PRINCIPAL COLLEGIALITY AND SCHOOL DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS: A COMPARISON OF FOUR BRITISH COLUMBIA SCHOOL DISTRICTS

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis compares the content, context and frequency of professionally focussed interactions between administrators in a sample of two high-performing and two low-performing British Columbia school districts. Data were collected and analyzed according to qualitative research guidelines. Drawing from the recent and abundant research on effective schools and enlarging the focus to the district level, this study argues by analogy that frequent opportunities for talk about instructional practice, which contribute to the positive ethos and press for improvement characteristic of good schools, are more evident in the high-performing districts than in the low-performing districts. The findings show that collegial relationships are positively associated with district effectiveness, as measured by test scores and costs. The role of the district superintendent in constraining or promoting collegial relationships among principals is also discussed.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Problem Statement

This thesis investigates the possibility that distinctions can be made between school districts based upon an examination of the context, content and frequency of interactions between administrators. More specifically, it argues that collegial relationships between principals and their peers, as well as between principals and their superordinates, may contribute to the positive ethos (Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, Ouston, & Smith, 1979) and press for improvement characteristic of good districts, in the holistic sense of goodness described by Lightfoot (1983). It also contends that the quality of collegial relationships among practitioners can be seen as an important climate indicator that may be positively associated with more commonly held measures of district effectiveness -- achievement and efficiency.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this investigation, the term collegiality closely parallels the operational definition drawn from Little's (1982) inventory of "critical practices" (p. 332). Little described these activities in an ethnographic study of the relationship between workplace conditions and successful implementation at the school level. In this study, critical practices are defined as interactions between colleagues which are concerned primarily with instruction. Little contends that a norm of continuous improvement is most possible in school settings where (a) colleagues engage in frequent, continuous and precise talk about their practices, (b) there is frequent opportunity for peer

observation and discussion of observed practices in a shared professional language, (c) colleagues work together to share, develop and implement new programs and materials, and (d) colleagues model instructional techniques for one another from time to time.

Little found that teachers in the more successful schools talked frequently about instructional practices, and that they did so in a variety of venues. These teachers were also observed engaging in a wide range of collaborative problem solving, sharing and coaching activities.

Little's study (1982) also noted the key role played by principals in successful implementation:

> By virtue first of office and then of performance, Principals are in a unique position to establish and maintain the important norms of collegiality and experimentation, and to promote and foster the critical practices of talk about practice, observation of practice, joint work on materials, and teaching each other about teaching (p. 338).

The argument by analogy used here to enlarge the focus to the district level is supported by "the fact that schools are nested in larger organizations (Cuban, 1984, p. 132) and by Goodlad's finding that "the school as an institution may well be the most inactive and ineffective part of the decision-making structure that includes classroom, individual school, district and state" (Goodlad, 1983, p. 38). If interactions among administrators include shared problem-solving and decision-making behaviors resulting in a willingness to experiment with policy or practices in district schools, then it may be possible to identify a relationship between norms of principal collegiality and school district performance.

This investigation adopts Lightfoot's (1983) view of "institutional goodness [which is] shaped by a broader, more generous perspective than the one commonly used in the literature on 'effective' schools" (p. 23). It "refers to the complex whole" (p. 23) and its "interpretation requires an embeddedness in the context" (p.24). This view is at least partially derived from Rutter and his colleagues' (1979) use of the term "ethos" to describe a "broader... climate of expectations or modes of behaving" (pp. 55-56). Such a definition of ethos implies that commonly shared norms, values and attitudes manifest themselves in practices which combine to "become characteristic of the school as a whole" (p. 179).

Goodlad, among others, supports the argument that achievement and cost measures do not take into account the equally important ecological or climate characteristics of good schools and districts. His investigation shows clearly that the social and personal goals of schooling enjoy broadly based parental support and are therefore legitimate focusses for appraisal (Goodlad, 1983; Peterson, 1979). More recently, Glickman (1987) cautions against "overgeneralizing" (p. 623) effective schools research and argues for clarification of the descriptors <u>good</u> and <u>effective</u>:

> The findings of the research on effective teaching and effective schools are too often equated with what is desirable or good. By failing to distinguish between <u>effectiveness</u> and <u>goodness</u>, we have avoided two central questions in education. The first question with which school systems and schools must deal is, What is good? Only after that question has been answered should they deal with the second question, How do we become effective? The current fascination with findings from the research on effectiveness has blinded school systems to the more basic question of goodness. (Glickman, 1987, pp. 623-624)

It is from this more comprehensive perspective of institutional or system goodness that the qualitative research approaches used in this study were applied to quantitative data in order to establish that there may be ecological explanations for the variance between districts in achievement and cost measures found by Coleman and LaRocque (1989) in their study of ten British Columbia school districts.

Accordingly, the main purpose of this research is to analyze administrator interactions drawn from a selected subset of two high-performing and two low-performing districts identified in the Coleman and LaRocque study. The research focusses on the following questions:

- Can differences be found between the high-performing and the low-performing districts with respect to the frequency, content and context of administrator interactions?
- If so, can these differences in collegial interaction patterns be positively associated with school district performance?

A secondary objective of this work is to enlarge the somewhat narrow perspective commonly used in determining district effectiveness by taking into account measures of the working climate or ethos of districts, in addition to test score data and cost-per-pupil figures. Positive collegial interaction patterns may then be used as a climate indicator to distinguish between the <u>good</u> districts and the simply <u>effective</u> districts.

The following steps were taken to achieve these objectives:

1. Interactions between administrators in the four selected districts were identified from transcript data collected by Coleman and LaRocque (1989).
2. Each interaction was coded as to its content, context and focus.

3. Interactions within each district were analyzed with respect to their frequency, focus, venue and consistency.
4. Interaction patterns were compared both between and within the two performance groups.

To summarize, this thesis argues that if the formal and informal networks that exist between principals and other district administrators can be used for collegial purposes as defined by Little (1982), then it is worth investigating districts where this appears to be happening, to speculate on how it is being achieved, and to clarify the nature of the relationship between collegial practices and district performance.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Literature

Principal collegiality is one of a cluster of climate or ethos features identified as possible correlates of effectiveness in a longitudinal, multi-site qualitative study of ten school districts in B. C. (Coleman & LaRocque, 1989). This study focusses "on school district ethos as a potential discriminator between unusually effective and other districts " (LaRocque & Coleman, 1986, p. 3).

Drawing inferences largely from the abundant and recent school effectiveness literature, the main study identifies themes, focusses and qualities that can be seen as analogous to, if not linked to, similar elements at the district level. One of these potential district ethos components, collegiality, is explored in this thesis, especially as it applies to principals and with reference to the principal - district administrator relationship.

In order to apply Little's (1982) definition of collegial behaviors among teachers to principals it is first necessary to demonstrate that there are sufficient opportunities and venues in the day-to-day life of principals corresponding with those available to teachers. Secondly, it is necessary to establish that principals prefer collegial interactions with their peers more than with the alternatives open to them. That is, given a choice, principals will engage in collegial interactions more readily with peers than with either subordinates or superordinates.

With respect to the first consideration, opportunities for interaction, Wolcott (1973) notes the highly flexible nature of the principal's schedule. Principals are generally free to attend meetings, make telephone calls or visit

other schools during the hours classes are in session. In this regard they appear to have an advantage over teachers who must usually confine their exchanges to break periods, specially arranged visits or after school hours. Wolcott observes that "[e]ven the absence of any pressing problem was enough to lead...Ed to call a close cohort...to assure himself, "Are things quiet over there, too?" (p. 315).

Principals also have access to a variety of venues suitable to collegial practices. These include formal principals' meetings with central office staff, principals' association meetings, curriculum and other special committee meetings, workshops, conferences, retreats and the like. These scheduled events, together with a variety of informal occasions where problems may be discussed with trusted peers, provide sufficient opportunities for collegial interactions to occur.

The second consideration in arguing an analogy between Little's definition of teacher collegiality and the realities of a principal's life is the question of preferred resources. To whom is a principal more likely to turn in order to discuss a new idea, to make a decision or to solve a problem? Again, Wolcott's study shows that principals tend to avoid initiating interactions with superordinates except with the one or two to whom they are directly responsible. Possible reasons for this behavior will be discussed more fully later, but the main constraint is the wish to avoid critical attention. Similarly, problems are not normally shared with subordinates with the exception of those upon whose sympathy and support the principal can count. To do so might invite unwanted speculation on his or her ability to lead. This leaves peers as

the most likely source for interaction because they are potentially the least threatening.

There appears to be little research dealing specifically with relationships between principals as they undertake their instructional tasks or struggle to implement new programs or policies. Most of the school effectiveness research done in the 1970's focusses on the principal- teacher relationships within schools and identifies the quality of principal instructional leadership as one of the determining factors (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, & Lee, 1982; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982). Hargrove and his colleagues (1981), in a study examining reasons for the differential implementation of a federal policy for mainstreaming handicapped children, observes that factors such as "skillful leadership, collegial relations among teachers, and richness of programmatic alternatives" (p. 119) often occur together in successful schools and appear to reinforce each other. It is at least possible that these kinds of reinforcing clusters could occur simultaneously in successful districts as well.

More recently, in a comprehensive case study of the working lives of high school teachers (Blase, 1987), dimensions of effective school leadership were derived inductively from teachers' detailed and consistent descriptions of the effective (and ineffective) principals with whom they had worked, together with teachers' perceptions of how different leadership styles affected workplace relationships with principals, colleagues, students and parents. Blase (1987) argues that this type of grounded theory approach to qualitative research is needed to supplement the existing definitions of effective school leadership derived primarily from studies focussing on performance outcomes or

testimonials. The characteristics of effective principals which emerged from this examination of teachers' perceptions will be discussed more fully later.

Only modest support exists in the literature for the influence of school district variables on schools and classrooms (Cuban, 1984; Mackenzie, 1983; Peterson, 1984; Purkey & Smith, 1982). Peterson (1984) describes school principals as the linking agents "between central office and classrooms [who] must keep resources, personnel and students working efficiently towards organizational goals" (p. 573). He goes on to argue that although the selection, recruitment, socialization and supervision of principals are the responsibility of central office administrators, there are differential balances of control and autonomy over principals between districts. Thus it can be argued that the extent to which collaborative interactions are encouraged or expected at the district level may be a discriminating factor between districts.

Support for more collegial practices amongst educators is not often explicitly stated in the literature. However, support may be inferred from repeated references to the autonomous, isolated and lonely nature of schools and schooling (Fullan, 1982; Goodlad, 1984; Lortie, 1975; Sarason, 1971). Sarason (1971), in arguing for an "ecological approach to the school culture" (p. 130), describes the psychological loneliness of teachers as a consequence of the fact that they infrequently interact with adults. The lack of professional, stimulating contact with colleagues results in teachers becoming increasingly dependent upon the "psychic rewards" of the classroom (Lortie, 1975) which further reduces the likelihood of collegial interaction leading to innovation. This dependency is reinforced by prevailing norms of professional autonomy that make requests for help sound like expressions of incompetence.

