eliminates sampling bias and minimizes sampling error as each element of the population was included in the study. The limitation of the study imposed by the use of a census was that the results of the study cannot be generalized beyond the defined population.

Instrumentation

Three instruments were used for this study. Two instruments, Customer Focused Education (Pando, 1992) and Perceptions of Shared Decision Making (Pikos, 1993), provided data on the dependent variables. A third instrument, developed specifically for this study, obtained information on the personal and professional characteristics of the sample.

Customer Focus in Education

Pando (1992) developed The Customer Focus in Education survey to obtain information on customer service orientation in public schools. Fifty statements were included on the instrument to measure five dimensions of customer focus in an educational setting. Figure 1 presents the five dimensions of a customer focus, along with the survey items included on each of the dimensions and test-retest reliability for each dimension.

Figure 1

Dimensions of Customer-Focus in Education

Dimensions of Customer-Focus in Education	Items on Subscale	Test/Retest Reliability
Staff Responsiveness to External Customers	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 24, 27, 37	.88
Instructional Systems	13, 14, 20, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 34, 36, 39, 40, 42	.86
Environment - Physical	1, 2, 11, 22, 23, 32, 33, 41, 43	.94
Environment - Affective	38, 44, 48, 49, 50	.77
Communication	35, 45, 46, 47	.67

A 5-point Likert scale with a "1" indicating "strongly disagrees" and "5" indicating "strongly agrees" was used to rate each item. Where the respondent either was unsure of the concept or had "no opinion" on statements, a "3" was provided as a neutral point. Scoring each dimension was accomplished by summing the ratings on each of the included statements to obtain a score for the dimension. The scores on each of the five subscales were used independently, with no total score provided on the instrument.

Reliability. Internal consistency was tested on the total instrument using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The alpha coefficient of .94 obtained for this subscale was considered as evidence of good internal consistency. Test-retest reliability, using Pearson product moment correlations, was obtained for each subscale. The r values used to determine test-retest stability ranged from .67 for customer-focused communication to .94 for customer focused environment - physical. These r values yielded for each of the five subscales provided support that the instrument was able to measure customer focus in schools consistently over time.

Validity. A panel of experts in effective schools and customer focus research was used to determine content validity. These experts reviewed the statements and reached a consensus that the statements measured the customer focus in schools. Support for the construct validity of the instrument was obtained by using a factor analysis on the final version of the instrument. Five factors emerged from the factor analysis explaining a total of 47.0% of the variation in customer focus in education. The eigenvalues for each factor was greater than 1.00 indicating the amount of variation explained by the individual subscales were significant (Pando, 1992).

Shared Decision Making (Pikos, 1993) was developed from a chart developed by Duke, Showers, and Imber (in Pikos, 1993). This chart showed categories of decisions that could be made within a school and jointly involve teachers and administrators.

Respondents were asked to rate each of the 24 listed items twice, once

relating "as it is now" and a second time asking "as it should be." For each rating, teachers used a five-point scale ranging from "1" for "never shared" to "5" for "always shared." Teachers were given a "3" for "do not know" in the instance they were unable to determine if decisions of that type are made at the building level.

Validity. Several superintendents and school principals examined the scale to evaluate the included items as a measure of content validity. These items developed from a review of related research literature were considered representative of the types of decision making that may be used in typical school settings. The superintendents and principals agreed that the instrument had good content validity.

Using a factor analysis on the responses determined construct validity of teachers (Pikos, 1993). Seven subscales emerged from the factor analysis that explained 63.9% of the variation in the construct of shared decisions made by principals and teachers. These subscales included: school policies/rules, instructional materials/curriculum, professional role, scheduling/allocation of resources, hiring personnel, and removing personnel. The amount of variation explained by this instrument was considered sufficient for the scale to have construct validity.

As reported by Pikos (1993), reliability of the instrument has not been determined. Following data collection for this study, internal consistency coefficients were obtained to verify the reliability of this survey.

Variables in the Study

The dependent variables in this study included:

- Perceptions of shared decision making (measured twice: as it is now and as it should be):
  - Specific to building level
  - Specific to area and central office
- Customer-focused Education
  - Staff Responsiveness to External customers
  - Instructional Systems
  - Environment - Physical
  - Environment - Affective
  - Communication

The independent variables in this study included:

- Personal characteristics of the teachers
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Educational Level
- Professional characteristics of the teacher
  - Experience in education
    - In teaching
    - In a school district
    - In school building
  - Area of teaching
    - Academic

- non academic
- Number of students taught during day
- Teaching in area of certification

Research Questions

The following variables were used to address the research questions established for this study:

1. To what extent do middle school teachers agree with the concepts of customer focused education?
2. To what extent do middle school teachers agree with involvement in shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be?"
3. Is there a difference in middle school teachers' perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be" in their schools?
4. Is there a relationship between middle school teachers' perceptions of their involvement in shared decision making process "as it is now" with customer focused education?
5. Is there a relationship between middle school teachers' perceptions of their involvement in shared decision making process "as it should be" with customer focused education?
6. Can middle school teachers' perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be" predicted from their professional demographics including: educational level, length of time in the district, length of time in present school, number of students in their classes, and participation in shared decision making?
7. Is there a difference in perceptions of customer focused education between middle school teachers who indicated more involvement in shared decision making during the past year and middle school teachers who were not involved in this process?
8. Is there a difference in perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be" between middle school teachers who indicated more involvement in shared decision making during the

past year and middle school teachers who were not involved in this process?

Data Collection

Following approval to conduct the study from the Behavior Investigation Committee (BIC) and the Detroit Public Schools, the researcher assembled survey packets for distribution to the middle school teachers in Area F. The survey packet included a copy of the cover letter, copies of all surveys, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The cover letter, developed using the guidelines established by BIC, included the title of the study, purpose and importance of the study, provided assurances of confidentiality, explained the voluntary nature of participation in the study, and instructions for the confidential return of the completed surveys. The researcher distributed the surveys to teachers at each school, who placed a survey packet in their mailboxes. The participants were asked to return their surveys within five working days to the researcher via United States Postal Service.

The surveys were not coded as the researcher did not have teaching lists at each of the 10 schools. Because of this lack of coding, the researcher cannot conduct follow-up with each respondent. Two weeks following the initial distribution of the surveys, the researcher sent a memo to each school to encourage the non responders to complete and return their survey. The memo was placed in the teachers' lounge and/or lunch room as a way to maximize the number of teachers to be reached. A telephone number included in the memo allowed teachers to contact the researcher if they needed a second survey

packet. All data collection was considered completed four weeks following initial distribution of the survey packets.

Data Analysis

Data collected on the surveys was entered using a computer file for analysis - SPSS-Windows, ver. 7.5. The analysis was divided into two sections: descriptive and inferential. The descriptive statistics used frequency distributions and measures of central tendency and dispersion to provide a profile of the respondents. The second section of the survey used inferential statistical analysis to answer the research questions developed for this study. The analyzes included one-sample t-tests, t-tests for two dependent samples, Pearson product moment correlations, and multiple linear regression analyzes. All decisions on the statistical significance of the findings were made using an alpha level of .05. Figure 2 presents the statistical analyzes that was used to answer each of the research questions.

Figure 2

Statistical Analysis

Research Question	Variables	Statistical Analysis
1. To what extent do middle school teachers agree with the concept of customer focused education?	Shared Decision Making • As it is now • As it should be • School policies/rules • Instructional materials/curriculum • Professional Role • Scheduling/allocation of resources • Hiring personnel • Removing personnel	One-sample t-tests were used to determine if middle school teachers are positive regarding their involvement in shared decision making. The criterion for comparison was the neutral point which were calculated by multiplying the number of items on each subscale by the value "3" assigned for a "neutral" point.
2. To what extent do middle school teachers agree with involvement in shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be"?	Shared Decision Making • As it is now • As it should be • School policies/rules • Instructional materials/curriculum • Professional Role • Scheduling/allocation of resources • Hiring personnel • Removing personnel	t-Tests for dependent samples were used to determine if there is a difference in teachers' perceptions of their involvement in shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be."
3. Is there a difference in middle school teachers' perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be" in their schools?	Customer Focused Education • Staff responsiveness to external customers • Instructional systems • Environment - physical • Environment - affective • Communication	One-sample t-tests were used to determine if middle school teachers are positive regarding customer-focus in education. The criterion for comparison was the neutral point which was calculated by multiplying the number of items on each subscale by the value "3" assigned for a "neutral" point.
4. Is there a relationship between the perceptions of middle school teachers in their involvement in the shared decision making process "as it is now"" and with customer focused education?	Customer Focused Education • Staff responsiveness to external customers • Instructional systems • Environment - physical • Environment - affective • Communication Shared Decision Making • As it is now • School policies/rules • Instructional materials/curriculum • Professional Role • Scheduling/allocation of resources • Hiring personnel • Removing personnel	Pearson product moment correlations were used to measure the strength and direction of the relationships between customer focus in education and perceptions of involvement in shared decision making "as it is now."

Research Question	Variables	Statistical Analysis
5. Is there a relationship between middle school teachers' perceptions of their involvement in shared decision making process "as it should be" with customer focused education?	Customer Focused Education • Staff responsiveness to external customers • Instructional systems • Environment - physical • Environment - affective • Communication Shared Decision Making • As it should be • School policies/rules • Instructional materials/curriculum • Professional Role • Scheduling/allocation of resources • Hiring personnel • Removing personnel	Pearson product moment correlations were used to measure the strength and direction of the relationships between customer focus in education and perceptions of involvement in shared decision making "as it should be."
6. Can middle school teachers' perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be" be predicted from their professional demographics including: educational level, length of time in the district, length of time in present school, number of students in their classes, and participation in shared decision making?	Dependent Variables Shared Decision Making • As it is now • As it should be • School policies/rules • Instructional materials/curriculum • Professional Role • Scheduling/allocation of resources • Hiring personnel • Removing personnel Independent Variables Professional demographics • Educational level • Length of time in the district • Length of time in present school • Number of students in classes • Participation in shared decision making	Stepwise multiple linear regression analysis were used to determine if the independent variables can be used to predict the level of involvement in shared decision making "as it is" and "as it should be.
7. Is there a difference in perceptions of customer focused education between middle school teachers who indicated more involvement in shared decision making during the past year and middle school teachers who were not involved in this process?	Dependent Variable Customer Focused Education • Staff responsiveness to external customers • Instructional systems • Environment - physical • Environment - affective • Communication Independent Variable Extent of participation in shared decision making in past year	MANOVA were used to determine if there is a difference in perceptions of customer focused education between middle school teachers who indicate they participated more in shared decision making in the past year and middle school teachers who did not participate in shared decision making. If statistically significant results are obtained on the MANOVA, univariate F tests were examined to determine which areas of customer focused education are contributing to the significance.

Research Question	Variables	Statistical Analysis
8. Is there a difference in perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be" between middle school teachers who indicated more involvement in shared decision making during the past year and middle school teachers who were not involved in this process?	Dependent Variables Shared Decision Making • As it is now • As it should be • School policies/rules • Instructional materials/curriculum • Professional Role • Scheduling/allocation of resources • Hiring personnel • Removing personnel Independent Variable Extent of participation in shared decision making during the past year	MANOVA were used to determine if there is a difference in perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be" between middle school teachers who indicated they participated more in shared decision making in the past year and middle school teachers who did not participate in shared decision making. If statistically significant results are obtained on the MANOVA, univariate F tests were examined to determine which areas of shared decision making are contributing to the significant finding.