Principals in turn are rarely helped by other principals or by central administrators in dealing with problems or change (Fullan, 1982). Expressions of doubt or lack of understanding of district expectations are characteristically rare given the historical norms associated with the job and the even greater lack of opportunity for principals to exchange ideas, address common problems and express concerns in a positive, constructive atmosphere. Fullan contends that despite these norms of professional autonomy " many...teachers and principals desire more social contact around professional matters, if it can be done in a supportive climate" (p. 142).

The cautious and restricted nature of principal peer relationships is also revealed in two studies undertaken by Licata and Hack (1980) and Johnson and Licata, (1983). The researchers describe the informal communications network or "grapevine" among school principals. In both studies the patterns of informal interactions are typically issue-specific and limited to one or two trusted individuals. Their reasons for such patterns are similar to those advanced by Fullan:

> Because the content of interaction could often be perceived by significant others as being indicative of possible incompetence or subversive activity, these informal interactions tended to be unobtrusive and exclusive, involving dyads or triads of trusting peers. While widespread interaction involving most principals was possible given the potential of their informal network or grapevine, such communication seemed rare and hardly indicative of the routine way this informal system operated. (Johnson & Licata, 1983, p. 460)

An experimental study involving collegial practices was conducted in the Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District, California (Bruno & Nottingham, 1976). The pilot project began in 1973 in four volunteer schools. Collegial teams formed in each school were responsible for program coordination,

examination of practices, peer evaluation and the selection of team members. A financial incentive scheme was incorporated into the design to compensate teams that exceeded objectives in student performance. At the time of publication (1976), the experiment was considered successful and would continue to receive district support. Teacher and principal reactions to the collegial team approach were gathered through attitude scales, interviews and anecdotal records. The responses indicated that collegial practices enhanced feelings of professionalism in the self-actualizing, belonging sense defined by Maslow (1970). The financial incentives gave added legitimacy to the project.

The functional potential of informal networks is alluded to in several recent discussions concerning the need for better approaches to implementation. Goodlad (1984) recommends linking "key" or experimental schools to universities and to one another in a "communicating, collaborating network" (p. 301). Principals and teachers within these networks would meet frequently to share information, discuss common problems and break down isolationist and defensive attitudes towards changes in practice.

Bentzen (1974) describes how such a plan works in a five year study of The League of Cooperating Schools. The eighteen principals of League schools met regularly to support and encourage one another. Most principals felt that the collegial relationships built over time were the single most important benefit of the League concept. Discussions and explorations of ideas went on between schools as well as within schools. Coaching and modelling practices became more frequent as teachers and principals learned to accept visiting each other. Professional literature and new materials were also exchanged in addition to advice and suggestions. Membership in the group became

important not only for the moral support but also for the professional assistance it provided.

In an interview with Quinby (1985), Goodlad argues that such mutually supportive networks of schools require substantially different approaches to improvement programs at the district level than is usual. For example, a district press for each school, or network of schools, to generate its own plan replaces the prevailing district-wide projects. The role of district staff then is to support, monitor and follow up on the progress of various plans throughout the district.

Support for a more collaborative, school-specific approach to implementation is also found in Fullan's discussion (1982) of the problems inherent in typical approaches. His review of some of the more successful school improvement projects isolates components crucial to the process. These include specific focus, coaching during the initial stages, and a variety of opportunities for sharing among teachers, principals, consultants and other professionals. Fullan observes that it is often during the first attempts at using a new idea that teachers become discouraged. Just when they have the most concrete questions, there is usually no one around to ask.

Further support for the importance of collegial relationships is to be found in the implementation literature (Berman & McLaughlin, 1979; Huberman & Miles, 1984). "We found that efforts to develop cooperation, coordination and conflict resolution across the differing worlds of administrators and users were often critical to successful implementation" (Huberman & Miles, 1984, p. 280).

Similarly, Fullan's chapter (1982) on the school district superintendent and the success or failure of improvement programs points out the "exact correspondence to the earlier discussion of the principal, except that the

reference is now to what happens district-wide instead of within one school" (p. 163). A superintendent's perceived motives for initiating change programs (Berman & McLaughlin, 1979) as well as his or her subsequent attitudes and support (McLaughlin & Marsh, 1977) are seen as important signals read by principals and teachers as to how much effort they should put into getting together on implementing the program.

Taken together, these references from the literature suggest that further exploration of the nature, occurrence and influence of collegial relationships between principals and their peers, as well as between principals and their superordinates, is warranted, given the evidence we currently have with respect to the critical role principals play in education.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

The general research design of this study is adapted from the approach taken by Coleman and LaRocque (1989) in a multi-site, qualitative case study of ten B. C. school districts. The data analysis section was influenced by Miles and Huberman (1984). A summary of the methodology used in the Coleman and LaRocque investigation will provide the context necessary for a discussion of the research design employed in the collegiality study.

The Coleman and LaRocque Study

The Coleman and LaRocque study began with an examination of test score data gathered from provincial test batteries administered between 1981 and 1984. The subject areas and student cohorts tested were: Science -- Grades 4, 8 and 12; Reading -- Grades 4, 7 and 10; and Mathematics -- Grades 4, 8 and 12. Test scores from all 75 districts were standardized and aggregated at the district level. Two extreme outlier districts were removed.

In order to correct for the influence of family environment (Walberg & Marjoribanks, 1976) on the variations from district to district, a proxy -- Community Education Level, which is the percent of families with some post-secondary education -- was used to calculate a residual score for each district. This Residual Achievement measure is admittedly "a broad and probably somewhat overstated measure of district impact on student test scores" (LaRocque & Coleman, 1988, p. 12). However, it does represent an attempt to take into account the effects of family environment as a predictor of student achievement. As such, it can be argued that calculating residual scores

provides a more realistic representation of relative district impact than that provided by reporting raw aggregated scores. After applying the proxy, extensive differences remained between districts in aggregated student achievement scores.

In a similar manner, raw cost data were taken from district budgets (Coleman & LaRocque, 1984) and residualized using a factor derived by calculating District Mean Grade Size. The co-investigators argue that this factor is "an important predictor of costs over which the district has little control" (LaRocque & Coleman, 1988, p. 12) and therefore provides a more accurate assessment of district efficiency than do raw cost-per-pupil figures.

Districts were then grouped into three performance categories (high, medium and low) according to the residualized achievement and cost measures. High-performing districts were defined as those with relatively high residual achievement scores and relatively low residual costs; low-performing districts were those with the inverse achievement and cost scores.

No significant relationship was found between residual cost-per-pupil figures and residual achievement. Thus, the possibility emerged that non-resource variables such as climate or ethos characteristics (Rutter, 1979) might be important mediating variables or co-relates of district achievement and efficiency. In order to investigate ethos variables more closely, ten districts were selected as representative of B. C. school districts in four respects: residual achievement, residual costs, district size (Peterson, 1984), and urban or rural location (Hrebiniak & Joyce, 1985).

A conceptual framework was then constructed in order to examine district ethos (see Coleman, 1986 for details). As Table 1 illustrates, this

TABLE 1

District Ethos and District Tasks

SIX FOCUSSES (DISTRICT ETHOS)	DISTRICT TASKS A. BE ACCOUNTABLE	B. IMPROVE/ ADAPT	C. SET EXPECTATIONS
LEARNING FOCUS			
1. focus on instruction	program effectiveness assessed?	changes to improve instruction?	instructional goals most important?
ACCOUNTABILITY FOCUS			
2. school accountability	schools held accountable for performance?	changes to improve school accountability practices?	monitoring and instructional goals linked?
CHANGE FOCUS			
3. organizational change	changes as response to performance data?	changes as response to environment changes?	changes in goals/goal-setting processes?
COMMITMENT FOCUS			
4. commitment to effort	commitment to accountability created?	commitment to change efforts created?	commitment to school/district goals created?
CARING FOCUS			
5. consideration	concern for community opinion on performance?	decisions reflect concerns of community?	emphasis on affective goals?
COMMUNITY FOCUS			
6. community integration	schools/district involve community in monitoring?	community involvement in change efforts? of goals?	community involvement in setting

Note. From Struggling to be good enough by P. Coleman and L. LaRocque, 1989. Manuscript submitted for publication.

framework consists of six activity and attitude focusses, three task-oriented and three human relations oriented. These focusses were labelled: 1. instruction, 2. accountability, 3. organizational change, 4. commitment to effort, 5. consideration, and 6. community integration. Each of these six district-level focusses was examined in terms of three broad district tasks: A. be accountable, B. improve/adapt, and C. set expectations. The resulting matrix of eighteen cells describes the work of district administrators together with the shared beliefs manifest in district attitudes and practices. The general research questions generated from this matrix guided data collection and analysis for the study.

Data Collection

The major method of data collection for the Coleman and LaRocque investigation was the audio-taped interview consisting of 32 relatively broad, open-ended questions. All district office administrators were interviewed -- superintendent, assistant superintendent, director(s) and supervisor(s). For the districts in the sample, this represented one to three individuals. A minimum of one-third of the principals in each district was interviewed. Principals selected for interview represented a variety of school levels, sizes and proximities to community centres. Only principals with three or more years of service in the district were included on the grounds that more recent appointees might not be as familiar with district norms and practices as principals with longer tenure.

All interviews were conducted by the co-investigators. Throughout the 90 to 150 minute interviews, respondents were probed for clarification, elaboration and specific examples. Since respondents were given several opportunities to

mention relevant district policies and practices in each area, the investigators inferred that "those not mentioned were not salient in the minds of respondents, and thus not important in the district" (LaRocque & Coleman, 1988, p. 15).

Data Analysis

After all interview data had been transcribed and read numerous times, a coding schedule was developed to capture the major themes and sub-themes emerging from the data. Independent coders established the reliability of the coding schedules. Triangulation techniques ensured internal response consistency by comparing responses across each district, and by comparing responses to district documents such as policy manuals, handbooks and administrative meeting agenda/minutes.

From the mass of interview data, relatively comprehensive and realistic descriptions emerged of the norms and practices prevalent in each district. These norms and practices varied significantly when comparisons were drawn between performance groups. However, within performance groups there were significant similarities in approaches and attitudes. Thus, the findings of the Coleman and LaRocque study support the speculation that an important positive relationship exists between a district's performance and the ethos in which that performance occurs.

The possibility that collegial interaction could be an ethos variable emerged first during the interview process as the co-investigators reflected on the variance between districts in response patterns. Although none of the questions on the prepared schedule asked respondents directly about the opportunities for collegial interaction in their district, probes occassionally

verified the presence or absence of such interaction. In some instances, respondents referred spontaneously and explicitly to the presence or absence of collegial exchange as they described district norms and practices. At other times, collegial interaction could be inferred when respondents displayed detailed knowledge of the practices in colleagues' schools. Such knowledge suggested that communication between administrators about instructional matters may occur relatively frequently in these districts.

The next section describes the methodology devised to analyze the interview data from a collegiality perspective. The analysis proceeds in terms of three separate yet related tasks: first, to identify in the interview data all references to collegial interaction between administrators in a subset of four districts; second, to describe the range, focus and frequency of interactions characteristic of each district in the subset; and third, to determine if distinctions can be made between high-performing and low- performing districts with respect to their patterns of collegial exchange.