Chapter 4

Results of Data Analysis

The results of the statistical analysis used to describe the sample and address the research questions are presented in this chapter. The personal and professional characteristics of the teachers are described using frequency distributions and descriptive statistics. The research questions are answered using inferential statistical analysis.

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between perceptions of customer focused education and shared decision making in middle schools. A total of 321 teachers in 10 middle schools in a single area of the Detroit Public Schools was asked to participate in the study by completing a survey packet. Of this number, 113 completed and returned their surveys for a response rate of 35.2%.

Demographic Characteristics

The teachers in the study were asked to indicate their age on the survey using forced-choice categories. Their responses were summarized using frequency distributions. Table 2 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 2

Age of Teacher

Age of Teacher	Frequency	Percent
25 and under	4	3.5
26 to 35	17	15.0
36 to 45	33	29.2
46 to 55	50	44.2
Over 55	9	8.0
Total	113	100.0

The largest group of teachers (n=50, 44.2%) indicated their ages were between 46 and 55 years of age. Thirty-three (29.2%) teachers were between 36 and 45 years of age, with 4 (3.5%) teachers reporting their ages were 25 and under. Nine (8.0%) teachers were over 55 years of age.

The middle school teachers provided their gender on the survey. Frequency distributions were used to summarize the responses to this question. Table 3 provides the results of this analysis.

Table 3

Gender of Teacher

Gender of Teacher	Frequency	Percent
Male	39	34.5
Female	74	65.5
Total	113	100.0

The majority of the respondents indicated their gender as female (n=74,

65.5%). Thirty-nine (34.5%) middle school teachers reported their gender as female.

The highest level of completed education was included on the demographic survey. The responses to this question were summarized using frequency distributions for presentation in Table 4.

Table 4

Level of Education

Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor's Degree	25	22.1
Master's Degree	76	67.3
Master's Degree + 30 credit hours	7	6.2
Educational Specialist	5	4.4
Total	113	100.0

The majority of the respondents reported their highest degree as master's degree (n=76, 67.3%), with 25 (22.1%) indicating a bachelor's degree was their highest level of education. Seven (6.2%) teachers had completed 30 credit hours beyond a master's degree and 5 (4.4%) had obtained an educational specialist certificate. None of the respondents reported completion of a doctorate degree.

The teachers were asked to indicate the area in which they taught. Their responses were categorized as academic, non academic, or special education. The responses to this question were summarized using frequency distributions. Table 5 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 5

Type of Teacher

Type of Teacher	Frequency	Percent
Academic	85	75.9
Nonacademic	6	5.4
Special Education	15	13.4
Other	6	5.4
Total	112	100.0

Missing 1

The majority of the teachers (n=85, 75.9%) reported they taught in academic areas, with 6 (5.4%) indicating their teaching areas were nonacademic. Fifteen (13.4%) respondents were special education teachers. Six (5.4%) teachers indicated "other" as their area of teaching. Their responses regarding their teaching area included: . . .

One teacher did not provide his/her teaching area on the survey.

The teachers were asked to indicate their professional experience on the survey. Their responses were summarized using descriptive statistics. Table 6 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics
Professional Experiences

Professional Experience	Number	Mean	SD	Median	Range	
					Minimum	Maximum
Years of teaching experience	112	17.51	9.38	17.50	1	37
Years in current school district	112	16.13	9.21	17.00	1	35
Years in present position	112	11.22	8.08	10.50	1	35
Number of children in class	107	140.47	44.20	160.00	12	180

The mean number of years of teaching experience was 17.51 (sd=9.38), with a median of 17.50 years. The range of experience as a teacher for the respondents ranged from 1 to 37 years.

The teachers had been in their current school district for an average of 16.13 (sd=9.21) years. The median number of years in the current school district was 17.00 years with a range from 1 to 35 years.

The range of time in their present position was from 1 to 35 years, with a median of 10.50 years. The mean number of years in their present position was 11.22 (sd=8.08) years.

The teachers representing a variety of teaching specialties reported they had an average of 140.47 (sd=44.20) students in class every day. The median number of students was 160, with numbers ranging from 12 to 180.

The teachers were asked to provide information on the use of shared decision making in their schools. The first question asked if their school used shared decision making. The responses to this question are presented in Table 7.

Table 7

School Uses Shared Decision Making

School Uses Shared Decision Making	Frequency	Percent
Yes	65	57.5
No	48	42.5
Total	113	100.0

The majority of the respondents (n=65, 57.5%) reported their school used shared decision making. The remaining 48 (42.5%) teachers indicated that shared decision making was not being used in their schools.

The teachers were asked if they were involved in shared decision making. Their responses to this question were summarized using frequency distributions. Table 8 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 8

Involved in Shared Decision Making

Involved in Shared Decision Making	Frequency	Percent
Yes	54	47.8
No	59	52.2
Total	113	100.0

Most of the teachers (n=59, 52.2%) reported they were not involved in shared decision making at their schools. Fifty-four (47.8%) teachers indicated they were involved in this process.

The teachers were asked if they were more involved in shared decision

making than they were a year ago. Their responses were summarized using frequency distributions for presentation in Table 9.

Table 9

More Involved in Shared Decision Making than One Year Ago

More Involved in Shared Decision Making than One Year Ago	Frequency	Percent
Yes	44	38.9
No	69	61.1
Total	113	100.0

The majority of the teachers (n=69, 61.1%) indicated they were not more involved in shared decision making than they were one year ago. Forty-four (38.9%) respondents reported being more involved in shared decision making at the time of the study than one year previously.

The teachers were asked to indicate the types of committees they were on at their schools and if these committees were part of the shared decision making used in their schools. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 10.

Table 10

Crosstabulation
Committees and Involvement in Shared Decision Making

Type of Committee	Shared Decision Making				Total	
	Yes		No			
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
School Improvement	27	35.5	2	4.8	29	24.6
Eighth Grade Graduation	2	2.6	1	2.4	3	2.5
Honor Society	3	3.9	4	9.5	7	5.9
School Staff Development	3	3.9	1	2.4	4	3.4
Union Committee	8	10.5	2	4.8	10	8.5
Curriculum	5	6.6	1	2.4	6	5.1
Technology	5	6.6	0	0.0	5	4.2
School-to-work	2	2.6	20	47.6	22	18.6
School Fund	0	0.0	2	4.8	2	1.7
Safe Schools	2	2.6	1	2.4	3	2.5
Staff Morale/Social	1	1.3	2	4.8	3	2.5
Career Week	1	1.3	0	0.0	1	0.8
Special Projects	0	0.0	2	4.8	2	1.7
LSCO	1	1.3	0	0.0	1	0.8
Teaching Teams	3	3.9	0	0.0	3	2.5
IEP	1	1.3	0	0.0	1	0.8
Title 1	3	3.9	1	2.4	4	3.4
Budget	2	2.6	1	2.4	3	2.5
Retirement	5	6.6	1	2.4	6	5.1
Spelling Bee	0	0.0	1	2.4	1	0.8
School Activities	1	1.3	0	0.0	1	0.8
Discipline	1	1.3	0	0.0	1	0.8
Total	76	100.0	42	100.0	118	100.0

No Committee Memberships 62

The results of this analysis provided evidence that many of the middle school teachers (n=62) did not participate on committees at their schools. Of

those who did participate, many teachers were on several committees. The committees most likely to involve shared decision making included school improvement, union committee, retirement, curriculum, and technology. The committees that did not involve shared decision making included school-to-work and honor society.

Description of the Dependent Variables

The scores four variables measuring involvement in shared decision making; curriculum decisions, organizational decisions, administrative decisions, and personnel decisions; were summarized using descriptive statistics. The possible scores are presented for each subscale, with a neutral point provided to determine the change from positive attitudes to negative attitudes regarding a topic. The neutral point is developed by multiplying the number of items on each subscale by "3," the numeric value assigned to a neutral response (don't know). For example, if there were 6 items included on a subscale, the neutral point would be 18 (6 X 3). The results of this analysis are presented in Table 11.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics
Involvement in Shared Decisions

Involvement In Shared Decisions	Number	Mean	SD	Median	Range	
					Minimum	Maximum
Curriculum Decisions						
As it is now	110	26.32	9.45	27.00	9	45
As it should be	110	39.82	5.11	40.00	21	45
Organizational Decisions						
As it is now	111	16.11	6.92	15.00	6	30
As it should be	110	25.44	4.70	26.00	7	30
Administrative Decisions						
As it is now	111	15.00	6.65	14.00	9	30
As it should be	111	24.80	5.15	25.00	9	30
Personnel Decisions						
As it is now	112	6.37	3.35	6.00	3	15
As it should be	112	11.34	3.31	12.00	3	15

Curriculum Decisions - As it is now. The mean score for the middle school teachers on curriculum decisions - as it is now was 26.32 (sd=9.45), with a median of 27. Actual scores on this subscale ranged from 1 to 45. Possible scores on this subscale that included 9 items was from 9 to 45 with a neutral point of 27. Scores greater than 27 was indicative of a positive attitude regarding their involvement in decisions regarding curriculum, with scores less than 27 indicating a negative attitude on this subscale.

Curriculum Decisions - As it should be. The mean score for curriculum decisions as it should be was 39.82 (sd=6.92), with a median of 40.00. The range of actual scores on this subscale was from 21 to 45. Possible scores on this subscale could range from 9 to 45, with a neutral point of 27. Scores greater than 27 reflected a positive attitude regarding their desire to participate in these types of decisions, while scores less than 27 indicated a negative attitude

regarding how they would like to see involvement in curriculum decisions.

Organizational Decisions – At it is now. The mean score on the subscale, organizational decisions – as it is now, was 16.11 (sd=6.92). The median score on this subscale was 15, with actual scores ranging from 6 to 30. Possible scores on this six item subscale could have ranged from 6 to 30 with a neutral point of 18. Scores less than 18 reflected negative attitudes regarding participation in organizational decisions as it is in their schools. Scores greater than 18 indicated a positive attitude regarding their current participation in organizational decisions.

Organizational Decisions – As it should be. The range of actual scores on the subscale measuring involvement in organizational decisions as it should be in their schools was from 7 to 30, with a median score of 28. The mean score on this subscale was 25.65 (sd=4.49). Possible scores on this subscale could range from 6 to 30, with a neutral point of 18. Scores greater than 18 were indicative of positive perceptions of how organizational decisions should be made in their schools, with scores less than 18 implying a negative attitude regarding how organizational decisions should be made.

Administrative Decisions – As it is now. The mean score on this subscale measuring administrative decisions as it is currently in their schools was 15.00 (sd=6.65), with a median of 14. The actual scores on this subscale ranged from 6 to 30. The range of possible scores on this subscale consisting of 6 items was from 6 to 30 with a neutral point of 18. Scores less than 18 were reflective of negative attitudes regarding administrative decision making as it was currently in

their schools. Scores greater than 18 indicated positive perceptions regarding involvement in administrative decisions in the schools.

Administrative Decisions – As it should be. The actual scores on how middle school teachers would like to be involved in administrative decisions ranged from 6 to 30, with a median of 25.00. The mean score on this subscale was 24.80 (sd=5.15). Possible scores on this subscale ranged from 6 to 30, with a neutral point of 18. Scores greater than 18 indicated a positive attitude regarding how teachers would like to be included in administrative decisions. Scores less than 18 reflected a negative attitude regarding how teachers would like to be included in these types of decisions.

Personnel Decisions – As it is now A mean score of 6.37 (sd=3.35) was obtained on the subscale measuring personnel decisions as it was at the time of the study. The range of actual scores on this subscale was from 3 to 15, with a median score of 6. Three items were included on this subscale. The range of possible scores on this subscale was from 3 to 15 with a neutral point of 9. Scores less than 9 indicated negative attitudes regarding current participation in personnel decisions, with scores greater than 9 reflecting positive attitudes on this subscale.

Personnel Decisions – As it should be. The mean score for middle school teachers on current participation in personnel decisions was 11.34 (sd=3.31), with a median of 12. The actual range of scores on this subscale was from 3 to 15. Possible scores on this subscale could range from 3 to 15, with a neutral point of 9. Scores greater than 9 were indicative of a positive attitude regarding

how the teachers believed they should be involved in personnel decisions, while scores less than 9 implied a negative attitude on this subscale.

Customer focus in education was measured using a scale developed by Pando (1993) measure staff perceptions of their customer focus relating to their external customers. The summed scores for each of the five subscales from this instrument were summarized using descriptive statistics. The results of this analysis is presented in Table 12.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics
Involvement in Shared Decisions

Involvement In Shared Decisions	Number	Mean	SD	Median	Range	
					Minimum	Maximum
Staff Responsiveness to External Customers	113	71.79	11.08	73	38	90
Instructional Systems	113	53.94	9.50	55	30	70
Environment - Physical	113	33.05	8.31	35	10	45
Environment - Affective	113	20.06	3.33	20	10	25
Communication	113	13.12	3.33	13	4	20

Staff responsiveness to external customers. The mean score on this subscale was 71.79 (sd=11.08), with a median of 73. Actual score on this subscale ranged from 38 to 90. Possible scores on this subscale with 18 items could range from 18 to 90 with a neutral point of 54. Scores greater than 54 were indicative of positive perceptions of staff responsiveness to external customers, with scores less than 54 indicating negative attitudes regarding staff

responsiveness.

Instructional Systems. The mean score on instructional systems was 53.94 (sd=8.31). Actual scores ranged from 30 to 70, with a median of 55. Possible scores on this subscale which included 14 items could range from 14 to 70, with a neutral point of 42. Scores greater than 42 indicated positive attitudes regarding instructional systems, while scores less than 42 implied negative attitudes on this subscale.

Environment - Physical. The range of scores on this subscale were from 10 to 45, with a median of 35. The mean score on this subscale was 33.05 (sd=8.31). Possible scores on this subscale with 9 items could range from 9 to 45, with a median of 27. Scores greater than 27 were indicative of positive attitudes regarding environment - physical, and scores less than 27 provided evidence of negative attitudes regarding this subscale.

Environment - Affective. The mean score on this subscale was 20.06 (sd=3.33), with a median of 20. Actual scores on this subscale ranged from 10 to 25. Five items were included on this subscale, with possible scores ranging from 5 to 25. The neutral point on this subscale was 15. Scores greater than 15 indicated a positive attitude regarding environment - affective, while scores less than 15 reflected a negative attitude on this subscale.

Communication. The range of actual scores on communication was from 4 to 20, with a median of 13. The mean score on this subscale was 13.12 (sd=3.33). Possible scores on this subscale containing 4 items could range from 4 to 20, with a neutral point of 12. Scores greater than 12 implied positive

perceptions regarding communication as a measure of customer focus, while scores less than 12 indicated positive attitudes regarding this measure.

Research Questions

Eight research questions were developed for this study. Each of these questions was answered using inferential statistical analyses, with an alpha level of .05 used for all decisions on the significance of the findings.

Research question 1: To what extent do middle school teachers agree with the concepts of customer-focused education?

To test the extent to which middle school teachers agree with the concepts of customer-focused education, one-sample t-tests were used. The summed scores on each of the five subscales measuring customer-focus in education were compared with the neutral points on each of the subscales. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 13.

Table 13

t-Test for One Sample
Customer Focus - External

Involvement In Shared Decisions	Number	Mean	SD	Neutral Point	t-Value	Sig of t
Staff Responsiveness to External Customers	113	71.79	11.08	54	17.06	*
Instructional Systems	113	53.94	9.50	42	13.36	*
Environment - Physical	113	33.05	8.31	27	7.74	*
Environment - Affective	113	20.06	3.33	15	16.16	*
Communication	113	13.12	3.33	12	3.55	*

*p<.05

Staff Responsiveness to External Customers. The obtained t-value of

17.06 comparing the summed scores on staff responsiveness to external customers to the neutral point for this scale was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 112 degrees of freedom. This finding showed that middle school teachers were in agreement with staff responsiveness to external customers as a measure of customer-focus in education.

Instructional systems. When the summed scores on instructional systems were compared to the neutral point using a t-test for one sample, the resultant t-value of 13.36 was statistically significant at alpha level of .05 with 112 degrees of freedom. This result provided evidence that middle school teachers were in agreement regarding instructional systems as a measure of customer-focus in education.

Environment - Physical. The summed scores on the physical environment were compared to the neutral point on this subscale. The obtained t-value of 7.74 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 112 degrees of freedom. This result indicated that middle school teachers were in agreement regarding the physical environment as a measure of customer-focus in education.

Environment - Affective. When the summed scores on the affective environment were compared to the neutral point using a t-test for one sample, the resultant t-value of 16.16 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 112 degrees of freedom. This finding indicated that middle school teachers were positive about the affective environment as a measure of customer-focus in education.

Communication. The comparison of the summed scores on communication with the neutral point on communication yielded a t-value of 3.55, which was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 112 degrees of freedom. This result indicated that middle school teachers were in agreement regarding communication as a measure of customer-focus in education.

The summed scores on each of the five subscales measuring components of customer-focus in education were statistically significant in a positive direction. These findings indicated that middle school teachers were in agreement on the use of customer-focus when dealing with external customers.

Research question 2. To what extent do middle school teachers agree with involvement in shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be?"

The summed scores on each of the four measures of shared decision making were compared to their neutral points to determine the extent to which middle school teachers were in agreement with their involvement in shared decision making using t-tests for one sample. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 14.

Table 14

t-Test for One Sample
Involvement in Shared Decisions

Involvement In Shared Decisions	Number	Mean	SD	Neutral Point	t-Value	Sig of t
Curriculum Decisions						
As it is now	110	26.32	9.45	27	-1.04	NS
As it should be	110	39.82	5.11	27	22.71	*
Organizational Decisions						
As it is now	111	16.11	6.92	18	-3.18	*
As it should be	110	25.44	4.70	18	16.82	*
Administrative Decisions						
As it is now	111	15.00	6.65	18	-4.98	*
As it should be	111	24.80	5.15	18	12.85	*
Personnel Decisions						
As it is now	112	6.37	3.35	9	-8.46	*
As it should be	112	11.34	3.31	9	7.26	*

Curriculum decisions. The comparison of the summed scores with the neutral point on curriculum decisions - as it is now produced a t-value of -1.04, which was not statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 109 degrees of freedom. Based on this finding, middle school teachers did not appear to differ in their perceptions of curriculum decisions - as it is now in their schools.

When the summed scores on curriculum decisions - as it should be were compared with the neutral point, the resultant t-value of 22.71 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 109 degrees of freedom. Based on this finding, middle school teachers appeared to be more positive about how involved they should be in curriculum decisions.

Organizational decisions. The summed scores on current involvement in organizational decision making were compared with the neutral point using t-tests for one sample. The t-value of -3.18 obtained on this analysis was

statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 110 degrees of freedom. The negative value of this finding showed that teachers were significantly below the neutral point regarding their participation in organizational decision making.

The comparison of the summed scores on organizational decisions - as it should be with the neutral point on this subscale produced a t-value of 16.82 which was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 109 degrees of freedom. Based on this finding, middle school teachers wanted more involvement in organizational decision making.

Administrative decisions. A t-test for one sample was used to compare the summed scores on current involvement in administrative decisions. The obtained t-value of -4.98 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 110 degrees of freedom. This finding provided evidence that middle school teachers were not as involved in administrative decision making.

When the summed scores on desired involvement in administrative decision making were compared with the neutral point, the obtained t-value of 12.85 was statistically significant at an alpha level of. 05 with 110 degrees of freedom. The results of this analysis showed that middle school teachers wanted to be involved in administrative decision making.

Personnel Decisions. The comparison of the summed scores to the neutral point on this subscale produced a t-value of -8.46 which was not statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 111 degrees of freedom. This result indicated that middle school teachers did not feel they were involved in personnel decision making.

The obtained t-value of 7.26 on the comparison of desired involvement in

personnel decisions with the neutral point was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 111 degrees of freedom. This finding showed that middle school teachers wanted significantly more involvement in shared decision making in the area of personnel.

Middle school teachers appeared to feel they currently were not involved in shared decision making in areas of curriculum, organization, administrative, and personnel. Their responses regarding how they would like to be involved provided evidence that they wanted greater involvement in these types of decision making situations.

> *Research question 3.* Is there a difference in middle school teachers' perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be" in their schools?

To answer this question, t-tests for dependent samples were used to compare middle school teachers' perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be." The results of these analyses are presented in Table 15.

Table 15

t-Tests for Dependent Samples
Involvement in Shared Decisions "As it Is Now" and "As It Should Be"

Involvement In Shared Decisions	Number	Mean	SD	t-Value	Sig of t
Curriculum Decisions					
As it is now	110	26.32	9.45	13.75	*
As it should be	110	39.82	5.11		
Organizational Decisions					
As it is now	111	16.11	6.92	13.57	*
As it should be	110	25.44	4.70		
Administrative Decisions					
As it is now	111	15.00	6.65	12.89	*
As it should be	111	24.80	5.15		
Personnel Decisions					
As it is now	112	6.37	3.35	13.13	*
As it should be	112	11.34	3.31		

Curriculum Decisions. The obtained t-value of 13.75 for the comparison of curriculum decisions as it is now and as it should be was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 112 degrees of freedom. This result provided evidence that middle school teachers had higher scores for as it should be (m=39.47, sd=5.84) than as it is now (m=26.05, sd=9.72), indicating they want more involvement in curriculum decisions.

Organizational Decisions. When the scores for organizational decisions as it is now (m=15.89, sd=7.06) were compared to scores on this subscale (m=25.44, sd=4.70), the resultant t-value of 13.57 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 112 degrees of freedom. Based on this finding, it appeared that middle school teachers wanted greater involvement in shared decision making involving organizational decisions.

Administrative Decisions. A comparison of perceptions of involvement in administrative decisions between as it is now (m=14.86, sd=6.71) in the schools

and as middle school teachers would like it to be (m=24.58, sd=5.45) yielded a t-value of 12.89 which was statistically significant at an alpha level of.05 with 112 degrees of freedom. These findings indicated that middle school teachers wanted greater involvement in administrative decisions in their schools.

Personnel Decisions. When the summed scores on personnel decisions as it is now (m=6.33, sd=3.36) were compared to the scores on as it should be (m=11.28, sd=3.34) using a t-test for dependent samples, the obtained t-value of 13.13 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 112 degrees of freedom. According to these findings, the middle school teachers appeared to want more involvement in personnel decisions than they currently were.

> *Research question 4*. Is there a relationship between middle school teachers' perceptions of their involvement in shared decision making process "as it is now" with customer focused education?

The five subscales measuring customer focus in education were used as the dependent variables in stepwise regression analyses, with perceptions of current involvement in the four types of decisions; curriculum, organizational, administrative, and personnel; used as the independent variables. The results of the first analysis using staff responsiveness to external customers as the dependent variable is presented in Table 16.