The Collegiality Study

Sample of Districts

For the purposes of the collegiality study, a subset of four districts was selected from the sample of ten districts included in the Coleman and LaRocque investigation. Two of these districts, R and J, are representative of the high-performing group of districts identified by Coleman and LaRocque. The other two districts, M and H, are among the low-performing group. Selection of the subset of four districts was based primarily upon outcome measures in order to determine if variations in collegial interaction patterns could be associated with

district performance. Two districts were selected for each performance group, high and low, in order to compare results within groups as well as between them. In addition to the contrast with respect to achievement and cost measures, these four districts exhibit other bases for comparison: size and location.

Districts R and J are both medium-sized by B. C. standards (2101 - 5600 students). Each district serves a small city and the surrounding rural area. District R is situated in B. C.'s southern interior; District J is located in a more remote northern sector of the province. Some of the schools in District J are quite large and most are scattered over a considerable area.

District M is also a medium-sized district. It is located in a well-established small city and its relatively large schools serve a concentrated urban population. District H is a small (less than 2100 students) rural district serving a resource based community. It is comprised of one high school and several scattered feeder elementary schools.

Data Pool

From the interview data files compiled in the Coleman and LaRocque study for each of these districts, four of the six matrix focusses were selected for investigation across all three district tasks. The four focusses included are: 1. instruction, 2. accountability, 3. change and 4. commitment. Thus, district and school administrator responses to interview questions corresponding to twelve cells of the eighteen cell matrix of the Coleman and LaRocque study constitute the data pool for this investigation. Focusses five and six were

excluded from the data pool because they deal primarily with community level interactions.

Data Analysis

The first step in the data analysis was to search the interview data for all references to collegial interaction, whether stated explicitly by respondents or inferred from context. (Transcripts used for this study are available from the author.) These passages were highlighted with a marker. A preliminary plan to discriminate between collegial (that is, professional) interactions and social (non-professional) interactions was discarded because of the virtual absence of references to non-professional exchanges in the data.

Next, a low inference, descriptive coding scheme was devised to identify (a) the context and (b) the content of each highlighted interaction. Contextual information was captured for each interaction by coding responses corresponding to the following questions:

- who talked to whom?
- was the interaction explicit or inferred?
- was the format structured or ad hoc?
- was the direction of the communication two-way (consultative) or one-way (informational)?

A description of content was captured for each interaction by coding information corresponding to the questions:

- what was the issue discussed?
- what was the stance of the respondent to the issue?
- what were the constraining or promoting factors associated with the issue?

Finally, all interactions were coded as to whether they confirmed or disconfirmed what at least two-thirds of the respondents reported as being a district policy or practice (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Coding reliability was established by two independent coders who read and coded the transcript data according to the coding scheme described below. Inter-rater reliability scores are shown, by district, in Table 2.

Coding Scheme

This section provides a key to the abbreviations used to code references to interactions identified in the interview data. The key also provides examples of the types of references which were included under each code category. Finally, the steps that were taken in coding each passage are described.

Key to the coding scheme.

DA = District Administrator: includes Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of Instruction, Supervisor

P = Principal: an individual

PG = Principal Group: any formal grouping of principals

T = Teachers

EXP = explicit reference to an interaction

INF = interaction inferred from context

TABLE 2

Inter-coder Reliability Scores (% agreement) by District

Districts	District H	J	M	R	mean	range
Focus						
1. Instruction	83	60	83	88	79	60-88
2. Accountability	67	83	100	75	81	67-100
3. Change	86	75	100	100	90	75-100
4. Commitment	81	91	92	93	89	81-93
mean	79	77	94	89	85	77-94

S = structured: a scheduled, formal venue for an interaction, such as a committee meeting

AH = ad hoc: an informal venue for an interaction, such as a telephone call

FOC = focus of the interaction: the issue that prompted the interaction or communication

Steps in coding.

1. Transcripts from Districts R, J, M, and H comprising Focusses 1, 2, 3, and 4 were read. All passages referring to interactions between District Administrators and Principals, District Administrators and a Principal Group, or between individual Principals were highlighted, whether explicit or inferred.

2. All highlighted passages were re-read and coded as to who talked to whom. The probable initiator of the interaction was indicated first, as follows: DA --> P, DA --> PG, PG --> DA, P --> DA. If the interaction was primarily one way, an arrow was used to indicate the direction of the communication, as shown above. If the interaction was more reciprocal, a slash mark was used: DA/PG.

3. The following coding rules were applied in order to capture a range of context and content information associated with each interaction:
DA/PG, PG/DA, P/P: refers to two-way interactions.
Includes references to: consultation, discussion, debate, input, feedback, committee work; meetings that are described explicitly by the respondent as primarily two-way rather than informational; sharing of ideas; requests for assistance or information.

DA --> PG,P: refers to primarily one-way communication from a District Administrator to a Principal Group or Principal.
Includes references to: District Administrator outlining policy, giving direction, presenting information, providing in-service.

PG --> DA; P --> DA: refers to primarily one-way communication from a Principal Group or Principal to a District Administrator.
Includes references to: Principal Group or Principal reporting back requested information to a District Administrator; Principal Group developing a policy statement or a process document at the request of a District Administrator; Principal or Principal Group responding to district policy or process; Principal or Principal Group raising issues with a District Administrator.

ST: refers to structured, formal, regularly scheduled interactions.
Includes references to: administrators' meetings; standing committees; work shops; task forces; regularly scheduled visits to the school such as accreditation team visits; scheduled District Administrator visits to school to discuss principal goals and objectives, assessment follow-up, test scores and the like; retreats.

AH: refers to ad hoc, informal interactions.
Includes references to: unscheduled, intermittent, temporary or spontaneous meetings or committees; visits to the school for informal monitoring purposes, supervision, providing feedback or information.

EXP: refers to explicitly reported interactions.

INF: refers to inferred interactions.
The coder must be reasonably certain an interaction occurred because of the respondent's reference to: the stance of colleagues on a particular issue; knowledge of programs and practices in other schools; knowledge of problems or concerns throughout the district or within a particular school; district in-service initiatives.

FOC: refers to the focus of the interaction; the issue prompting the interaction. Includes references to: restraint, curriculum, teacher transfers, report writing, supervision of instruction, goals, test results, principal evaluation, district policies, budget, relationships, decision making, assessment procedures and so forth.

+ - : refers to the opinion or stance expressed by the respondent with respect to an issue.

Codes were printed in the right-hand margin of the transcript adjacent to the corresponding highlighted passage to which they referred. There were several instances where a respondent commented on the lack of opportunity for interaction, or mentioned issues that they believed should be discussed in their district but were not. These comments were noted with an asterisk in the left-hand margin of the transcript, together with a brief description of the issue or circumstance.

4. The coded passages were collated into a chart for each district, labelled a Master Interaction Chart, which shows each interaction as it was reported by a respondent, together with the circumstantial information associated with the interaction.

Clusters of interactions were arranged horizontally on the chart in order as they appeared in the transcript and according to the interview question that prompted the response. Dividing lines were drawn to separate each respondent's set of reported interactions, beginning with the district superintendent (identity number 1.01) and proceeding in order through the other central office administrators (identity numbers 1.02 and 1.03) to the principals (identity numbers 2.01, 2.02 and so on).

Table 3 shows Columns I to IX of the Master Interaction Chart assembled for District M. (A complete set of Master Interaction Charts is available from the author.) Space constraints prevent the display of the somewhat lengthier quotes and comments recorded in Columns X to XII. However, representative examples of these are found throughout Chapters 4 and 5.

In order to provide a guide to the charts, a column by column explanation follows.

TABLE 3

District M: Interaction Chart

M1.01

Interview Topic	Interaction Number	Who	INF	EXP	ST	AH	2w	Direction DA->P	Direction P->DA	Issue	Opinion
Creating	1	PG		x	x		x			elem assessmnt	+
Commitment to	2	P,T		x	x				x	testing	+
Self Evaluation	3	P,T		x	x			x		test scores	+
Reporting and	4	PG		x	x			x		school goals	+
Monitoring	5	P		x	x				x	reporting goals	+
Creating	6	PG		x	x		x			d-m process	+
Commitment to	7	P,T	x		x				x	curr. committee	+
Change	8	P		x	x		x			curr. council	+
Building	9	PG		x	x			x		admin. meetings	-
School staff	10	P,T	x			x			x	policy devel.	+
Goal consensus	11	PG		x	x	x				principal role	+
Pursuing Monitoring Goals	12	P,T	x		x			x		PLAP test scores	+
Changes in	13	P,T		x	x	x		x		d-m process	+
Goal setting	14	PG	x		x			x		SBDM	+
Process	15	PG		x	x				x	curr. committee	+
M1.02											
Creating Commitment to Change	1	PG		x	x		x			elem. SS curric.	0
Building	2	PG		x	x		x			elem. computers	+
School staff	3	PG		x	x		x			P transfer policy	+
Goal consensus	4	PG		x	x		x			P transfer policy	+
	5	PG		x	x		x			field trip policy	+
M1.03											
Reporting and Monitoring	1	PG	x			x	x			improving instr.	0
M2.01											
Creating Commitment to Evaluation	1	DA,P	x		x			x		committees	-
Creating Commitment to Change	2	DA,P		x	x			x		committees	-

Interview Topic	Interaction Number	Who	INF	EXP	ST	AH	2w	Direction DA->P	Direction P->DA	Issue	Opinion
Building	3	DA,P		x	x			x		admin. meetings	-
School staff	4	DA,P		x	x			x		P involvement	-
Goal consensus	5	P/P		x		x	x			protecting turf	+
	6	P/P		x	x		x			P transfers	+
	7	DA		x	x	x			x	reaction to chnge	-
	8	DA		x		x	x			staffing d-m	-
	9	DA		x		x	x			supply money	-
Changes in Goal setting Process	10	DA,P		x	x		x			P involvement	-
M2.02											
Creating Commitment to Change	1	P/P	x		x	x	x			P transfers	+
Building	2	P/P		x		x	x			P transfers	+
School staff	3	PG		x	x		x			P trans. policy	-
Goal consensus	4	DA		x		x	x			staffing	0
	5	P/P	x			x		x		SBDM	-
Changes in Goal setting Process	6	DA		x	x			x		SBDM	-
M2.03											
Reporting and Monitoring	1	DA	x		x			x		CAT testing	0
Creating	2	DA		x	x			x		implementation	-
Commitment to Change	3	P/P	x			x				T end runs to DA	-
Adapting to Restraint	4	DA		x	x	x	x			morale	+
Building	5	DA		x	x	x	x			policy develop.	+
School staff	6	DA		x	x	x	x			DA/PG relations	+
Goal consensus	7	DA		x		x	x			staffing, $	+
	8	DA,P		x	x		x			admin. meetings	+
	9	P/P	x			x	x			T end runs to DA	-
Pursuing Monitoring goals	10	DA	x		x			x		Cat testing	0
Changes in Goal setting Process	11	DA		x	x		x			policy develop.	+

Interview Topic	Interaction Number	Who	INF	EXP	ST	AH	2w	Direction DA->P	Direction P->DA	Issue	Opinion
M2.04											
Reporting Performance Data	1	DA		x		x	x			low Plap scores	0
	2	DA		x		x	x			low Cat scores	0
Creating Commitment to Evaluation	3	P/P	x			x	x			T evaluation	-
	4	P/P	x			x	x			power struggle	-
Creating Commitment to Change	5	DA,P,T		x	x		x			Curric. council	+
Building School staff Goal consensus	6	DA,P,T		x	x		x			committees	+
	7	P/P	x			x	x			opting out	-

Column I: District identification letter and respondent number, e.g. M1.01; interview question number and title, e.g. 19. Creating Commitment to Self-Evaluation

Column II: interaction number, e.g. 1,2,3,.....