Table 16

Stepwise Multiple Regression -
Staff Responsiveness to External Customers

Predictor Variable	Constant	b Weight	Beta	r^2	t-Value
Curriculum Decisions - As it is now	58.69	.50	.44	.19	5.18*
Multiple R					.44
R^2					.19
F Ratio					26.79*
Degrees of Freedom					1/111

*$p \leq .05$

Staff Responsiveness to External Customers. Involvement in one type of decision, curriculum decisions, entered the stepwise regression analysis, explaining 19% of the variability in staff responsiveness to external customers. The associated F ratio of 26.79 was statistically significant indicating the amount of variance in staff responsiveness to external customers explained by current involvement in curriculum decisions was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 111 degrees of freedom. The teachers' perceptions of current involvement in shared decision making including organizational, administrative, and personnel decisions were not statistically significant predictors of staff responsiveness to external customers.

Instructional Systems. The dependent variable, instructional systems, as a measure of customer focus in middle schools was used in a stepwise regression analysis. The independent variables in this analysis were teachers' perceptions of their involvement in the four types of shared decisions. Table 17 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 17

Stepwise Multiple Regression - Instructional Systems

Predictor Variable	Constant	b Weight	Beta	r^2	t-Value
Curriculum Decisions - As it is now	41.72	.47	.48	.23	5.76*
Multiple R					.48
R^2					.23
F Ratio					33.17*
Degrees of Freedom					1/111

*$p \leq .05$

Involvement in curriculum decisions, as it is now, entered the stepwise regression analysis explaining 23% of the variance in instructional systems as a measure of customer focus in education. The F ratio of 33.17 for this analysis was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 111 degrees of freedom indicated that the amount of variance in instructional systems that was explained by current involvement in curriculum decisions was statistically significant. The remaining three types of decisions, organizational, administrative, and personnel, did not enter the regression equation indicating they were not significant predictors of instructional systems as a measure of customer focus in education.

Environment - Physical. A stepwise linear regression was used to determine which of the four types of shared decisions; curriculum, organizational, administrative, and personnel; could predict perceptions of the physical environment as a measure of customer focus in education. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 18.

Table 18

Stepwise Multiple Regression - Environment - Physical

Predictor Variable	Constant	b Weight	Beta	r^2	t-Value
Curriculum Decisions - As it is now	21.62	..44	.51	.26	6.30*
Multiple R					.51
R^2					.26
F Ratio					39.64*
Degrees of Freedom					1/111

*p≤.05

Current involvement in curriculum decisions entered the stepwise regression equation explaining 26% of the variance in physical environment as a measure of customer focus in education. The associated F ratio of 39.64 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 111 degrees of freedom, indicating current involvement in curriculum decisions was a significant predictor of perceptions of the physical environment as a measure of customer focus. Current involvement in organizational, administrative, and personnel decisions did not enter the regression equation indicating they were not significant predictors of physical environment as a measure of customer focus.

Environment - Affect. The scores on the affective environment as a measure of customer focus in education were used as the dependent variable in a stepwise linear regression analysis. The perceptions of teachers on current involvement in curriculum, organizational, administrative, and personnel decisions were used as the independent variables in this analysis. Table 19 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 19

Stepwise Multiple Regression -
Environment - Affective

Predictor Variable	Constant	b Weight	Beta	r^2	t-Value
Curriculum Decisions - As it is now	16.14	.15	.44	.19	5.15*
Multiple R					.44
R^2					.19
F Ratio					26.52*
Degrees of Freedom					1/111

*p≤.05

Current involvement in curriculum decisions entered the stepwise regression equation, explaining 19% of the variability in the affective environment as a measure of customer focus in education. The F ratio of 26.52 obtained for this analysis was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 111 degrees of freedom. This finding provided evidence that current involvement in curriculum decisions at the middle school level could be used as a predictor of the affective environment as a measure of customer focus. Current involvement in organizational, administrative, and personnel decisions did not enter the regression equation indicating these variables were not significant predictors of the affective environment as a measure of customer focus.

Communication. Current involvement in four types of decisions; curriculum, organizational, administrative, and personnel; were used as the independent variables in a stepwise multiple regression. Scores on communication as a measure of customer focus. The findings of this analysis are presented in Table 20.

Table 20

Stepwise Multiple Regression
Communication

Predictor Variable	Constant	b Weight	Beta	r^2	t-Value
Organizational Decision - As it is now	14.57	-.22	-.47	.06	-3.77*
Personnel Decisions - As it is now		.32	.32	.06	2.63*
Multiple R					.34
R^2					.12
F Ratio					7.12*
Degrees of Freedom					2/110

*$p \leq .05$

Two of the four types of decisions, current involvement in organizational decisions and personnel decisions, entered the regression equation, explaining a statistically significant perception in the middle school teachers' perception of customer focus

Current involvement in organizational decisions explained 6% of the variance in communication. The associated t-value of -3.77 indicated the amount of variance in communication that was explained by current involvement in organizational decisions was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05. The negative relationship between these two variables indicated that decreased involvement in organizational decisions was associated with increased scores on communication as a measure of customer focus.

Current involvement in personnel decisions accounted for an additional 6% of the variability in communication as a measure of customer focus. The t-value of 2.63 obtained for this independent variable was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 indicating that current involvement in curriculum decisions was a significant predictor of communication.

The beta weights were compared for current involvement in organizational

decisions and personnel decisions to determine which was a stronger predictor of communication as a measure of customer focus. Current involvement in organizational decisions (β=-.47) was a stronger predictor of communication than personnel decisions (β=.32). Current involvement in curriculum and administrative decisions did not enter the equation indicating these variables were not significant predictors of communication as a measure of customer focus.

Based on the findings of these stepwise linear regression analyses, it appears that current involvement in curriculum decisions could be used to predict higher scores on staff responsiveness to external customers, instructional systems, environment - physical, and environment - affective. Communication as a measure of customer focus could be predicted by lower scores on organizational decisions and higher scores on personnel decisions

Research question 5. Is there a relationship between middle school teachers' perceptions of their involvement in shared decision making process "as it should be" with customer focused education?

The four subscales measuring middle school teachers' perceptions of their involvement in shared decision making process "as it should be" were used as the independent variables in a stepwise multiple regression analysis. Each of the five subscales measuring customer focus in education were used as the dependent variables in separate analyses.

Staff Responsiveness to External Customers. Table 21 presents the results of the stepwise multiple regression analysis using staff responsiveness to

external customers.

Table 21

Stepwise Multiple Regression
Staff Responsiveness to External Customers

Predictor Variable	Constant	b Weight	Beta	r^2	t-Value
Curriculum Decisions - As it should be	54.26	.44	.23	.06	2.54*
Multiple R					.23
R^2					.06
F Ratio					6.43*
Degrees of Freedom					1/111

*$p \leq .05$

One independent variable, curriculum decisions – as it should be, entered the regression equation, explaining 6% of the variance in staff responsiveness to external customers. The associated F ratio of 6.43 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05, indicating the amount of variance in staff responsiveness to external customers explained by curriculum decisions – as it should be was statistically significant. The remaining subscales; administrative decisions, organizational decisions, and personnel decisions as it should be; did not enter the regression equation indicating they were not significant predictors of staff responsiveness to external customers.

Instructional Systems. The summed scores on instructional systems were used as the dependent variable in a stepwise linear regression. The four measures of shared decision making as the teachers perceived they should be were used as the independent variable. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 22.

Table 22

Stepwise Multiple Regression
Instructional Systems

Predictor Variable	Constant	b Weight	Beta	r^2	t-Value
Curriculum Decisions - As it should be	37.61	.41	.22	.05	2.35*
Multiple R					.22
R^2					.05
F Ratio					5.51*
Degrees of Freedom					1/111

*$p \leq .05$

Five percent of the variance in instructional systems was explained by curriculum decisions – as it should be. The associated t-value of 2.35 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05, indicating the amount of variance in instructional systems explained by curriculum decisions – as it should be was significant. The remaining subscales; administrative decisions, organizational decisions, and personnel decisions as it should be; did not enter the regression equation indicating they were not significant predictors of instructional systems as a measure of customer focus in education.

Environment - Physical . A stepwise linear regression analysis was used to determine which of the four types of shared decision making in which teachers perceived they should be included could be used to predict the physical environment as a measure of customer focus in education. Table 23 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 23

Stepwise Multiple Regression
Environment Physical

Predictor Variable	Constant	b Weight	Beta	r^2	t-Value
Curriculum Decisions - As it should be	19.65	.34	.24	.06	2.59*
Multiple R					.24
R^2					.06
F Ratio					6.67*
Degrees of Freedom					1/111

*p≤.05

Curriculum decisions - as it should be explained 6% of the variance in the physical environment. The associated t-value of 2.59 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05. This finding showed that teachers who wanted to be involved in curriculum decisions were more likely to have more positive perceptions of the physical environment. The remaining subscales; administrative decisions, organizational decisions, and personnel decisions as it should be; did not enter the regression equation indicating they were not significant predictors of the physical environment as a measure of customer focus in education.

Environment - affective. The summed scores on the affective environment measure of customer focus in education was used as the dependent variable, with the four subscales measuring involvement in shared decision making as it should be used as the independent variables. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 24.

Table 24

Stepwise Multiple Regression
Environment Affective

Predictor Variable	Constant	b Weight	Beta	r^2	t-Value
Curriculum Decisions - As it should be	12.82	.20	.30	.09	3.26*
Multiple R					.30
R^2					.09
F Ratio					10.62*
Degrees of Freedom					1/111

*p≤.05

Nine percent of the variance in the affective environment as a measure of customer focus in education was explained by curriculum decisions – as it should be. The associated t-value of 3.26 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 indicating the amount of variance in the affective environment explained by curriculum decisions – as it is now was significant. The remaining types of inclusion in shared decision making; administrative decisions, organizational decisions, and personnel decisions; did not enter the regression equation indicating they were not significant predictors of the affective environment as a measure of customer focus.

Communication. Scores on the four types of shared decisions; curriculum decisions, administrative decisions, organizational decisions, and personnel decisions; were used as the independent variables in a stepwise linear regression analysis. The summed scores on communication as a measure of customer focus in education was used as the dependent variable. The results of this analysis is presented in Table 25.

Table 25

Stepwise Multiple Regression
Communication

Predictor Variable	Constant	b Weight	Beta	r^2	t-Value
Personnel decisions - As it should be	9.99	.28	.28	.08	3.05*
Multiple R					.28
R^2					.07
F Ratio					9.30*
Degrees of Freedom					1/111

*p≤.05

Eight percent of the variance in communication as a measure of customer focus was explained by teachers' perceptions of involvement in personnel decisions – as it should be. The associated t-value of 3.05 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 indicating the amount of variance in scores on communication that were explained by personnel decisions – as it should be was significant. The remaining types of decision involvement; curriculum decisions, administrative decisions, and organizational decisions; did not enter the equation indicating they were not significant predictors of communication.

The findings on these analyses indicated that for staff responsiveness to external customers, instructional systems, physical environment, and affective environment could be predicted from perceptions of involvement in curriculum decisions as it should be. Perceptions of involvement in personnel decisions – as it should be were found to be a significant predictor of communication as a measure of customer focus in education.

Research question 6. Can middle school teachers' perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be" be predicted from their professional demographics including: educational level, length of time in the district, length of time in

present school, number of students in their classes, and participation in shared decision making?

The summed scores on the four areas of shared decision making; curriculum decisions, organizational decisions, administrative decisions, and personnel decisions; were used a dependent variables in separate stepwise multiple linear regression analyses. The teachers' level of education, years of teaching experience, years in present school district, years in present position, number of students, and school's use of shared decision making were used as independent variables. School's use of shared decision making was a dichotomous nominal variable that was dummy coded with a 0 indicating involvement in shared decision making and a 1 indicating no involvement in shared decision making. The analyses are presented by shared decision area.

Curriculum decisions – as it is now. The results of the stepwise multiple regression analysis using perceptions of involvement in curriculum decisions as it is now as the dependent variable is presented in Table 26.

Table 26

Stepwise Multiple Regression
Curriculum Decisions – As It Is Now

Predictor Variable	Constant	b Weight	Beta	r^2	t-Value
School Uses Shared Decision Making	42.83	-8.07	-.43	.18	-4.89*
Number of students		-.04	-.18	.03	-2.04*
Multiple R					.46
R^2					.21
F Ratio					13.77*
Degrees of Freedom					2/104

*$p \leq .05$

Two variables, school uses shared decision making and number of students entered the stepwise linear regression analysis, accounting for 21% of

the variance in perceptions of curriculum decisions – as it is now. The associated F ratio of 13.72 was statistically significant indicating the amount of variance in perceptions of curriculum decisions - as it is now that was explained by the two independent variables was significant. The first variable that entered the equation was school uses shared decision making explained 18% of the variance in perceptions of participation in curriculum decisions. The t-value of -4.89 was statistically significant indicating the amount of variance in perceptions of participation in curriculum decisions - as it is now was significant. The number of students explained an additional 3% of the variance in the dependent variable. The associated t-value of -2.04 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05. The negative value of the results indicated that teachers whose schools used shared decision making had significantly higher scores on their involvement in curriculum decisions - as it is now and teachers with smaller number of students were more likely to be involved in curriculum decision making. The remaining variables; level of education, number of years of teaching experience, years in current school district, and number of years in present position did not enter the equation indicating these variables were not significant predictors of perceived involvement in curriculum decisions - as it is now.

Organizational Decisions – As It Is Now. The results of the stepwise multiple linear regression analysis using perceptions of organizational decisions - as it is now as the dependent variable is presented in Table 27.

Table 27

Stepwise Multiple Regression
Organizational Decisions – As It Is Now

Predictor Variable	Constant	b Weight	Beta	r^2	t-Value
School Uses Shared Decision Making	21.88	-4.28	-.31	.09	-3.29*
Multiple R					.31
R^2					.09
F Ratio					10.85*
Degrees of Freedom					1/105

*p≤.05

One variable, school uses shared decision making, entered the stepwise linear regression equation. This variable explained 9% of the variance in perceptions of inclusion in organizational decisions - as it is now. The associated F ratio of 10.85 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 105 degrees of freedom. The negative relationship between perceptions of inclusion in organizational decisions indicated that teachers who were in schools that used shared decision making were more likely to indicate they were currently involved in organizational decision making. The remaining independent variables; level of education, number of years in teaching, number of years in present school district, number of years in present position, and number of students did not enter the equation indicating these variables were not significant predictors of inclusion in organizational decisions - as it is now.

Administrative Decisions – As It Is Now. The results of the stepwise multiple linear regression analysis that was used to determine significant predictors of perceptions of inclusion in administrative decisions - as it is now is presented in Table 28.

Table 28

Stepwise Multiple Regression
Administrative Decisions – As It Is Now

Predictor Variable	Constant	b Weight	Beta	r^2	t-Value
School Uses Shared Decision Making	21.26	-4.49	-.34	.11	-3.66*
Multiple R					.34
R^2					.11
F Ratio					13.40*
Degrees of Freedom					1/105

*$p \leq .05$

The results of the stepwise multiple linear regression analysis produced one significant predictor of perceptions of inclusion in administrative decisions - as it is now. This variable, school uses shared decision making, explained 11% of the variance in perceptions of current inclusion in administrative decision making. The F ratio of 13.40 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 105 degrees of freedom indicating the amount of variance in current inclusion in administrative decision making was statistically significant. The negative relationship between these two variables indicated that teachers in schools that used shared decision making were more likely to be involved in administrative decision making than teachers in schools that did not use shared decision making.

Personnel Decisions – As It Is Now. The results of the linear stepwise multiple regression using perceptions of involvement in personnel decisions – as it is now are presented in Table 29.

Table 29

Stepwise Multiple Regression
Personnel Decisions – As It Is Now

Predictor Variable	Constant	b Weight	Beta	r^2	t-Value
School Uses Shared Decision Making	8.39	-1.49	-.23	.05	-2.37*
Multiple R					.23
R^2					.05
F Ratio					5.62*
Degrees of Freedom					1/105

*$p \leq .05$

One independent variable, school uses shared decision making, entered the stepwise multiple linear regression analysis, explaining 5% of the variance in perceptions of inclusion in personnel decisions. The associated F ratio of 5.62 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 105 degrees of freedom. The negative value of the relationship between the two variables indicated that teachers in school that used shared decision making were more likely to be included in personnel decisions than teachers who were in schools that did not use shared decision making. The remaining independent variables did not enter the equation indicating they were not significant predictors of perceptions of current inclusion in personnel decisions.

Curriculum Decisions – As It Should Be. The stepwise multiple linear regression analysis that used perceptions of curriculum decisions – as it should be in the schools as the dependent variable is presented in Table 30.

Table 30

Stepwise Multiple Regression
Curriculum Decisions – As It Should Be

Predictor Variable	Constant	b Weight	Beta	r^2	t-Value
School Uses Shared Decision Making	43.96	-2.89	-.28	.08	-2.98*
Multiple R					.28
R^2					.08
F Ratio					8.87*
Degrees of Freedom					1/105

*$p \leq .05$

One variable, school uses shared decision making, entered the stepwise multiple linear regression analysis. This variable explained 8% of the variance in perceptions of inclusion in curriculum decisions - as it should be. The F ratio obtained for this analysis was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 105 degrees of freedom. The negative value of the relationship between the two variables indicated that teachers who were in schools that used shared decision making were more likely to want to be involved in curriculum decisions than teachers in schools that did not use shared decision making. The remaining independent variables; level of education, years of teaching experience, years in present school district, years in present position, and number of students; did not enter the equation indicating these variables were not significant predictors of perceptions of how teachers should be included in curriculum decisions.

Organizational Decisions – As It Should Be. The results of the stepwise multiple linear regression analysis indicated that none of the independent variables; level of education, years as a teacher, years in present school district, years in present position, number of students, and school's use of shared decision making entered the regression equation.. Based on the lack of

significant results, these independent variables do not appear to be significant predictors of perceptions of how teachers wanted to be involved in organizational decisions.

Administrative Decisions – As It Should Be. None of the independent variables; level of education, years as a teacher, years in present school district, years in present position, number of students, and school's use of shared decision making; entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation. Based on the lack of significant results, these independent variables do not appear to be significant predictors of perceptions of how teachers wanted to be involved in administrative decisions.

Personnel Decisions – As It Is Now. The results of the stepwise multiple linear regression analysis using perceptions of inclusion in personnel decisions – as it should be are presented in Table 31.

Table 31

Stepwise Multiple Regression
Personnel Decisions – As It Should Be

Predictor Variable	Constant	b Weight	Beta	r^2	t-Value
Years in Present Position	10.41	.08	.19	.04	2.01*
Multiple R					.19
R^2					.04
F Ratio					4.05*
Degrees of Freedom					1/105

*$p \leq .05$

One variable, years in present position, entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation., explaining 4% of the variance in perceptions of inclusion in personnel decisions - as it should be. The associated F ratio of 4.05

was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 105 degree of freedom. This finding provided evidence that years in present position was explaining a statistically significant amount of variance in perceptions of involvement in personnel decisions - as it should be. This result indicated that teachers who had been in their present position longer wanted to be more involved in personnel decision making. The remaining independent variables did not enter the regression equation indicating they were not significant predictors of inclusion in personnel decisions - as it should be.

Based on these findings, it appears that teachers in schools that use shared decisions were more likely to want to be involved in shared decision making than teachers who were in schools that did not use shared decision making. These findings indicated that teaching experiences were not predictors of participation in shared decision making.

> *Research question 7.* Is there a difference in perceptions of customer focused education between middle school teachers who indicated more involvement in shared decision making during the past year and middle school teachers who were not involved in this process?

The middle school teachers' perceptions of customer focused education were used as the dependent variable in a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA). The self-reported involvement in shared decision making by the teachers was used as the independent variable in this study. Table 32 provides the results of this analysis.

Table 32

Multiple Analysis of Variance
Customer Focus in Education by Involvement in Shared Decision Making

Hotelling's Trace	F Ratio	DF	Sig	Effect Size
.18	3.85	5/107	*	.15

*p≤.05

The results of the MANOVA produced a Hotelling's trace statistic of .18. The associated F ratio of 3.85 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 5 and 107 degrees of freedom. The effect size of .15 indicated a small effect for this analysis. Based on these findings, there appears to be a difference in customer focus in education between teachers who indicated they were more involved in shared decision making now than they were a year ago and those who were not more involved in shared decision making. To determine which of the five subscales; staff responsiveness to external customers, instructional systems, environment - physical, environment - affective, and communication; univariate F tests were obtained. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 33.

Table 33

Univariate F Tests
Customer Focus in Education by Participation In Shared Decision Making

Involvement In Shared Decisions	Number	Mean	SD	F ratio	Effect Size
Staff Responsiveness to External Customers					
Involved in Shared Decision Making	44	74.55	10.27	4.61*	.04
Uninvolved in Shared Decision Making	69	70.03	11.29		
Instructional Systems					
Involved in Shared Decision Making	44	56.82	8.04	6.98*	.06
Uninvolved in Shared Decision Making	69	52.10	9.95		
Environment -Physical					
Involved in Shared Decision Making	44	36.48	7.07	13.62*	.11
Uninvolved in Shared Decision Making	69	30.87	8.35		
Environment - Affective					
Involved in Shared Decision Making	44	21.09	2.87	7.26*	.06
Uninvolved in Shared Decision Making	69	19.41	3.46		
Communication					
Involved in Shared Decision Making	44	12.52	3.15	2.30 (NS)	.02
Uninvolved in Shared Decision Making	69	13.49	3.42		

*p≤.05

Four of the five subscales measuring customer focus in education produced statistically significant results. Communication with an F ratio of 2.30 was not statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 111 degrees of freedom.

Staff responsiveness to external customers. The obtained F ratio of 4.61 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 111 degrees of freedom. This result indicated that teachers who were more involved in shared decision making (m=74.55, sd=10.27) were more positive regarding staff responsiveness to external customers than teachers who were not involved in shared decision making (m=70.03, sd=11.29). The effect size of .04 indicated a small effect for this finding.

Instructional systems. The comparison between teachers who were more

involved in shared decision making (m=56.82, sd=8.04) and teachers who were not involved in shared decision making (m=52.10, sd=9.95) yielded an F ratio of 6.98 which was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 111 degrees of freedom. The effect size of .06 indicated a minimum effect for this analysis. These findings indicated that while instructional systems differed significantly between teachers who indicated they were more involved in decision making than teachers who were not involved in decision making, the effect of this finding was minimal.