Column III: WHO refers to the person(s) interacting with the respondent

Column IV: INF/EXP refers to whether the interaction was coded as inferred or explicit as per the coding rules (see Step 3 above).

Column V: STRUCTURED/AD HOC refers to the formality or informality of the interaction context as per the coding rules.

Column VI: FREQUENCY refers to the approximate number of times per year the interaction occurred. Regularly scheduled meetings are noted as REG in this column. (Note that this column does not appear in Table 3.)

Column VII: DIRECTION refers to the primary direction of the interaction, one-way or two-way.

Column VIII: ISSUE summarizes the topic prompting the interaction, e.g. staffing, test scores, etc.

Column IX: OPINION refers to the stance of the respondent to an issue (+ -)

Column X: CONSTRAINING or PROMOTING FACTORS refers to factors mentioned by the respondent as constraining or promoting interaction, e.g. small district size -- promoting committee disbanded -- constraining

Column XI: RATIONALE refers to a respondent's explanation as to why a particular issue arose in the district or to support his/her opinion.

Column XII: QUOTES consists of verbatim comments that express the prevailing district attitude towards an issue. Examples of comments referring explicitly to the presence or absence of collegial relationships in a district are also recorded in this column.

These quotes may also provide examples of missed opportunities for interaction noted in the left-hand margin of the transcripts. Each quote is recorded in the chart section corresponding to the respondent who reported it and with reference to the interview question that prompted it.

Columns I to VII record the CONTEXT in which interactions occurred, while Columns VIII to XII describe their CONTENT.

The relatively low inference Master Interaction Charts for each district, generated directly from the coded interview data as described above, constitute the main source from which all other charts and tables were derived for this study. Inferences made about the patterns emerging from the master charts are supported by illustrative quotations selected from the transcripts. Quotations were used only if (a) they were representative of comments made by at least two-thirds of respondents in the district, and (b) they were not disconfirmed by any other respondent in the district (Miles & Huberman, 1984). All quotations identify the district and speaker by their code labels.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Analysis

Critical Practices

Drawing from Little's (1982) inventory of practices associated with collegial norms among teachers at the school level, and applying this inventory to principals and their superordinates at the district level, a set of conditions supporting collegiality includes the following district characteristics:

1. frequent opportunities, both formal and informal, for focussed talk about instructional policies and practices;
2. district concern for continuous improvement in core educational outcomes;
3. district expectation that principals work collaboratively toward solving problems.

Evidence that collegial norms exist in a district may be inferred when a majority of district administrators manifest a number of the following behaviors:

1. expressing respect for the work of colleagues;
2. describing peers and superordinates as resource persons, sounding boards, etc.;
3. referring to visits, meetings, committees and other opportunities for collegial contact in a positive manner;
4. expressing instructional concerns in a shared language;
5. exhibiting a common pool of information;
6. exhibiting knowledge of, and commitment to, district goals and expectations;
7. referring positively to programs and practices in other schools;
8. expressing support for district processes, e.g. assessment, monitoring.

The next section compares the interactions identified in the interview data from Districts R, J, M, and H with respect to their frequency, focus, venue and consistency.

Frequency

A simple tabulation of the interactions per district identified in the transcripts reveals considerable differences between the high-performing districts (R and J) and the low-performing districts (M and H). Table 4 summarizes the frequency of interactions per district by type.

The total number of interactions identified in the interview data of Districts R and J (149 and 146 respectively) were each over twice the number found in either District M (56) or District H (63). Table 4 also reveals a marked difference between the high-performing districts, R and J, and the low-performing districts, M and H, with respect to the types of interactions extracted from the transcript data.

As described earlier in the Methodology section of this study, each interaction was coded as to whether it appeared to be Inferred or Explicit, Structured or Ad hoc, Two-way or One-way. Although the number of inferred interactions is relatively uniform across all four districts, explicitly stated instances of interaction in Districts R and J (118 and 113, respectively) outstrip those in either District M or District H by a ratio of about 3:1.

Again, when we look at whether an interaction took place in a formal (structured) setting or in a more informal context (ad hoc) we find the high-performing districts R and J tending towards more planned opportunities for

TABLE 4

Type and Frequency of Interactions by District

	District			
	M	H	R	J
Totals	56	63	149	146
Type of interaction				
Inferred	14	25	31	33
Explicit	42	38	118	113
Structured	39	42	111	86
Ad hoc	17	21	38	60
Two-way	32	36	112	96
One-way	24	27	37	50

interaction (111 and 86, respectively) than did their low-performing counterparts District M (39) and District H (42).

Finally, Table 4 shows that the majority of interactions in Districts R and J tended to be two-way (interactive, consultative) rather than predominantly one-way (informational). Districts M and H each reported only slightly larger numbers of two-way than one-way interactions, and these were roughly one-third as many as those identified in either District R or District J.

One can conclude from these data that workplace conditions in the high-performing districts R and J are more conducive to collegial exchange than those evident in either of the low-performing districts. Thus it can be argued that Districts R and J appear to satisfy one of the conditions Little (1982) identifies as supporting collegiality: relatively frequent opportunities for administrators to engage in focussed debate about instructional issues. The range of venues and mechanisms for interaction evident in each district will be discussed more fully later.

A partial explanation for the difference between high- and low-performing districts in the frequency of interactions may be found by simply comparing transcript lengths by district.

High-performing		Low-performing	
District R =	108 pages	District M =	48 pages
District J =	68 pages	District H =	48 pages
Total	176 pages	Total	96 pages

As Table 5 illustrates, respondents in Districts R and J averaged twice the number of interactions per person (16.5 and 16.2, respectively) when compared with their counterparts in Districts M and H (8.0 each). It is interesting to note that every respondent in Districts R and J reported interactions, ranging from a low of 7 reports for one principal in District J to a high of 25 by a principal in District R. However, for one district administrator in District H and two principals in District M no mention of interaction could be identified from the interview data, with other respondents reporting between 1 and 15 interactions each. Table 5 compares the number of reported interactions per district by respondent.

From these figures it can be argued that administrators in Districts R and J appear to have much more to say in response to questions concerning district policies and practices than do administrators in Districts M and H. Since Coleman and LaRocque were careful to give all respondents several opportunities during the course of the interview to elaborate, it seems likely that administrators in Districts R and J have more to talk about because there is a wider range of salient instructional issues being addressed in their districts. Accordingly, an analysis of the range and salience of instructionally focussed issues identified in the interview data is presented. These findings are summarized by district in Table 6.

Range and Salience of Issues

As with the frequency of interaction data discussed above, the range of issues listed in Table 6 was collated from the master charts which were prepared directly from the transcript data. A relatively wide range of instructionally focussed issues is another of the indicators Little (1982)

TABLE 5

Number of Interactions Reported by Respondents

	District			
	M	H	R	J
Respondent				
District Administrators Total	22	12	44	50
1.01	15	9	9	21
1.02	6	-	23	11
1.03	1	3	12	18
Average	7.3	6.0	14.6	16.6
Principals Total	34	51	105	96
2.01	10	8	25	10
2.01	6	13	10	7
2.03	11	14	17	8
2.04	7	2	14	13
2.05	-	6	19	18
2.06	-	8	20	18
Average	8.5	8.3	17.5	16.0
Overall Average	8.0	8.0	16.5	16.2

TABLE 6

Range and Salience of Issues: Response Consistency by District

District	Administrator Consistency Rating							
	M		H		R		J	
Respondent Group	DA	P	DA	P	DA	P	DA	P
Issues								
Monitoring issues								
test score	+	X	X	S	++	++	++	++
school assessment	+	N	X	N	++	++	++	++
school goals		N	-	N	++	++	++	+
district goals	N	X	S	N	+	+	++	++
Evaluation issues								
principals	N	N	N	+	++	+	+	+
programs	N	N	N	N	++	++	++	++
teachers	+	X	N	N	+	+	++	+
report cards	N	N	N	+	+	N	N	N
Decision-making issues								
text selection	+	++	+	++	++	++	++	++
d-m process	+	-	+	+	++	++	++	++
staffing	N	S	++	+	++	++	+	+
principal input	++	S	S	S	++	++	++	++
improvement programs	+	N	N	N	+	++	++	++
test selection	N N	- -	S	++	++	+	+	
pro-d topics	N	N	N	N	+	++	++	++
principal transfers	+	+	N	N	N	N	N	N
Relationship issues								
communication	++	-	-	S	+	++	++	++
P/P relations	N	X	N	N	+	++	+	++
DA support	N	N	N	N	+	++	++	++
principal autonomy	+	-	N	N	++	++	N	+
DA leadership style	+	-	N	+	++	++	++	+
DA/P relations	+	-	N	S	+	++	++	++
Attitude to change	N	S	- -	-	++	++	++	++
Effects of restraint	N	S	N	N	N	N	+	N

Key: ++ = 2/3 or more of the respondents commented positively
+ = 1/3 to 2/3 of the respondents commented positively
N = not mentioned by 2/3 or more of the respondents
-- = 2/3 or more of the respondents commented negatively
- = 1/3 to 2/3 of the respondents commented negatively
S = split opinion among respondents
X = specifically mentioned by 1/3 or more of the respondents that the issue is not discussed

associates with collegial norms among practitioners. A variety of topics is thought to indicate a concern for core educational outcomes and to provide the impetus for collegial exchange.

Each issue in Table 6 was coded as to its general salience among administrators across the district. The coding scheme devised also shows whether the importance attached to each issue is reflective of a generally positive or a generally negative stance among respondents, or whether opinion was divided either within or between respondent groups. In this way, Table 6 represents an attempt to capture the presence or absence in the sample districts of three of the conditions Little (1982) identifies as supporting norms of collegiality and continuous improvement:

1. the range of instructional issues discussed among practitioners;
2. the salience of these issues both within and between respondent groups;
3. the consistency of opinion expressed with respect to the issues both within and between respondent groups.

As Table 6 shows, the high-performing districts, R and J, differed from the low-performing districts, M and H, with respect to all three of these conditions.

Range of issues. Of the 24 issues extracted from the Master Interaction Charts, respondents in District R reported interactions in connection with all but two: principal transfers and the effects of budgetary restraint. Similarly, District J respondents reported interactions concerning all issues except two: principal transfers and report card development.

District M respondents did not mention interactions associated with 8 of the 24 issues: district goal review, principal evaluation, program evaluation,

report card development, test selection, professional development, collegial contact among principals, and district support for school initiatives. Of these, district goal review and principal collegiality were specifically mentioned by at least one-third of principal respondents as issues that were not discussed in District M.