Environment - Physical. The F ratio of 13.62 produced on the comparison of teachers who were more involved in shared decision making (m=36.48, sd=7.07) and teachers who were not involved in shared decision making (m=30.87, sd=8.35) was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 111 degrees of freedom. The associated effect size of .11 for this analysis was considered small . Based on these findings, it appears that teachers who were more involved in shared decision making had more positive perceptions regarding the physical environment than teachers who were not involved in shared decision making.

Environment - Affective. The comparison of perceptions of the affective environment between teachers who indicated they were more involved in shared decision making (m=21.09, sd=2.87) and teachers who were not involved in shared decision making (m=19.41, sd=3.48) resulted in an F ratio of 7.26 which was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 111 degrees of freedom. The associated effect size of .06 for this comparison was considered

small. This result indicated that teachers who were more involved in shared decision making were more positive regarding the affective environment as a measure of customer focus in education than teachers who were not involved in shared decision making.

Based on the findings of this analysis, with the exception of communication, teachers who were more involved in shared decision making appeared to be more positive about customer focus in education than teachers who were not involved in shared decision making.

> *Research question 8.* Is there a difference in perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be" between middle school teachers who indicated more involvement in shared decision making during the past year and middle school teachers who were not involved in this process?

The teachers who reported they were more involved in shared decision making now than they were a year ago were compared to teachers who were not more involved in shared decision making on their perceptions of shared decision making in their schools as it currently is and as it should be using two separate MANOVA procedures. Table 34 presents the results of these analyses.

Table 34

Multiple Analysis of Variance
Involvement in Shared Decision Making
By Participation in Shared Decision Making

Shared Decision Making	Hotelling's Trace	F Ratio	DF	Sig	Effect Size
As it is now	.11	3.00	4/108	*	.10
As it should be	.01	.33	4/108	NS	.01

*p≤.05

The MANOVA for participation in shared decision making as it is now produced a Hotelling's trace of .11 which was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 4 and 108 degrees of freedom. The associated effect size associated with this analysis of .10 was considered small.

The resulting Hotelling's trace of .01 for the comparison of teachers who were more involved in shared decision making now than they were a year ago and teachers who were not involved in shared decision making was not statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 4 and 108 degrees of freedom. The associated effect size of .01 for this analysis was considered small.

To determine which of the four measures of shared decision making as it is now were contributing to the significance of the findings, the univariate F tests were interpreted. Table 35 presents the results of this analyses.

Table 35

Univariate F Tests
Shared Decision Making As it is Now
by Participation In Shared Decision Making

Involvement In Shared Decisions	Number	Mean	SD	F ratio	Effect Size
Curriculum Decision - As it is now					
Involved in Shared Decision Making	44	29.66	9.39	10.80*	.09
Uninvolved in Shared Decision Making	69	23.75	9.27		
Organizational Decisions - As it is now					
Involved in Shared Decision Making	44	18.32	7.01	9.18*	.08
Uninvolved in Shared Decision Making	69	14.33	6.70		
Academic Decisions - As it is now					
Involved in Shared Decision Making	44	16.93	6.67	7.27*	.06
Uninvolved in Shared Decision Making	69	13.54	6.44		
Personnel Decisions - As it is now					
Involved in Shared Decision Making	44	7.14	3.53	4.31*	.04
Uninvolved in Shared Decision Making	69	5.81	3.16		

*$p \leq .05$

Curriculum decisions – as it is now. The obtained F ratio of 10.80 for the comparison of teachers who were more involved in shared decision making (m=29.66, sd=9.39) and teachers who were not involved in shared decision making (m=23.75, sd=9.27) on curriculum decisions - as it is now was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 111 degrees of freedom. The associated effect size for this analysis of .09 was considered small. Based on this finding, there appeared to be a difference in perceptions of inclusion in curriculum decisions as it is now between teachers who were more involved in shared decision making and teachers who were not involve in shared decision making.

Organizational decisions – as it is now. The comparison of teachers who were more involved in shared decision making (m=18.32, sd=7.01) and those

who were not involved in shared decision making (m=14.33, sd=6.70) yielded an F ratio of 9.18 which was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 111 degrees of freedom. The effect size of .08 obtained on this analysis was considered small. Based on these finding, there appeared to be differences in the perceptions of inclusions in organizational decisions differed between the two groups of teachers.

Academic decisions – as it is now. The obtained F ratio of 7.27 on the comparison of academic decision - as it is now between teachers who indicated they were more involved in shared decision making (m=16.93, sd=6.67) and teachers who were not involved in shared decision making (m=13.54, sd=6.44) was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 111 degrees of freedom. The effect size of .06 obtained for this analysis was considered small.

Personnel decisions – as it is now. The comparison of teachers who reported they were more involved in shared decision making now (m=7.14, sd=3.53) and teachers who were not involved in shared decision making (m=5.81, sd=3.16) resulted in an F ratio of 4.31 was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 with 1 and 111 degrees of freedom. The associated effect size of .04 was considered negligible. Based on these findings, teachers who reported being involved in shared decision making appeared have higher perceptions on current involvement in shared decision making regarding personnel decisions than teachers who were not involved in shared decision making.

There were no differences between the four subscales measuring

perceptions of shared decision making as it should be. The descriptive statistics for these variables are presented in Table 36.

Table 36

Univariate F Tests
Shared Decision Making As It Should Be
by Participation In Shared Decision Making

Involvement In Shared Decisions	Number	Mean	SD
Curriculum Decision - As it should be			
Involved in Shared Decision Making	44	39.45	6.37
Uninvolved in Shared Decision Making	69	39.48	5.52
Organizational Decisions - As it should be			
Involved in Shared Decision Making	44	25.64	4.88
Uninvolved in Shared Decision Making	69	25.32	4.62
Academic Decisions - As it should be			
Involved in Shared Decision Making	44	24.39	5.60
Uninvolved in Shared Decision Making	69	24.71	5.39
Personnel Decisions - As it should be			
Involved in Shared Decision Making	44	11.27	3.45
Uninvolved in Shared Decision Making	69	11.29	3.34

The results of these analyses showed that middle school teachers who were more involved in shared decision making now than they were a year ago did not differ in their perceptions of how involved they should be from teachers who indicated they were not as involved in shared decision making. Based on these findings, it appeared that teachers in the study wanted to be involved in shared decision making, regardless of their present level of involvement in shared decision making.

Summary

The results of the data analysis used to describe the sample and address

the research questions posed for this study have been presented in this chapter. Chapter 5 provides conclusions and recommendations that can be derived from these findings.

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

Michigan passed Public Act 25 in 1990, mandating increased local involvement in the operation of the schools. Central and area school building administrators, local school administrators, teachers, noninstructional staff, students, parents, and interested community members were to be included in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of their local school district. This process is still a struggle for many districts at both the elementary and secondary levels. The component considered the most difficulty is shared decision making.

Shared decision-making in schools can be defined as to several characteristics. Shared decision making requires: (a) a new mindset regarding authority and responsibility in schools in which powers to make decisions about the schools are no longer relegated to top management, but shared with the faculty and sometimes staff, parents, and community members; (b) negotiation of certain trends and issues as they apply to specific school settings and situations; and (c) variety in approach with no one model being the best.

Shared decision making, as described by Deming (1986), was an important element of total quality management. The climate of organizational management emphasized a philosophy that incorporated shared decision making as an integral component. A climate where administrators and teachers work cooperatively within the school could temper the adversarial relationship that could occur between administrators and teachers.

In schools with a focus on shared decision making, administrators were generally conscientious about the process of continuously improving customer service. A customer was an individual who received, or was affected by, the product or process of an organization. Accordingly, internal customers, working within the school, were affected by the product and the process. External customers (students, parents, and local community) could be affected by the product, but were not members of the school that produced the product or service of shared decision making.

This study investigated perceptions of teachers at select middle schools on the role of teachers in shared decision making and its relationship to customer focused education. While state legislatures mandated such involvement, methods for implementation, and extent of teacher involvement were left to administrators at local school district and building levels. Building administrators and teachers, who were accustomed to top-down management, were becoming actively involved as participants in carrying out suitable models of shared decision-making.

Teachers working at the middle school level represented a special population. These teachers were responsible for transforming students from elementary students whose educational experiences had been nurturing and supportive to high school students who were expected to be independent learners and learn to function in the adult world. Teachers should have realized that students in their schools were valued customers and learn to treat them in this context.

Positive student outcomes have been associated with the approach

(Smylie, Lazarus, & Brownlee-Conyers, 1996). Shared decision making seemed dependent of the degree to which those involved in shared decision making, especially teachers and principals, effectively carried out the process.

Public Act 25 and 335 were legislative mandates for shared decision making and provided funding for initiation of this process in Michigan schools. Research supported a high level of success for Michigan's shared decision making efforts and many roles were expected of the principal at the shared decision making schools and that at least for some roles, certain personality characteristics, (e.g., willingness to take risks, optimism, and communicative skills) was vital to successful implementation. When roles expected of teachers in shared decision making schools was noted and compared with administrators, teachers' roles tended to be much more limited (Pikos, 1993).

Shared decision making has become a vital part of the reform movement in contemporary American schools. The literature supported the concept that shared decision making could be effective provided those involved effectively fulfill the roles assigned to them. In fulfilling these roles, several factors could either energize or debilitate principals and teachers' role fulfillment. By understanding the nature of roles expected of principals and teachers and by being aware of various factors that could affect teachers' and principals' efforts regarding their role tasks, schools were better able to maximize their positive outcomes associated with implementation of shared decision making.

Methods.

A nonexperimental, descriptive research design was used in this study. Three surveys, Shared Decision Making (Pikos, 1992) and Customer-Focus in

Education (Pando 1993), and a demographic survey developed specifically for this study, were completed by middle school teachers in 10 middle schools.

The 10 middle schools were located in Area F of the Detroit Public Schools. Area F of the Detroit Public Schools is located on the northeast-side of Detroit, and is a low socioeconomic area that had a high crime rate, with drugs and gang activity causing many problems. Single parents head many families in this area, who may be on public assistance of some type. Nine of the 10 middle schools in this study qualified for school-wide section 31A or Title 1 funding.

These schools enrolled approximately 7,000 students in 6th through 8th grades, with a total of 321 teachers working in these schools. The racial breakdown of the students was primarily African American, with a small percentage of Caucasian and Hmong students. The racial composition of the staff members at these schools was approximately 60% of African Americans and 40% Caucasians.

Findings

Of the 321 teachers who were asked to participate in the study, 113 completed the survey instruments for a response rate of 35.2%. Most of the teachers were between 45 and 55 years of age, female, and were teaching in both academic and nonacademic classes. The majority of teachers in the study had completed a master's degree, and had approximately 18 years of teaching experience, with 16 years in their present school district. They had been in their present positions for an average of 11 years. The teachers served an average of 140 students a day.

Most of the schools used shared decision making, with fewer than 50% of the teachers indicating they were personally involved in the shared decision making process. Approximately 40% of the teachers indicated they were more involved in shared decision making than they were one year ago. More than 50% of the teachers indicated they were on school committees, with school improvement and union committees indicated as involving shared decision making most often.

Research Questions

The following eight research questions were addressed separately. All decisions on the statistical significance of the inferential tests were made using an alpha level of .05.

Research Question 1. To what extent do middle school teachers agree with the concepts of customer focused education?

Findings. The five subscales of customer focus in education were compared to the neutral point for each subscale using a t-test for one sample. Teachers' scores on the five subscales were significantly above the neutral point indicating teachers were positive about the use of customer focus in their schools.

Conclusions. Teachers in middle schools perceived that students should be treated as valued customers, as evidenced by the significant findings for each subscale. Many middle school teachers hold elementary certification where the teaching process is more nurturing and promote feelings of worth for the

students. They appeared to be aware that middle school is a period of transition and these students need special handling to help ease this period of growth and change.

Research Question 2. To what extent do middle school teachers agree with involvement in shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be?"

Findings: Teachers' responses to the four subscales measuring perceptions of involvement in shared decision making between "as it is now" in their schools and "as it should be" were compared to the neutral point using t-tests for one sample. Except for involvement in curriculum decision "as it is now" the remaining subscales were significantly different from the neutral point. Each subscale measuring involvement in shared decision making "as it is now" was below the mean indicating a negative perception regarding their involvement. The four subscales measuring involvement in shared decision making "as it should be" were significantly above the mean, providing evidence that teachers wanted to be involved in shared decision making.

Conclusions: Teachers were not as involved in shared decision making as they would have like to be in their schools, with the exception of involvement in curriculum decisions. These decisions directly affected their work in the classroom and have traditionally been included to some extent. In areas where principals had been solely responsible for making decisions (e.g., organizational decisions, administrative decisions, and personnel decisions), teachers perceived they were not being included. Teachers appeared to want to be included in these types of decisions as evidenced by their scores that were

significantly above the neutral point.

Research Question 3. Is there a difference in middle school teachers' perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be" in their schools?

Findings: To answer this question, t-tests for dependent samples were used to compare middle school teachers' perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be." The four subscales of involvement in shared decision making curriculum, organization, administration, and personnel provided evidence that middle school teachers wanted more involvement in each area. The result of these analyses indicated higher scores for "as it should be" than "as it is now."

Conclusions: The differences between teachers' perceptions of their current participation in shared decision making and how they would like to be involved in shared decision making indicated they wanted to be more involved in all aspects of decision making at their schools. Involvement in decision making is evidence that teachers want to be able to provide information on decisions that affect their work and their workplace. They do not seem content to allow others to make and carry out decisions that can impact on their ability to provide instruction to the students effectively.

Research Question 4. Is there a relationship between middle school teachers' perceptions of in their involvement in shared decision making process "as it is now" with customer focused education?

Findings: The five subscales measuring customer focus in education were

used as the dependent variables in stepwise multiple regression procedures with perceptions of current involvement in the four types of decisions; curriculum, organizational, administrative, and personnel; used as the independent variables. Current involvement in curriculum decisions was a statistically significant predictor of staff responsiveness to external customers, instructional systems, environment - physical, and environment - affective for the communication subscale of customer focus in education, current participation in organizational decisions and personnel decisions.

Conclusions: The primary product of teaching is student achievement. Instruction and curriculum are the frameworks for providing effective instruction to students. Teachers, who were positive about customer focus in education, were more likely to be involved in making decisions about the curriculum in their schools. By participating in this type of decision making, teachers could have greater control over their classrooms and the instructional goals established for their students. The teachers who were more involved in administrative and personnel decisions were more likely to have positive perceptions of communications as a measure of customer focus in education. Participation in administrative decisions and personnel decisions empowers a teacher to be aware of more than the instructional programs at the school. By understanding administrative and personnel factors, teachers can better understand the importance of communication between the home and the school.

Research Question 5. Is there a relationship between middle school teachers' perceptions of their involvement in shared decision making process "as it should be" with

customer focused education?

Findings: The five subscales measuring customer focus in education were used as the dependent variables in stepwise multiple linear regression equations. The four subscales of desired involvement in shared decision making were used as the dependent variables in these analyses. The result of these analyses showed that desired involvement in curriculum decisions could be used to predict perceptions of staff responsiveness to external customers, instructional systems, environment - physical, and environment - affective. Perceptions of communication could be predicted from desired involvement in personnel decisions.

Conclusions. Teachers, through their responses, appeared to want to be involved in shared decision making that related directly to their work in the classroom and with students. These teachers were aware of customer focus with their students considered to be external customers. By wanting greater input into curriculum decisions, teachers could be more effective in the classroom. Teachers, who had ownership in decisions involving the curriculum, were more likely to adapt instructional strategies that could be used to improve student outcomes as established by group decision making.

Research Question 6. Can middle school teachers' perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be" predicted from their professional demographics including: educational level, length of time in the district, length of time in present school, number of students in their classes, and participation in shared decision making?

Findings. The demographic variables; educational level, length of time in the district, length of time in present school, number of students in their classes,

and participation in shared decision making; were used as independent variables in stepwise multiple linear regression analyses. The dependent variables for these analyses were participation in curriculum, organizational, administrative, and personnel decision making, both as it is now and as it should be.

The results of these analyses showed that participation in curriculum decisions – as it is now could be predicted from whether the school uses shared decision making and the number of students in the class. Current participation in organizational, administrative, and personnel decisions could be predicted from being in a school that uses shared decision making.

Being in a school that uses shared decision making could be used to predict desired involvement in shared decision making, while years in present position could be used to predict desired involvement in personnel decisions. None of the demographic variables could be used to predict desired involvement in organizational and administrative decisions.

Conclusions: Participation in shared decision making is a relatively new phenomenon, although in previous years, participative management and empowerment, were predecessors of the shared decision making that is proscribed in school improvement legislation. Teachers want to participate in decisions in their schools, but may not be provided with that opportunity given their perception that shared decision making is being used. Participation in personnel decisions may come as a result of being in a school building for many years. The principal may come to trust a teacher's abilities to provide insight into decisions that need to be made regarding personnel issues involving both students and teachers. This trust usually builds over a number of years as both

the principal and teacher gain in experience and develop an understanding of the climate of the school and surrounding community.

Research Question 7. Is there a difference in perceptions of customer focused education between middle school teachers who indicated more involvement in shared decision making during the past year and middle school teachers who were not involved in this process?

Findings: To answer this research question, the five subscales measuring perceptions of customer focused education were used as the dependent variables in a one-way multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA). The responses to the question of whether the teacher believed s/he was more involved in shared decision making in their school now than in the previous year were used as the independent variable in this analysis. A statistically significant difference was found between the two groups of teachers. To determine which of the subscales were contributing to the significant result, four of the five subscales; staff responsiveness to external customers, instructional systems, environment - physical, and environment - affective were found to differ significantly between the two groups. In each case, teachers who perceived they were more involved in shared decision making had more positive perceptions of customer focus in education. No differences were found between the two groups of teaches.

Conclusions: Greater involvement in shared decision making helps provide an awareness of the problems that occur in schools and methods and strategies that can be used to facilitate a solution to the problem. Teachers who are involved in shared decision making have this awareness and understand the importance of treating students and parents as valued customers.

Research Question 8. Is there a difference in perceptions of shared decision making "as it is now" and "as it should be" between middle school teachers who indicated more involvement in shared decision making during the past year and middle school teachers who were not involved in this process?

Findings: A MANOVA was used to compare involvement in shared decision making both as it is now and as it should be between teachers who indicated they were more involved in shared decision making now than they were a year ago. The results of this analysis produced a statistically significant difference between the two groups on involvement in shared decision making - as it is now. An examination of the univariate F tests showed that teachers who were more involved in shared decision making had more positive perceptions regarding their current participation in curriculum, organizational, academic, and personnel decisions. The comparison for involvement in shared decision making as it should be was not significant indicating no differences between teachers regarding how they would like to participate in shared decision making.

Conclusions: The lack of difference in perceptions of how teachers would like to be involved in shared decision making showed that teachers regardless of their involvement wanted to have a voice in the administration of their schools. The scores on how the teachers wanted to be involved were significantly more positive than how they were currently involved. Teachers, who may not have had opportunities to be involved in shared decision making previously, wanted to be as involved in shared decision making as those teachers who reported greater involvement than a year ago.

Discussion

Legislation in several states, including Michigan, had mandated involvement in shared decision making. Teachers in middle schools perceived that students should be treated as valued customers. However, if middle school teachers wanted to be involved in shared decision making to appropriately serve their external customers, they had to be proactive in their attitudes and actions in their local schools. Shared decision making with a customer focus could provide an opportunity for teachers to have some control of, and input into, their work lives. Teachers, who had positive perceptions regarding customer focus in education, were more likely to be involved in making decisions about the curriculum in their schools. Teachers, who had ownership in decisions involving the curriculum, were more likely to adapt instructional strategies that could be used to improve student outcomes as established by group decision making.

From the findings of this study, middle school teachers appeared to want inclusion in the decision making process at the building level. Effective communication must be in place for this process to be successful. By wanting greater participation into curriculum decisions, middle school teachers could be more effective in the classroom. The study findings provided evidence that middle school teachers were not involved in administrative, curriculum, and personnel decisions in their buildings. However, they perceived to want this involvement and perceived it could be related to the quality of instructional services that were provided to the student from their perspective.

Shared decision making and customer focus could be positive factors in helping middle school teachers establish goals and objectives for students at the

local school level. Complying with Public Act 25 is important for middle school teachers, along with other stakeholders in the education, if an environment that adequately serves the intended customer is to be established.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study investigated perceptions of teachers at select middle schools on the role of teachers in shared decision making and its relationship to customer focused education. While the questions hypothesized for this study were answered, several other realms of possible research became apparent. The following recommendations are made for further research in these areas:

1. Investigate ongoing staff development programs using a experimental research design to determine if an instructional staff trained to use shared decision making had an effect on student outcomes.

2. Compare student outcomes in two similar schools or school districts, one using customer focus and the other providing instruction in a traditional structure, to determine if the use of customer focus can influence achievement and motivation.

3. Examine the role of the administrator in developing shared decision making programs within the school to determine what elements can affect teachers' willingness to participate in these programs.

4. Use a longitudinal research design to determine the long-term effects on a school in terms of teacher satisfaction, student attendance and discipline problems, and school climate when a school adopts a customer focus orientation.

Appendix A

Correspondence

Larry C. Latimore

To: Middle School Principals (Area F)

I am a doctoral student at Wayne State University in educational administration. I am working on my dissertation, "Perceptions of Teachers at Select Middle Schools on the Role of the Teacher in Shared Decision Making and Its Relationship to Customer Focused Education." This study will examine all Area F Middle Schools and compare teachers' perceptions of their role in shared decision making and its effect on the customer focus of the schools. This research portends to be an invaluable school improvement reference for principals.

Please be advised that all responses will be confidential and no individual or school will be identifiable from the analysis that will be provided on the final report. No risks or additional effects are likely to result from your participation or your teachers response in this study. In the unlikely event of an injury arising from participation in this study, no reimbursement, compensation, or free medical treatment is offered by Wayne State University or the researcher.

Participation in this study has been approved by the Detroit Public Schools and the Area F Superintendent and is voluntary. With the return of the completed surveys, this will evidence your teachers willingness to participate in the study. Once the completed surveys are returned, you will not be able to withdraw from the study as no coding is included that would identify the respondents.

Please ask your teachers to complete the surveys within five working days. Return the survey in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope and return it to the researcher by United States mail.

If you have any questions regarding the items on the survey or the purpose of the study, please feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience. I can be reached at (xxx) xxx-xxxx. This number is to my home where I have an answering machine. I will return your call within 24 hours. If you would like information regarding your rights regarding participation in this study, please contact Dr. Peter Lichtenberg, Wayne State University Behavioral Investigation Committee at (313) 577-1628.

I appreciate your help with this research project.