> I am reluctant to say that the district is pursuing any goals. (M.2.01)
>
> I can't think of what [the district's goals] would be. I don't think they have ever been stated, unless they were in the Superintendent's message in September. (M2.02)
>
> We are not a collegial district at any level....Nobody trusts anybody else, and it goes all the way from bottom to top. (M2.01)

Administrators in District H did not mention interactions associated with 10 of the issues: school assessment, program evaluation, teacher evaluation and report writing, instructional improvement programs, professional development, principal transfers, principal collegiality, district support for school initiatives, principal autonomy, and the effects of restraint. One District Administrator stated explicitly that school assessment was <u>not</u> discussed in the district.

> Self-improvement has not been a focus in the district. (H.1.03)

<u>Salience</u>. Salience is a third condition identified by Little (1982) as supporting collegial norms. It is defined here as the strength of agreement between district administrators and principals with respect to the importance of issues mentioned in connection with interactions, and to the stance expressed by each group.

As Table 6 shows, District R administrators were in agreement with respect to 16 of the 24 issues. That is, at least two-thirds of the respondents in each group mentioned interactions associated with 16 issues in a positive way. There was relatively close agreement (within one-third of the respondents) about the remaining eight issues. There were no instances of split opinion within a respondent group; nor was there specific mention that a particular issue was not discussed.

Responses in District J were also remarkably consistent. There was agreement as to weighting and stance between administrator groups with respect to 18 of the 24 issues, and close agreement (within one-third) about the remaining six issues. As with District R, District J respondents reported a uniformly positive stance to the issues, and there was no specific mention that an issue was not discussed.

Districts M and H vary markedly from R and J, both with respect to salience of issues and to opinions expressed about the issues. District M respondents were in agreement about only one issue -- principal transfers. The principal group specifically mentions four issues as not generating discussion in their district: test score analysis, teacher evaluation and report writing, district goal review and principal collegiality. The principals report divided opinion on another four issues: staffing, principal input, attitudes to change, and the effects of restraint. Further, opinion is divided between district administrators (positive) and principals (negative) on several important issues: decision-making process, communication between groups, principal autonomy, district administrator leadership style, and collegial relations between district administrators and principals.

District H is characterized by a similarly divided response pattern. Respondent groups agreed positively on only one issue -- the decision-making process. There was close positive agreement about curriculum change and staffing; close negative agreement was expressed in connection with attitudes to change, test selection, and communication among groups. District administrators referred specifically to test score analysis and school assessment as issues not discussed in the district. Their opinion was split on the issues of staffing and district goal review. The fact that there were only two respondents in this group invites the implication that divisiveness begins at the top in this district. Principals were divided on the issues of test score analysis, principal input, test selection, communication and collegial relations between administrators.

Interaction Mechanisms

The range of mechanisms or venues available to district administrators and principals for interaction purposes can be seen as an important collegiality-promoting factor. As such, respondents mention of, and attitude toward, the various opportunities for collegial exchange available to them in their districts are the focus for this section of the data analysis. The range of mechanisms characteristic of the districts in the sample, together with administrator attitudes about the efficacy of these mechanisms, is shown in Table 7. As with the range of issues, venues for interaction were collated from the four Master Interaction Charts.

An examination of Table 7 shows that distinctions can be seen between the high- and low- performing districts when responses are compared with

TABLE 7

Opportunities for Interaction: Mechanisms and Efficacy

District	Administrator Efficacy Rating							
	M		H		R		J	
Respondent Group	DA	P	DA	P	DA	P	DA	P
Mechanism								
Structured								
Meetings	-	S	-	+	++	+	++	++
Committees	++	S	N	+	++	+	++	++
DA formal visits	N	N	N	N	++	++	++	++
Retreats	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	N
Workshops	N	N	N	N	+	++	+	++
Evaluation team	N	N	X	-	N	+	++	++
P formal visits	N	N	N	+*	N	N	N	N
Ad Hoc								
DA informal visits	N	N	N	+	++	+	++	++
Other DA informal	++	+	++	++	++	++	++	++
P informal visits	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Other P informal	N	N	N	+	+#	++	+#	++

Key: ++ = 2/3 of the respondents commented positively
+ = 1/3 to 2/3 of the respondents commented positively
N = not mentioned by 2/3 or more of the respondents
- = 1/3 to 2/3 of the respondents commented negatively
S = split opinion among the respondents
X = specifically mentioned by 1/3 or more of the respondents that the mechanism is not in place
+* = 1/3 of the principals reported visiting schools, but only in other districts
+# = 1/3 of the district administrators reported informal contacts between principals

respect to the range and efficacy of mechanisms. In Districts R and J, administrators reported 8 of the 11 mechanisms available to them were both used and useful. In neither district did respondents mention principals visiting each other at school, either formally or informally, as a characteristic mechanism.

In District R there was strong positive affirmation from all respondents of district administrator formal visits to schools, and of district administrator informal contacts with principals. District administrators were somewhat more positive than were principals about the efficacy of meetings, committees and district administrator informal visits to schools. Principals were more positive about the usefulness of workshops and informal contacts with other principals. Neither group mentioned retreats or principal visits to schools as significant mechanisms for collegial exchange in District R.

Respondent groups in District J shared strong positive agreement about the efficacy of six mechanisms: meetings, committees, district administrator formal visits to schools, evaluation team visits, and other district administrator informal contacts with principals. Principal support for workshops and informal contacts with peers was somewhat stronger than that reported by District Administrators. Neither group mentioned principal visits to schools as a significant mechanism in District J. Only one district administrator mentioned retreats as a venue for interaction.

In addition to the range of issues and mechanisms available to respondents in Districts R and J, and the consistently strong positive support expressed for their relevance and efficacy, evidence of collegial norms in these districts is found in exerpts from the verbatim transcripts. The fact that these

comments were not solicited by specific interview questions lends to their credibility as accurate descriptions of characteristic district practice.

> I think there is a reasonable amount of staying in touch [among principals]. I think there could be more. But there could always be more, more collegiality. (R1.01)
>
> I think we work at [problems] with [principals] as colleagues. The principals will call one or the other without hesitation; they know they won't be judged badly if they call for help. (R1.02)
>
> I think the relationship at this point is really collegial; there is a lot of give and take. (R2.06)
>
> It's a pretty collegial district. People are involved in the decisions that affect them. [There is] effort not just to lay things on, but rather to demonstrate a need and build on it. (J1.03)
>
> The administrators talk together a lot and many have taken courses together, so they have a common language.... We support one another's efforts; we share a lot. (J2.03)

The response pattern in District M is markedly different from that of the high-performing districts. Respondents in District M reported positive support for only 1 of the 11 interaction mechanisms -- informal district administrator contacts. District administrators rated the efficacy of committees quite highly, but expressed negative opinions about meetings. Principal opinion was split with regard to the usefulness of both committee work and meetings.

Examination of the transcript data reveals a strong preference among all respondents in District M for frequent informal contact between individual principals and district administrators.

> One-to-one interactions between principals and district staff are the main coordinating device. The roles of district administrators are well delineated.... [There is] easy access; we can reach [them] by phone -- no fuss, no muss. (M2.03)

I speak to principals by phone every day. (M1.01)

In a relatively small, compact district such as this, one could reasonably expect more face-to-face contact between administrators. As District M demonstrates, distances between schools does not appear to be an important factor in determining the extent to which this mechanism is used.

> We have the advantage of being a small district so we can visit the schools easily, although I haven't got in as much as I anticipated. (M1.01)

The one issue in District M that prompted considerable discussion among principals was a proposed new policy concerning principal transfers. The interactions generated by this issue are interesting because they illustrate what can be labelled "territoriality" or the "dark side" of collegiality.

> The principals have a strong sense of territory -- "this is my school". They clearly see that they run the schools. Therefore, although they do not always agree with one another, there is an unwritten law that we hang together at meetings with district staff. We agree on a position and hold it in meetings with central office. (M2.01)

Principals in this district describe themselves as engaged in a continous struggle for control of the schools, not only with the school board and district administrators, but also with teachers.

> There is a power struggle between principals and the Teachers' Association, which is tied into accountability, especially with respect to report writing. The principals are not sure of the support they would receive if they were to write an unfavourable report. (M2.04)

Similarly, the one mechanism for interaction that prevails in District M -- one-on-one negotiation -- also contributes to a destructive use of "end runs", as well as to a general lack of commitment to district decisions.

> There have been situations where teachers have circumvented the formal channels and gone directly to the Board or district administrators. (M2.03)

> The reason I'm smiling is that there seems to be, to almost every decision made, one or more schools who have a reason for not abiding by the decision that everyone else has to live by. There are always concessions, amendments, a reluctance to say, "We've heard everyone, considered all the information, this is the decision, now do it". (M2.04)

Unfortunately, divisiveness among respondents in this district is not surprising in view of comments, such as the example exerpted below, which reflect lack of respect for colleagues. The interviewers noted, in an editorial aside shown in double parentheses, that such comments were frequently heard in District M.

> I don't think we have an obligation to a C minus teacher just because my colleague down the road is not screening properly. (M2.02) ((another negative comment about other principals))

A somewhat similar pattern of responses associated with interaction mechanisms exists in District H. Both respondent groups were strongly positive only about the efficacy of informal district administrator contacts. Principals expressed a moderately positive stance toward meetings, committees, district administrator informal visits to schools, informal contacts with their peers and formal visits to schools. It should be noted that visits to schools were only mentioned in the context of out-of-district observational forays. The mechanism

of external evaluation team visits received negative mention by principals, and it was specifically identified as not in place by district administrators. It is interesting to note that principals were favourably disposed to informal district administrator visits to schools, but that district administrators did not mention engaging in this activity.

> The present Superintendent is new and we haven't seen much of him. [He] is very versatile with budget, but not as aware as he should be of what is going on in classrooms. [He] only visited a total of two hours. (H2.03)

Both respondent groups in District H describe administrative meetings as less interactive than desired.

> At some meetings communication is just one way, even when issues could be discussed. (H1.03)

> Sometimes things are floated out and reaction is gauged. After the fact testing of ideas. Some of the process of consultation is window-dressing. (H2.05)

The dark side of collegiality identified in District M also surfaces in District H, although the divisiveness here is not as pronounced as that evident in District M.

> But I find that most of the time when we meet we don't come to a consensus. I guess we all have our territory to protect, and we seem to be concerned just with our territory when we meet. (H2.03)

The preference for one-on-one negotiation rather than group consensus building is characteristic of District H, as it is in District M.

> D. and I talk almost every day.... That kind of communication, it's essential that it be so. That is our strength. (H2.01)

Recurring Themes and Patterns

In an effort to describe the general ethos of the four districts under study, this section will discuss findings in terms of the themes and patterns emerging from the data as revealed by the interactions characteristic of each. Such descriptions are necessarily inferential and speculative. However, the facts that these portraits are drawn from the relatively low-inference reportage of administrators working in these districts, and that they exhibit considerable internal consistency lends credibility to their accuracy. Quotations selected for illustrative purposes are broadly representative of the commentary found among respondents within a district. Each quotation identifies the district and speaker in parentheses.

A major theme emerging from the data is the remarkable similarity in district interaction patterns within the two performance groups, as compared to the clear distinctions that can be made between them. This finding supports the view that good districts, like good schools, tend to vary together across a number of measures (Coleman, 1984; Hargrove, Abernathy, Graham, Cunningham, Ward, & Vaughn, 1981). Unfortunately, the findings also show that a corollary may also be present -- poor districts tend to perform poorly across a variety of measures.

High-Performing Districts

The high-performing districts R and J can be described as operating under a monitored autonomy model (Cuban, 1984). District administrators here are highly visible, and credible, instructional leaders.

> We see a lot of [the District Administrators] in spite of the distance. I appreciate their presence; they are on top of things. They do get around and their follow-up is good. (J2.06)

> [The Superintendent] spends a lot of time out in the schools rather than in his office. I think a lot of people appreciate that. (R2.03)

District administrator expectations of principals with respect to outcomes are clear and demanding. They ensure compliance with district objectives through a set of well-defined monitoring practices. Commitment to these objectives is achieved through a consultative approach to decision-making on substantive issues and processes. Most principals in these districts consider their input into processes, if not policies, to be meaningful.

> I find that we really get on quite well, because I think we really are consulted. That is, I think we really are consulted although the direction has been determined by the Superintendent. (R2.05)

However, principals are also aware that if they do not work collaboratively to achieve consensus among themselves in order to produce workable process documents, a process will be imposed.

> Where we're given a mandate, we're fairly confident the policy we draw up will go, once we've got our act together. But we must do our homework; we must be prepared for our meetings or [the Superintendent] won't accept what we suggest. (J2.01)

In this way, principals in districts R and J are given both the opportunity and the impetus to interact collegially.

A second interaction pattern characteristic of the two high-performing districts is the tendency to a district-regarding perspective among principals. This tendency can be viewed as an enlargement to the district level of LaRocque's (1983) description of school-regarding teachers at the school level.

> [W]e would have to talk about [teacher transfers] with the Superintendent or at least with the Supervisor of Instruction and then look at the needs of the whole district, not just this school. (R2.04)

The district-regarding perspective characteristic of Districts R and J may be generated partly by a strong district presence and partly by the coaching and modelling leadership style of the District administrators -- a style which encourages collaboration among principals and the sharing of ideas.

> You're spread pretty thin [but] one of the priorities in my estimation is helping schools get off the ground with this effectiveness stuff. I don't just tell people things anymore, I coach them, provide them with feedback. I help them do what they set out to do. (J1.03)

> This is a district where things happen, where we try to do things. (J2.01)

Respondents in these districts tended to acknowledge the educational work of their colleagues in respectful terms.

> Our view of the school staffs by and large is that they are good people.... We have good teachers .... good principals. We are impressed by their hard work (R1.01)

A third common thread running through the interaction patterns of the high-performing districts is the shared responsibility evident in both districts for initiating improvement programs. In-service is largely school based with district staff providing support.

> We allow the principals a lot of autonomy, at the same time trying to give them as much support as possible. (R1.03)

> Principals are given ample leeway to make decisions, be they relevant to only your school or to the district as a whole. I think the communication in this regard is excellent; the respect, the mutual

> appreciation is there. If there's an idea, it's "Let's go for it, let's try it." (J2.06)
>
> You are encouraged to try things, and if an idea works, others will take it up. (J2.07)

Norms of continuous improvement are evident not only in their monitoring practices but also in the number of curriculum and instructional innovations, such as School Based Decision Making (SBDM) and Instructional Theory Into Practice (ITIP), undertaken by the high-performing districts in addition to curriculum changes mandated by the Ministry of Education.

Complementary to their concern for educational outcomes is the common belief shared by District R and J administrators in their ability to effect change. They express generally positive attitudes toward colleagues and tend to look upon them as partners in the educative process. Although the incidence of formal district administrator-to-principal interaction is reported in the data more frequently than principal-to-principal contact, there is considerable mention of principals staying in touch and sharing ideas informally in these districts.

> The administrators talk together a lot.... We support one another's efforts; we share a lot. (J2.03)
>
> I think the relationship at this point is really collegial, there is a lot of give and take. (R2.06)

Administrators in Districts R and J also share a belief in the efficacy of various interaction mechanisms available to them. Administrative meetings are generally described as moving toward a better balance between a one-way, informational or direction setting type of agenda and a more participatory, two-way format.

> (Probe: What about the Administrators' Meetings now? How would you describe them?) Very open. (Probe: Lots of debate?) Yes. (Probe: Heated debate?) On some issues. (Probe: Everybody gets to speak?) Everyone gets to speak. (R2.02)
>
> The administrators in this district see themselves as a pretty powerful group who will be heard. (J2.01)

Committee work is perceived to be influential in developing processes and sometimes policies.

> A committee of principals looks into the issue in depth, considers various viewpoints, and returns with a recommendation which is in some cases, but not all, a compromise. The recommendations of the committees are generally accepted. (J2.02)

Involvement in decision making is described as high at all levels. Throughout the interview data, respondents in Districts R and J refer frequently to the satisfying professional relationships they enjoy with colleagues and to their belief that the collaborative work being done in their respective districts is contributing to a continual improvement in educational programs. Thus, there appears to be a reasonably clear positive association in the high-performing districts between collegial interaction patterns among administrators, administrator efficacy, and district effectiveness in terms of test scores and costs.

Low-performing Districts

The characteristics of the low-performing districts M and H are also similar in terms of the patterns of interaction common to them both.

A top-down informational leadership model is operative in both these districts whereby policies are generated at the board office and then circulated

among principals and others for reaction. The interviewers note (in double parentheses) that such reaction is often negative.

> (Re cross-grade CTBS testing) It is seen as desirable that schools be similar. ((Note form of words here. Strong impression that he did not support this....)) (H2.01)
> (Re School Based Management) I think it's [Superintendent's] idea; there has been talk about a move to SBM, but I don't know where it's got to -- it's in the works, but it's been there awhile. (M2.02)

Decision making on substantive issues is centralized at the district level but is accompanied by little monitoring of decision implementation in the schools. District administrator attempts to increase principal involvement in the process meets with largely negative or apathetic response because consultative mechanisms are viewed by principals as largely ineffective and after-the-fact.

> Sometimes things are floated out and reaction is gauged. After the fact testing of ideas. Some of the process of consultation is window-dressing. (H2.05)
>
> (Probe re involvement of principals) Bad. Previously all school-related matters were taken to Administrative Meetings and decided there. That's no longer the case -- it sometimes happens, but not always like it used to. (M2.04)

Ambivalent attitudes toward long-term planning and goal setting activities are also characteristic of the low-performing districts. Such ambivalence often emanates from the central office, as noted by the interviewer, and contributes to the sense of directionless malaise expressed by many respondents.

> I have a statement of Board goals stuck on the wall -- I can't think why. You can't dispute this "strive to..." ((there followed the usual sarcastic reference to motherhood goals -- very common in this

> district -- quite clear that he does not see any utility in goal statements.)) (H1.03)
>
> I am reluctant to say that the district is pursuing any goals. (M2.01)

Commitment to decisions is further weakened in these districts by the lack of district press to conform. A district propensity for one-on-one negotiation rather than consensus achievement, together with district administrator responsiveness to outside pressure, make it relatively easy for principals to appeal, circumvent or ignore district decisions.

> I expected the district to say "results were poor in such and such, what are you going to do?" But I have no sense that we were in any way answerable for the results. (M2.01)
>
> To be truthful, there is no real follow-up to the testing. (H2.04)

Although central office administrators in Districts M and H express concern for instructional issues, they are not particularly visible in the schools and are generally perceived as managers rather than as instructional leaders.

> Our Superintendent is very versatile with budget, but not as aware as he should be of what is going on in classrooms. (H2.03)
>
> The Superintendent rarely talks to staff directly, except on the restraint issue. (M2.01)

There is virtually no mention of collegial contact in these districts, except with regard to issues where principals believe they must present a united front against any district policy which they perceive as threatening their "turf".

> The principals have a strong sense of territory --"this is my school".... There is an unwritten law that we hang together at meetings with district staff. (M2.01)

For the purposes of this study, the tendency to a school-regarding perspective among principals is a clear indicator that collegial norms do not prevail in these districts. Principals tend to view their colleagues as allies of convenience in the struggle to maintain control over their schools rather than as partners in the educative process. Indeed, remarks alluding to the work of other principals are more often disparaging than respectful. Together, these characteristics illustrate what can be termed the dark side of collegiality.

Finally, there is little evidence in the low-performing districts that instructional change, other than that mandated by the Ministry, is a priority. In fact, mistrust of, and resistance to, change is a more characteristic response.

> In this district we are very conservative and reluctant to change, to do anything differently from the way it's been done in the past. (M2.02)

> Self-improvement has not been a focus in the district. (H1.03)

District administrators tend to cite factors such as anxiety over budgetary restraint or pressure from teachers' associations as constraining their ability to initiate improvement projects. Here again, a sense of powerlessness is evident at the central office level and appears to manifest itself throughout the district.

> Morale is a real problem -- there is a lot of uneasiness and anxiety. (M1.01)

To summarize, this section discusses several themes and patterns extracted from the data that appear to play a part in shaping the relationships between administrators in the sample school districts. Quotations chosen from the interview data are intended to provide illustrative, descriptive support for the arguments made.

From the preceding discussion, it is evident that the district superintendent's leadership style has an important influence on the interaction patterns between administrators which emerged from each district. Chapter 5 will discuss some of the factors that may be involved in determining the nature of that influence.

CHAPTER FIVE

Factors That Constrain or Promote Superintendent Support for Principal Collegiality

From the preceding analysis of interview data gathered from a sample of four B. C. school districts, it is clear that the interaction patterns of the two high-performing districts, R and J, differ quite markedly from those characteristic of the two low-performing districts, M and H.

This section will argue that the district-level response patterns associated with high-performing districts are consistent in an analogous way with the conditions Little (1982) identifies as supporting collegial norms and continuous improvement at the school level. Moreover, these patterns can be understood as reflecting ethos differences evident in the high-performing districts, and appear to be dependent to some extent on the differences in leadership style exhibited by the district superintendents. In other words, collegial exchange between principals in a school district appears to occur more often in districts where the superintendent's leadership style can be described as conducive to that kind of activity.

Accordingly, this chapter discusses several factors that appear to play a part in shaping the relationships between superintendents and principals in a school district. Particular attention is paid to those factors which can be viewed as either constraining or promoting superintendent support for collegial practices among principals.

Relationships between administrators will be examined from a number of perspectives including: superintendent characteristics, characteristics of educational organizations, collegiality and informal networks, implementation

and change, and leadership styles. Each perspective will be discussed with respect to its potential usefulness for predicting principal collegiality within a school district, and with reference to the sample districts in this study.

The last section of this chapter presents a small sampling of the literature on principal leadership styles and discusses the parallels that can be drawn between some of the school-level research findings and the results of this district-level study.

Superintendent Leadership Styles

In the absence of empirical evidence concerning how superintendents either constrain or promote principal collegiality, observations expressed are of necessity speculative and inferential in nature. Studies chosen for discussion are intended to provide illustrative, descriptive support for the arguments made. They are not intended to represent an exhaustive review of the literature.

Discussion of Factors Relating to Principal Collegiality

Superintendent characteristics. Griffiths (1979), among others, has pointed to the need for more comprehensive, qualitative research on the educational administrator as an individual.