Larry C. Latimore
Doctoral Candidate, Wayne State University

Enclosures

Larry C. Latimore

To: Middle School Teachers:

I am a doctoral student at Wayne State University in Educational Administration. I am working on my dissertation, "Perceptions of Teachers at Select Middle Schools on the Role of the Teacher in Shared Decision Making and Its Relationship to Customer Focused Education." This study will examine middle school teachers' perceptions of their role in shared decision making and its effect on the customer focus of the school.

Please be advised that all responses will be confidential and no individual or school will be identifiable from the analysis that I will provide on the final report. No risks or additional effects are likely to result from your participation in this study. In the unlikely event of an injury arising from participation in this study, no reimbursement, compensation, or free medical treatment is offered by Wayne State University or the researcher.

Participation in this study is voluntary, with the return of the completed surveys evidence of your willingness to participate in the study. Once you return the completed surveys, you will not be able to withdraw from the study as the survey includes no coding that would identify the respondents.

Please complete the surveys within five working days. Return your survey in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope and return it to the researcher by United States mail.

If you would like a copy of the results of this study, please enclose a business card that can be separated from the survey. I will be happy to share the findings with you and your school.

If you have any questions regarding the items on the survey or the purpose of the study, please feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience. You can reach me at (xxx) xxx-xxxx. This number is to my home where I have an answering machine. I will return your call within 24 hours. If you would like information regarding your rights regarding participation in this study, please contact Dr. Peter Lichtenberg, Wayne State University Behavioral Investigation Committee at (313) 577-1628.

I appreciate your help with this research study.

Larry C. Latimore
Doctoral Candidate, Wayne State University

Enclosures

Wayne State University
Human Investigation Committee

Behavioral Institutional Review Board
University Health Center 8C
4201 St. Antoine Blvd.
Detroit, MI 48201
(313) 577-5174 Office
(313) 993-7122 Fax

MEMORANDUM

TO: Larry C. Latimore
19610 Stratford
Detroit, MI 48221-3500

FROM: Peter A. Lichtenberg, Ph.D. Peter A. Lichtenberg, Ph.D
Chairman, Behavioral Institutional Review Board

SUBJECT: Exemption Status of Protocol # B03-27-97(B03)-X; "Perceptions of Building Administrators and Teachers at Select Middle Schools on the Role of the Teacher in Shared Decision Making"

SOURCE OF FUNDING: No Funding Requested

DATE: April 4, 1997

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The research protocol named above has been reviewed and found to qualify for exemption according to paragraph #2 of the Rules and Regulations of the Department of Health and Human Services, CFR Part 46.101(b).

Since I have not evaluated this proposal for scientific merit except to weigh the risk to the human subjects in relation to potential benefits, this approval does not replace or serve in the place of any departmental or other approvals which may be required.

C: Dr. Roger DeMont
369 Education

B032797.X
(B03 APPROVALS)

Stan Pikos
2320 Hillcrescent
Troy, MI 48098

Mr. Larry Latimore
19610 Stratford Rd.
Detroit, MI 48221

Dear Mr. Latimore,

You have my permission to use my dissertation in your research toward your doctoral degree. Good Luck.

Stan Pikos, Ed. D.

Appendix B

Survey Packet

Customer Service Orientation Scale

Please respond to the statements concerning your feelings about this school's orientation toward its customers (students, parents, and community). There are no right or wrong answers.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

Using the scale shown above, please place a check mark (✓) in the column that most closely matches your feelings about each of the following statements.	1	2	3	4	5
1. High quality instructional materials are utilized in this school.					
2. There is an adequate variety of teaching materials.					
3. Student achievement is continuously monitored.					
4. Employees appear to enjoy their chosen field of work.					
5. There are many forms of communication with parents.					
6. Parents are encouraged to be involved with their child's education.					
7. Parents can ask any school employee a question and expect to be directed to someone with the correct answer.					
8. Students receive recognition for their accomplishments.					
9. Parents are informed of changes in policy that affect their child.					
10. Constructive student input is welcomed.					
11. There is a regular program of staff development activities.					
12. The atmosphere is conducive to learning.					
13. Staff development activities focus on ways to increase student achievement.					
14. Employees are encouraged to make suggestions for improvement.					
15. Teachers are encouraged to communicate frequently with parents.					
16. There is an agreed upon mission statement that guides decision making.					
17. A variety of teaching methods are employed by teachers.					
18. Teachers believe that they can influence student learning.					
19. Instructional time is managed effectively.					
20. There is a well-defined school improvement process in place.					
21. Teachers know what is expected of them in the school setting.					
22. Teachers are recognized for their accomplishments.					
23. Programs are available to help all students meet the school's learning objectives.					
24. Employees are capable of being responsive to student needs.					
25. Employees possess the desire to be responsive to student needs.					

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

Using the scale shown above, please place a check mark (✓) in the column that most closely matches your feelings about each of the following statements.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Employees believe that all students are capable of learning.					
27. Teachers make their students aware of their expectations.					
28. The staff is committed to student learning.					
29. All employees have input in school improvement planning.					
30. Employees are encouraged to "think for themselves" and make decisions when necessary.					
31. Students are treated as valued customers.					
32. The school building is a comfortable place in which to learn.					
33. The school building is a pleasant place to be.					
34. Every employee believes that it is his/her responsibility to promote excellent education.					
35. Students do not appear to understand what is expected of them.					
36. A goal of supervision is to enhance instructional effectiveness.					
37. Students are treated with respect.					
38. Students feel comfortable in this school.					
39. Teachers believe that they can improve their students' educational environment.					
40. Written communications are timely.					
41. The building is attractive.					
42. Instruction is goal oriented.					
43. Requests for information are answered in a timely manner.					
44. This school aims to satisfy its customers.					
45. Home contacts are made when a child is having academic problems.					
46. There is limited communication between the school and the community.					
47. Parents are not utilized as resources.					
48. Teachers praise their students for work well-done.					
49. The school staff is friendly.					
50. The principal is very visible throughout the school.					

Shared Decision-Making

Shared decision-making between building administrators and teachers is a relatively new process in education. Please check-off the extent to which the following areas of decision-making are shared in your school **NOW** and the extent to which they **SHOULD BE SHARED. Please be sure to respond to each item on the table**. Use the following scale in rating each area of decision making.

1	2	3	4	5
Never Shared	Seldom Shared	Don't Know	Often Shared	Always Shared

As it is now						As it should be				
1	2	3	4	5	Areas of Decision Making	1	2	3	4	5
					1. Determining activities for teaching teams.					
					2. Selecting instructional materials for multiple classroooms.					
					3. Determining curriculum goals and outcomes.					
					4. Selecting curriculum content.					
					5. Planning professinoal development activities.					
					6. Selecting professional development personnel.					
					7. Selecting methods for evaluating curriculum, programs, professional development activites, techer effectiveness, etc.					
					8. Planning for school improvement.					
					9. Identifying resources for school improvement.					
					10. Determining criteria for selecting personnel.					
					11. Selecting personnel.					
					12. Removing personnel.					
					13. Assigning and reassigning personnel.					
					14. Determining school rules.					
					15. Resolving conflicts concerning student behavior.					
					16. Determining how to allocate time (scheduling).					
					17. Determining school calendar.					
					18. Determining how to allocate resources.					
					19. Determining budget.					
					20. Determining student placement.					
					21. Determining local goals for education.					
					22. Determining rules for employees.					
					23. Determining program priorities.					
					24. Determining how to react to evaluation results.					

Demographic Survey

Please answer the following questions as they relate to you. There are no right or wrong answers and all responses will be confidential. Results will be reported in summarized form, with no individual identifiable from the findings. Provide a response for each item.

Age

- ❑ 25 and Under
- ❑ 26 to 35
- ❑ 36 to 45
- ❑ 46 to 55
- ❑ Over 55

Gender

- ❑ Male
- ❑ Female

Level of Education

- ❑ Bachelor's Degree
- ❑ Master's Degree
- ❑ Masters + 30 hours
- ❑ Educational Specialist
- ❑ Ph.D./Ed.D.

Type of Teacher

- ❑ Academic
- ❑ Nonacademic
- ❑ Special Education
- ❑ Other _____

Years of teaching experience	Years in current School District	Years in Present Position	Number of Children in class per day
_____	_____	_____	_____

Does your school use shared decision making? ❑ Yes ❑ No

If your school has shared decision making, are you involved? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Do you feel you are more involved in decision making than you were a year ago? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Please list all committees you are on and indicate if they are part of the shared decision making used in your school by placing a check mark in the column labeled "S".

Committee	S	Committee	S	Committee	S

Please use the following space to provide any comments you may have regarding the use of shared decision making and its effects on the customer focus of the school.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank You for Taking the Time to Participate in this Study.

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Abstract

PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS AT SELECT MIDDLE SCHOOLS ON THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN SHARED DECISION MAKING AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO CUSTOMER FOCUSED EDUCATION

by

LARRY C. LATIMORE

May, 1998

Advisor: Roger DeMont, Ed.D.

Major: Administration and Supervision - General

Degree: Doctor of Education

This study investigated perceptions of teachers at select middle schools on the role of teachers in shared decision making and its relationship to customer-focused education. While state legislatures have mandated such involvement, methods for implementation and extent of teacher involvement have been left to administrators in local school districts and at building levels.

A nonexperimental descriptive research design, using two previously developed surveys, Customer Focused Education (Pando, 1993) and Shared Decision Making (Pikos, 1992), was used in this study. In addition, a researcher-designed demographic questionnaire was used to collect information on personal and professional characteristics of the teachers. A total of 321 teachers in 10 middle schools in a single area of the Detroit Public Schools was asked to participate in the study by completing a survey packet. Of this number, 113 completed and returned their surveys for a response rate of 35.2%.

The major conclusions indicated that teachers in middle schools

perceived students should be treated as valued customers. Middle school teachers wanted to be included in the decision making process at the building level. However, if middle school teachers want to be involved in shared decision making to serve the customer focus of their schools, they needed to become proactive in their approaches and actions in their local schools. Shared decision making with a customer focus provides teachers with some control over their work lives. Teachers, who were positive about customer focus in education, were more likely to be involved in making decisions about the curriculum in their schools. Effective communication must be in place for this process to be successful. As it is now, middle school teachers' personal and professional experiences were unrelated to their perception of customer focus education. As it should be middle school teachers wanted to be included in administrative, organizational, curricular, and personnel decisions.

Autobiographical Statement

Larry C. Latimore

Education:

1998 - Doctor of Education
Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan
Major: Administration and Supervision - General

1970 - Master of Education
Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan
Major: Guidance and Counseling

1968 - Bachelor of Arts
Kentucky State University, Frankfort, Kentucky
Major: History and Political Science

Professional Experiences

1968 to present
Detroit Public Schools, Detroit, Michigan

- 1997 - to present — Principal, Northwestern High School
- 1994 - 1997 — Principal, Columbus Middle School
- 1989 - 1994 — Asst. Principal, Denby High School
- 1988 - 1989 — Asst. Principal, Ruddiman Middle School
- 1985 - 1988 — Guidance and Counseling Department Head – Martin Luther King, Jr. Senior High School
- 1983 - 1985 — Job Placement Counselor and Practicum Coordinator – Golightly Vocational/ Technical Center
- 1976 - 1983 — Counselor/Youth Incentive Employment Project – Kettering High School
- 1968- 1976 — Teacher/Counselor – Barbour Junior High School

Endorsements:

Grades K - 12 Guidance and Counseling
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Memberships:

Phi Delta Kappa
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Executive Board, Organization of School Administrators and Supervisors
Boy Scouts of America, Metro West District