> While there is no doubt value in the kind of information that can be gleaned from questionnaires - average age, height, and weight, place in family, religion, birthplace, salary, and so forth - that which is really significant in understanding administrators is omitted. (p. 43)

Studies depending on survey data to determine the influence of personal characteristics on a superintendent's job priorities usually find that the effects of

personal variables are largely insignificant (see for example Salley, 1980). One exception to this typical outcome may be found in the work of Carlson (1961) and Iannaccone and Lutz (1970).

Carlson (1961) makes a distinction between career-bound and place-bound superintendents and their respective impacts on school personnel. He contends that the career-bound administrator desires visibility and collegial recognition of his professional abilities. If this is the case, it follows that such an administrator should be more likely than a place-bound superintendent to initiate changes. Since substantive change usually requires the cooperation of principals, the career-bound superintendent's need for collaborative effort, together with his ability to control staff, should result in collegial interactions occurring between principals as they work together to implement changes.

Expanding on Carlson's work, Iannaccone and Lutz (1970) discuss the impact of the succession of an "outsider", that is, a career-bound superintendent, on schools and school personnel. Firstly, they note that the outsider will concern himself almost immediately with a revision of standard operating procedures. This streamlining serves to (a) establish the new man as one who can take charge, (b) remove annoying red tape and thus bring more people on side, and (c) put the successor on more even terms with those of the old guard well-versed in established traditions.

Secondly, Iannaccone and Lutz state that an outside successor will alter the pattern of recruitment in the district by hiring from outside the district or by promoting young upwardly mobile locals who may not have been on the former superintendent's list. This happens because the outside successor often enjoys an expanded mandate from the board to recruit those who best suit his

approach. As appointments change and new positions are created, a new cadre of principals is created who share a committment to the superintendent and his ideas.

Finally, since the outsider has normally been brought to the district in response to community demands for change, an outside appointee will embark on innovative programs in an attempt to satisfy these demands.

Taken together, these three activities typically undertaken by an outside successor to the superintendency provide increased opportunity or potential for the development of collegial relationships among district staff. The emphasis tends to be on the creation of a new administrative team which will work together to effect the changes sought by the community through the election of an insurgent board.

Although background information about the four superintendents involved in the collegiality study was not gathered because such data did not appear to be immediately relevant, it would be interesting to investigate the possibility of a connection between superintendent career paths and the administrator interaction patterns identified in this study.

Characteristics of educational organizations. This section explores the possibility that constraints on the development of collegial practices amongst school administrators may lie in the nature of school systems as loosely-coupled (Weick,1976) or institutionalized (Rowan, 1981) organizations.

Rowan's study of twenty San Francisco Bay area school districts supports the view that district staffs "appear to be structured by the demands of their institutional environments" (p. 69). As these demands increase, concern

for instruction decreases and linkages between central office and school-level personnel become looser. Since the notion of collegiality depends upon an instructional focus, in loosely-coupled systems one would expect relatively infrequent interactions between principals for instructional purposes.

Further support for this line of argument lies in the technological uncertainty of teaching (Thompson, 1967) which makes administrative control over practice a dubious exercise. Rowan (1981) comments:

> The larger point is that administrators deliberately decouple themselves from instructional demands. They do so because they lack the time and energy for instructional leadership and cannot use formal controls to compensate. In part, decoupling is designed to make a difficult situation more manageable. (p. 62)

A number of studies examining the time allocations of educational administrators point to the relatively small amounts of time devoted to instruction related tasks (Meyer & Rowan, 1978; Morris, 1979; Salley, 1980; Willower & Fraser, 1980; Wolcott, 1973). Rowan (1981) notes that these patterns were true even in districts committed to the implementation of innovative programs. It follows then that principals and superintendents will tend to concentrate their energies on administrative areas which loom larger in their daily schedules than instructional concerns. Such a tendency was certainly true of the superintendents in Districts M and H, although both expressed some regret that it was so.

Meyer and Rowan (1977) argue that the subordination of instruction is a consequence of school systems belonging to a social environment which is institutional or rule-oriented rather than efficiency-oriented. Such an environment, with its emphasis on compliance with the broader goals of society

and its regulation of the means to achieve those goals, creates barriers to the development of activities intended to improve instruction. Even assuming that these barriers can be overcome in order to pursue instructional goals, there are compelling arguments to suggest that the loosely-coupled nature of school systems (Weick, 1976) precludes much administrator influence over the classroom (Lortie, 1975) and thus reduces the incentive for administrators to engage in collaborative instructional activities.

Contrary to the usual, if not inevitable, tendencies described by the above researchers, the superintendents in Districts R and J emerged as highly visible instructional leaders who managed to spend a relatively large portion of their time engaged in collaborative activities aimed at improving school and district performance. As a result, Districts R and J appear to display what can be labelled simultaneous loose-tight characteristics, as evidenced by their decentralized decision-making models, monitoring practices and goals-to-budget linkages.

Collegiality and change. As has been noted in Chapter 2 above, support for a more collaborative, school-specific approach to implementation is well documented in the implementation and change literature (Berman & McLaughlin, 1979; Fullan, 1982; Huberman & Miles, 1984; McLaughlin & Marsh, 1977). Once a perceived need in the system results in principals' energies being directed towards improving that area, the central administrator must follow up initial enthusiasm for the change by setting up a process for continued support. Such a process would include the provision of support staff, the development of principals' growth, supplying materials, release time and the

like. Provision would also have to be made for orienting new staff to the plan as others leave the district, and for monitoring and tailoring (Cooley, 1981) the change program as it evolves in district schools.

Thus it can be argued that in districts where the superintendent recognizes the need for collaboration among the various actors in the system and is inclined to promote and monitor collaborative activities, it is reasonable to expect that principals will engage in collegial practices more frequently as they work through the many problems associated with substantive change in their schools. An example can be found in District J, where the superintendent and principals were engaged in implementing a number of substantive changes, such as School Based Decision Making.

Collegiality and role analysis. Bacharach and Mitchell (1983) investigated the sources of job dissatisfaction in a role-specific analysis of survey data gathered from a sample of principals and superintendents in 83 New York State school districts. An examination of the findings reveals several aspects of the superintendent-principal relationship which appear to be related to measures of the bureaucratization of the work process, supervisory behavior and attitudes, power and influence, the district environment, work demands made on administrators and individual attributes. Each set of independent variables was regressed on each of the following dependent variables: job dissatisfaction, dissatisfaction with agents (people), and dissatisfaction with pay. Results of the regression analyses for superintendents and principals were presented separately so that comparisons between the two roles could be drawn.

Table 8 summarizes the similarities and differences identified in this study between principals' and superintendents' role perceptions. A brief interpretation of the findings follows with a view to predicting the presence or absence of collegial interaction among principals from a role analysis perspective.

1. With respect to the first set of measures related to level of bureaucratization, the investigators hypothesized that the inherent conflict between bureaucracy and professionalism would emerge. However, low role conflict, which is considered an attribute of bureaucratic organizations, emerged as a strong and consistent negative predictor of dissatisfaction for both principals and superintendents. This finding suggests that some characteristics of bureaucracies, such as low autonomy and high rule observance, run contrary to the need for professional autonomy and therefore make an expected contribution to dissatisfaction. However, one characteristic of bureaucracies, low role conflict, appears to contribute to the development of a "negotiated order" (Hanson, 1981) that many educational administrators consider a prerequisite for the effective discharge of their responsibilities.

2. The regression results relating to supervisor attitudes and behavior revealed a predictably strong association between negative supervisory behavior and dissatisfaction with the job, co-workers and pay among principals and superintendents.

TABLE 8

Superintendent and Principal Dissatisfaction

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable- Dissatisfaction					
	Superintendents			Principals		
	Job	Agents	Pay	Job	Agents	Pay
Bureaucratization						
high routinization	NS	NS	NS	+P	+WP	NS
low autonomy	+P	+SP	+SP	-WP	NS	NS
low rule observance	NS	-P	NS	-P	NS	NS
low record keeping	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	-WP
high ambiguity	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	-WP
low conflict	-P	-SP	-P	-P	-SP	NS
Supervision						
high negative	+SP	+SP	+P	+P	+P	NS
high positive	NS	NS	NS	NS	-P	-P
high value	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	-WP
inaccurate view of performance	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	WP
Decision-Making Power						
authority	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
influence	+P	+SP	+P	NS	NS	NS
saturation	NS	NS	NS	NS	-SP	NS
deprivation	NS	NS	NS	+WP	+SP	+P
District Environment						
enrollment	NS	NS	NS	-P	NS	NS
% low SES families	+SP	+SP	+SP	+P	NS	+WP
high diversity	-P	-P	NS	NS	+P	NS
stability	NS	NS	NS	NS	-P	NS
high info need	+SP	+P	+P	NS	NS	NS
low predictability	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
Work Demands						
number supervised	-P	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
number committees	-SP	-SP	-SP	NS	-P	-SP
high cooperation	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
high frequency demands	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
negative union attitude	NS	NS	NS	+SP	+P	NS
Individual Attributes						
age	NS	NS	NS	+P	-P	NS
years in position	+P	+P	+P	+P	+P	NS
years in district	NS	NS	NS	-SP	+P	-WP

Note. NS = Not Significant =>= .01 - .14
+WP = Positive Weak Predictor of Dissatisfaction = .15 - .20
+P = Positive Predictor of Dissatisfaction = .21 - .32
+SP = Positive Strong Predictor of Dissatisfaction = >.33
-WP = Negative Weak Predictor of Dissatisfaction = -.15 - -.20
-P = Negative Predictor of Dissatisfaction = -.21 - -.32
SP = Negative Strong Predictor of Dissatisfaction = > -.33

3. The third hypothesis assumed a positive relationship between the influence one has in decision making and the level of satisfaction expressed. The results were somewhat surprising in that they showed that superintendents would prefer to exert less influence (by delegating some of their responsibilities), whereas principals were generally reluctant to accept additional responsibility because many felt overburdened already.

4. The complexity of the district environment produced a differential mixture of positive and negative predictors of dissatisfaction among administrators. Superintendents did not associate agent dissatisfaction with high district diversity nearly as strongly as did principals. Conversely, principals were less strongly affected by district enrolment than superintendents. Both groups reported a consistent association between the percentage of low income families in the district and dissatisfaction.

5. The fifth hypothesis predicted a positive relationship between the level of work demands and dissatisfaction. The results for superintendents showed no relationship between either the extent of committee involvement or the number supervised and dissatisfaction. For principals, work demands related to unfavorable union-management conditicns were strongly associated with both job and agent dissatisfaction. Principals showed a lack of concern with committee work similar to that of superintendents.

6. Lastly, individual attributes such as age, tenure in position, and tenure in the district were hypothesized to be negatively related to dissatisfaction. No

significant predictors for any of the forms of dissatisfaction were found for superintendents. For them, experience appeared to provide the contacts, expertise and confidence necessary to work effectively in the system. Principals, on the other hand, associate years in position and years in district with job dissatisfaction and dissatisfaction with others. This suggests that principals may experience increased frustration with the system as their tenure increases and their chances for promotion diminish.

An analysis of these findings shows that principals and superintendents are similarly concerned with creating consensus in a highly complex environment. For principals, lack of influence in decision making, long tenure in the position and negative supervisory behavior exacerbate the problems associated with consensus building, whereas positive supervisory attitudes, sufficient influence and the sharing of responsibilities through a committee system alleviate these problems. Thus it can be argued that superintendents who promote collegial practices may be satisfing their need for reliable information and at the same time securing relief from some of the burdens of their office by delegating responsibility to groups of principals. Similarly, individual principals may find their needs for growth and recognition satisfied through collegial endeavors while avoiding the risk and work load associated with embarking on solitary improvement programs.

This discussion of the Bacharach and Mitchell study (1983) of differential sources of dissatisfaction among principals and superintendents is admittedly interpretive. However, it does point out the complementary nature of the

principal-superintendent relationship and its potential usefulness for analysis from a collegial perspective.

Leadership styles and collegiality. "Since few topics have been so extensively researched [as leadership], making sense of the wealth of leadership material available is a formidable task" (Gray & Starke, 1984, p. 221). Approaches to the topic range from the universalist theories of Blake and Mouton (1964), McGregor (1960), Likert (1967) and others, to the more recent contingency approaches of Hersey and Blanchard (1982), Fiedler (1967), and Vroom and Yetton (1973). The Eagleton and Cogdell (1980) Humanistic Leadership Model discussed in this section was chosen for extended treatment because it lends itself well to comparison with the Hersey and Blanchard Situational Leadership Model and to a collegial perspective. Table 9 illustrates the comparison between these two models.

In an effort to integrate a comprehensive, interdisciplinary theory of educational administration with empirical research, Eagleton and Cogdell (1980) conducted a pilot investigation to test their Humanistic Leadership Model on a sample of superintendents. A questionnaire was used to gather responses to 55 behaviorally stated items relating to the 15 principles and 11 practices of the model together with three items eliciting each superintendent's perception of his own and his administrative staff's leadership performance. Factor analysis of the data resulted in the indentification of four factors: Organized, Open, Task Oriented; Organized, Open, Human Relations Oriented; Disorganized, Unprepared-Cautious, Ambiguity Oriented; and Organized,

TABLE 9

Humanistic Leadership compared with Situational Leadership

	Model (Eagleton & Cogdell)	Model (Hersey & Blanchard)
Factor I.	Organized, Open, Task Oriented	High Task Low Relationship Style
Factor II.	Organized, Open, Human Relations Oriented	High Task High Relationship Style
Factor III.	Disorganized, Unprepared-Cautious, Ambiguity Oriented	Low Task Low Relationship Style
Factor IV.	Organized, Closed-Favoritism, "Top Down" Oriented	High Task, Low Relationship Style

Note. The Hersey & Blanchard Low Task, High Relationship Style is not represented in this comparison.

Closed-Favoritism, "Top Down" Oriented. Each factor will be discussed briefly together with its potential relevance to the question of principal collegiality.

1. Factor I: Organized, Open, Task Oriented.

Superintendents scoring high on this factor supported five principles and five practices of the model and did not disagree strongly with any of them. These superintendents supported differentiated roles of line and staff, assessment of performance, justification for each position, and preparation of subordinates for advancement. They tended to be task oriented, valued competence and policy enforcement, and believed their leadership was both improving yearly and superior to that of their peers.

These superintendents could be considered relatively open to promoting principal collegiality if they perceived the maturity level of their principals as being equal to the tasks at hand. If not, the superintendent would likely assume a more directive style until principals were deemed ready to assume more responsibility. These leaders would correspond roughly to the high task, low relationship style described in Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model (1982).

2. Factor II: Organized, Open, Human Relations Oriented.

These superintendents tended to support formalized goal-setting with informal implementation, accountability, formalized advisory system, clear policies and procedures, open sharing of information, and positive supervisory attitudes. They disagreed with the principle that all organizations have the

same number of purposes and that only individuals, not committees, can be held accountable.

Superintendents high in this factor would tend to support collegial activities between principals in order to promote district goals and to make sure that policies and procedures were discussed and clearly understood. They would also encourage participative decision making within a goal-directed framework and business-like attention to preparation of background information.

This description conforms to Gross and Herriot's (1965) finding that effective principals tend to occur more often in districts led by effective superiors. The effective superintendent models his expectations for accountability and thorough preparation to his principals and sees collegial activities as a way for principals to develop the necessary skills and attitudes to put these expectations into practice. This type of leader could be described as approximating the high task, high relationship style of the Hersey and Blanchard model.

3. Factor III: Disorganized, Unprepared-Cautious, Ambiguity Oriented.

As predicted, superintendents scoring high on this factor did not strongly support any variables of the model. They tended to disagree with the following principles/practices: the delegation of responsibility and authority, the subordination of staff to line, preparation of background information on issues, and risk-taking behavior.

Superintendents reporting these tendencies would be unlikely to view principal interaction for instructional purposes with enthusiasm. Their

reluctance to engage in goal-setting activities, to delegate responsibility and to develop accountability procedures convey the message to principals that collegial pursuit of such activities would not be endorsed. Such a leader would correspond to the low task, low relationship style defined in the Hersey and Blanchard model. Unless district principals were an unusually mature group capable of sustaining collegial practices independently from the superintendent, it is unlikely that such practices would occur on a continuing basis.

4. Factor IV: Organized, Closed-Favoritism, "Top Down" Oriented.

These superintendents agreed that responsibility should be delegated, policies and procedures should be clear, and leadership should be firm and consistent. They also believed that administrators should support their line administrators. They tended to disagree with, or ignore, equal accountability for line and staff, participative decision making, concern for a positive climate, and recognition for exemplary performance.

Principals working under a Factor IV superintendent would not be encouraged to engage in collegial practices since these practices typically involve questioning of existing policies and procedures. Such questioning would be seen as a threat to the superintendent's authority. These superintendents would be more inclined to support individual principals in experimental ventures capable of bringing recognition to the district (and themselves) rather than activities aimed at developing the growth of all principals or of improving district performance. Like those administrators

described under Factor I, Factor IV superintendents are roughly equivalent to the high task, low relationship leader in the Hersey and Blanchard model.

To summarize, of the four Factors discussed in the Eagleton and Cogdell study only Factor II appears to include superintendent leadership style variables consistent with those thought to be required for promotion of collegial activities among district principals. As discussed in the literature review above, this view of the cautious and restricted nature of principal peer relationships is supported by studies of the informal communications, or grapevine, undertaken by Licata and Hack (1980) and Johnson and Licata (1983). However, it can be argued from the data that superintendents of the more collegial districts, R and J, did indeed exhibit several of the practices associated with the Factor II style: formalized goal-setting, accountability, decentralized decision-making, collegial approach to problem-solving, and positive supervisory attitudes.

Principal Leadership Style

Hargrove and his associates (1981) studied the differential implementation of federal regulations mandating the support of handicapped children in the regular school setting. The leadership style of the principal was considered an independent variable in distinguishing between high compliance schools and those falling into the middle or low ranges. Four styles were identified: authoritative democrat, risk avoidant but orderly manager, authoritarian and laissez-faire.

The Hargrove study showed that (a) teachers prefer the autocratic democrat whose strength provides the staff with protection from interference, yet who relates to them in a consultative, collegial way; and (b) this style was

apparent in four of the seven successful schools' principals. The other three schools had the support of principals who were considered "helpful facilitators" (p. 117) if not dynamic leaders.

Considerable collaboration among teachers was also noted in all of the high-performing schools in the Hargrove study. These collegial arrangements were considered to be closely associated with the leadership styles described above and with the performance of their schools. Hargove and his colleagues observed that successful schools displayed uniform strength across a number of variables, including leadership, collegial relations and programming. As has been argued earlier, it is at least possible that parallel strengths could be identified in successful districts as well.

In a more recent investigation, Blase (1987) examined effective school leadership from the teachers' standpoint. Data collected over a 30-month period from interviews, questionnaires and observations were coded and then analyzed inductively in accordance with qualitative research procedures. Teachers identified nine leadership dimensions associated with task-related competencies: accessibility, consistency, knowledge/expertise, clear and reasonable expectations, decisiveness, goals/direction, follow-through, time management, and problem-solving orientation. These factors were closely intertwined with five consideration-related qualities: support in confrontations/conflict, participation/consultation, fairness/equitability, recognition, and willingness to delegate authority.

Blase found that these "leadership factors affected teacher motivation, involvement, and morale and, in general, enhanced the possibility of productive interactions between teachers" (1987, p. 606). By enlarging the focus to the

district level, parallels can be drawn between the effective high school principal and the effective superintendent. These parallels support a more holistic view of a school system's needs -- a view that attaches an equal, if not greater, importance to people-oriented factors as compared to managerial skills.

Summary

The concern for collaborative effort among educational practitioners is revealed in statements written by administrators and researchers alike. For example, one principal comments: "Cooperation between principals and superintendents is critical to the success of our education system (Beranis, 1981, p. 22). Hargrove and his associates (1981) emphasize the importance of administrative unity in implementation:

> District superintendents, and their staffs, . . . should develop a coherent implementation strategy. The chief ingredient would be regular conversations . . . to consider all the schools in each district as schools, that is, as whole entities. The task would be to identify strengths and deficiencies in performance . . . and develop ways to strengthen school capacities. (p. 120)

The results of this investigation demonstrate that the potential exists for more collegial approaches, as described by Little (1982) to the administration of our schools and districts, and that ethos variables such as collegiality can be studied as powerful positive corelates of more conventional measures of performance. More research is needed using larger samples and different methodologies to confirm or disconfirm the speculations arising from this study and to disentangle the welter of factors and inter-relationships that comprise any human organization.

Themes and patterns emerging from the data suggest that in the more successful districts, Districts R and J, all administrators strive to promote group unity in the pursuit of common goals while accepting individual differences in style, talent and perspective. Superintendents in these districts assume the initiative in establishing a climate in which a clear distinction is made between healthy debate and divisiveness. It may be the case that in districts, such as M and H, where principals feel insecure because of superintendent neglect, indecision or manipulation, they will tend to withdraw into their own schools and display little interest in district-level issues. Conversely, where superintendents present opportunities for their principals to explore problems that lie beyond, yet are relevant to, the boundaries of their own school sites, collegial activity is more likely to occur.

As has been suggested by the comments exerpted from the transcript data in the previous chapter, principals in the more successful districts support administrative unity by looking beyond their own schools to the larger problems facing the district. This may mean that principals in these districts have agreed to subordinate the priorities of their particular schools from time to time to meet the greater needs of the district. In any case, they tend to seek out opportunities to network with other schools in order to stimulate staff development and develop better articulation between elementary and secondary levels. Successful collaboration in these districts involves all participants being prepared to offer alternative solutions to problems and to analyze suggested compromises objectively. Collegial practices appear to have helped these principals develop a balance between the managerial, the instructional, and the inter-personal components of their roles.

The complex and changing nature of public schooling is currently exerting a variety of pressures on administrative relationships. It is especially important in these times that school and district administrators make a greater effort to clarify expectations for each other, to gather information about districts that are successfully working through problems, and to learn from research in the field.

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